IN THIS ISSUE: FOCUS on Changes in Faculty Demographics

2008 Annual Meeting News

Meet Me in Chicago ..............................6–7
Highlights of the City
Performances and Exhibitions ..............7
Reel Religion .................................7
Ten Films to be Shown
South Asian Focus ..............................8
Thirty-six Sessions and Events
Kudos to South Asian Scholar Co-sponsors  .8
Lafayette College and Missouri State University
Future Annual Meeting Dates and Sites  . 8
Leadership Workshop .........................9
Taking Religion(s) Seriously: What Students Need to Know
Religious Studies in South Asia .............10
A Conversation with Vasu Narayanan
Student Events ..............................11
Returning from the Annual Meeting .....11
Absentee and Early Voting
Looking Forward to Montréal ..............12
Early Registration and Passport Booth Available in Chicago
An Early Glimpse of Quebec ...............12
A Unique Religious Culture in North America and the World

FEATURES

In the Public Interest ..........................35
Why Does Sex Play Such a Large Role for Fringe Sects?
Research Briefing .............................36
Envisioning Hinduism: Raja Ravi Varma and the Visual Canon
From the Student Desk .......................37
Staying Straight/Going Queerly Forward: Navigating a Job Search When Your CV has Queer Written All Over It

From the Editor ..................................3
Strategic Plan ..................................4
Officer Elections .............................4–5
Candidates for Vice President
In Memoriam .................................13
Remembering Catherine M. Bell
Academy Announces Annual Awards ....14–15
Journalism, Marty Award, Book Awards, Excellence in Teaching, and Religion and the Arts
Membership Corner .........................16
Important Information for Our Members
Book Corner ..................................17
AAR Highlights Three New Books
Briefs .........................................18–19
News from Around the Academy
Sustainability Task Force Update ........20
AAR Advocates Humanities Funding ....20
A Report on Humanities Advocacy Day 2008
OUP Book Series Name Change ..........20
Texts and Translations now Religion in Translation
The Religion Major and Liberal Education 21–24
The Religious Studies Major in a Post–9/11 World: New Challenges, New Opportunities
The Work of the Scholar/Activist Teacher 25–26
Regional Meetings and Calls for Papers ....38–40
Academy Fund ..............................41–42
Contributors to the AAR
Upcoming Summer Seminars ..........43
Theologies of Religious Pluralism and Comparative Theology
2008 Member Calendar

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

October

Religious Studies News October issue.

October 13, Annual Meeting Job Center pre-registration closes.

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, Fall Board of Directors meeting, Chicago, IL.

October 31, Chairs Workshop at the Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.

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 3, Annual Business Meeting at the Annual Meeting. See the Program Book for day and time.

November 14, New program unit proposals due.

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.

December 31, Membership renewal for 2009 due. Renew online at www.aarweb.org/Members/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.

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.jsp.

Job Postings. A members-only publication, Job Postings lists 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/jump/jobpostings.
FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

We hope that this issue of Religious Studies News finds you enjoying the beginning of another semester.

We are very happy to announce that during the summer the AAR received a $400,000 grant from the Henry Luce Foundation. This grant will allow us to offer four one-week summer seminars dealing with theories of religious pluralism and comparative theology. We encourage you to view the announcement of this initiative, which appears on the inside back cover of this issue.

This issue’s Focus section deals with various changes in faculty demographics, the role of contingent faculty, faculty unions, and a survey of AAR student members.

Of particular note in this issue is the printed announcement of our two candidates for the position of Vice President. The Vice President sits on the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, and the Program Committee, as well as being in line to be confirmed as President-elect and eventually President. This is your chance to cast your vote for a position of responsibility.

Also of note is a major white paper from our Teagle project — “The Religion Major and Liberal Education.”

This issue also has many suggestions of places of interest, things to do, and sessions to attend during the Annual Meeting in Chicago next month. In preparation for it, the executive office staff has been working over the last several months attending to the myriad of details required to produce the Program Planner, the Program Book, plenary speakers, panels, sessions, workshops, and book exhibitions, with the view toward making this an enriching experience for all our members. We hope to see you in the Windy City!

Carey J. Gifford
Executive Editor

Dear Readers:


AAR Annual Meeting Events
Chicago, Illinois

Friday - October 31

Workshop on Teaching College Introductory Courses (Advance registration required) M31-208
1:30 pm to 8:00 pm
Location: CHT-Lake Huron

Saturday - November 1

Lunch Table Teaching Conversations
(Co-Sponsored with the AAR Teaching Religion Section - Advance registration required) M1-122
11:45 am to 12:45 pm
Location: PH Salon 12

Special Topics Forum: “If I Knew Then What I Know Now”: Lessons for the First Year Teaching
(Co-sponsored with the Graduate Student Committee) A1-302
4:00 pm to 6:30 pm
Location: CHT-Conference Room 4G

Wabash Center Reception M1-301
6:30 pm to 8:30 pm
Location: PH-Red Lacquer Room

Sunday - November 2

Wabash Center and Louisville Institute Grant Writing Consultation (Co-sponsored with the Louisville Institute) M2-202
1:30 pm to 5:00 pm
Location: CHT-PDR 7

Wabash Center Dinner for New Teachers
(Advance invitation required) M2-400
7:00 pm to 8:30 pm
Location: CHT-Conference Room 4H

Monday - November 3

Teaching the History of Christianity
(Co-sponsored with the History of Christianity Section) A3-207
Location: CHT-Conference Room 4F

Accepting Applications
2009-2010 Workshops
Deadline - January 15, 2009

Workshops for
* Pre-Tenure Theological School Faculty
* Pre-Tenure Religion Faculty
* Pre-Tenure Theology and Religion Faculty of African Descent

Colloquy on
* Writing the Scholarship of Teaching in Theology and Religion

See web site for details

Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion
www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu

Funded by Lilly Endowment - Located at Wabash College
AAR Updates the Centennial Strategic Plan

Jack Fitzmier, American Academy of Religion

In 2003, THE AAR’s “Centennial Strategic Plan, 2004–2009” set out our mission statement, identified a series of goals for our organization (e.g., to promote research and scholarship in the field, to facilitate members’ professional development, to contribute to the public understanding of religion, to encourage diversity within the Academy), and listed a set of strategic objectives to which we were committed (e.g., attract new members, clarify the identity of the AAR vis-à-vis other scholarly societies in religion, hold stand-alone Annual Meetings, enhance the international dimension of the AAR, and prepare for our Centennial Celebration). Recently the AAR staff, working with AAR members, the Executive Committee, and the Board, have sharpened the mission statement, prioritized goals, reiterated objectives, and put in place concrete implementation plans that can be measured and assessed. We want to remind all of our members of our central commitments and strategic objectives. These spring from our original “Centennial Strategic Plan, 2004–2009,” and were approved by our Board as the “Updated Strategic Plan” in April 2008.

Our Statement of Purpose and Values

The purpose of the American Academy of Religion derives from two principal goals:

1) To promote understanding of and critical reflection on religious traditions, issues, questions, values, texts, practices, and institutions. To this end, we foster communication and exchange among teachers and scholars and the public understanding of religion.

2) To serve the professional interests of AAR members as students, teachers, and scholars.

The AAR is committed to promoting equity, responsibility, and democratic accountability within the academic study of religion and in the work of the AAR itself.

Our Near Term Objectives (to be accomplished in eighteen to thirty-six months)

• Facilitate membership development by increasing membership, members’ satisfaction, and member participation.

• Enhance our Annual Meeting with a successful meeting in Chicago that will set the stage for the Centennial kickoff in Montreal; to use our “stand alone” status to develop the AAR’s unique program.

• Foster international exchanges by building global connections and by positioning the AAR to be a resource to our international partners.

• Reimagine our governance structures to better suit our current situation, and in this seek an ideal balance among competing values.

• Celebrate the AAR’s 100th anniversary with a fundraising campaign and special programming and events.

• Enhance the public understanding of religion with new programming.

• Experiment with and deploy new technologies in scholarly communication.

• Enhance the work of the AAR’s ten regions.

The AAR has a bright future. As we plan our Centennial Celebration, look for more news about progress on our Updated Strategic Plan.

AAR Officer Elections

A Message from the AAR Nominations Committee

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

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

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

Hans J. Hillerbrand, Chair
Nominations Committee

Call for Nominations

The Nominations Committee will continue its practice of consultation during the Annual Meeting in Chicago to begin the process of selecting nominees for Vice President and Student Director in November 2009. The committee takes seriously all recommendations by AAR members.

The following characteristics regularly surface in discussions of candidates for Vice President:

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

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

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

How to Vote

All members of the Academy are entitled to vote for all officers. The elected candidates will take office at the end of the 2008 Annual Meeting.

Please vote online at www.aarweb.org. Paper ballots are only sent to those without e-mail addresses on file or by special request (please call 404-727-3059). Vote by Monday, October 20, 2008, to exercise this important right.

Vice President

The Vice President serves on the Executive and Program Committees, as well as on the Board of Directors. She will be in line to be confirmed President-Elect in 2009 and President in 2010. During her tenure, the Vice President will have the opportunity to affect AAR policy in powerful ways; in particular, during the presidential year, the incumbent makes all appointments of members to openings on committees.

See page 5 for candidates’ statements
Candidates for Vice President

Janet Gyatso

Janet Gyatso is Hersey Professor of Buddhist Studies at Harvard University. Previously she taught for thirteen years in the Religious Department of Smith College, before which she was an adjunct faculty member at SUNY, Stony Brook. She received a BA in Religious Studies, an MA in Sanskrit, and a PhD in Buddhist Studies, all from the University of California at Berkeley. From 2000–2006, she was president of the International Association of Tibetan Studies. Gyatso co-founded the Tibetan and Himalayan Religious Group at the AAR, and currently co-chairs the Buddhism Section. At Harvard, she was the first chair of the Divinity School’s Standing Committee for the Study of Women in Religion; she is presently Director of Graduate Studies in the Committee for the Study of Religion. She has also initiated an effort to make the teaching of Buddhist ministry part of the Divinity School’s Master of Divinity curriculum. Her books are In the Mirror of Memory: Reflections on Mindfulness and Remembrance in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism; Apparitions of the Self: The Secret Autobiographies of a Tibetan Visionary; Off the Menu: Asian and Asian North American Women’s Religion and Christianity, 1860–1927. She is co-editor of Empire and the Christian Tradition, and Off the Menu: Asian and Asian North American Women’s Religion and Theology. From 2000 to 2005, she was co-editor of the Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion and has recently been asked to edit a major reference work on Women and Christianity in the next five years. She has just completed a research year supported by NEH and ACLS, during which she wrote a book on the relations between Buddhist and medical intellectual culture in sixteenth through eighteenth century Tibet.

Kwok Pui Lan

Kwok Pui Lan is William P. Gale Professor of Christian Theology and Spirituality at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She has published extensively in the areas of Asian feminism, Biblical hermeneutics, and postcolonial criticism. She received her PhD from Harvard University (1989) and an honorary PhD from Kampen Theological University in the Netherlands (2004). Kwok’s books include Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology: Introducing Asian Feminist Theology; Discovering the Bible in the Non-Biblical World; and Chinese Women and Christianity, 1860–1927. She is co-editor of Empire and the Christian Tradition, and Off the Menu: Asian and Asian North American Women’s Religion and Theology. From 2000 to 2005, she was co-editor of the Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion and has recently been asked to edit a major reference work on Women and Christianity in the next five years. She has just completed a research year supported by NEH and ACLS, during which she wrote a book on the relations between Buddhist and medical intellectual culture in sixteenth through eighteenth century Tibet.

Statement on the AAR

LOOK BACK ON twenty years of membership in the AAR with considerable gratitude. The proliferation of units in the organization has helped me to understand my own areas of specialty in a new light. At the same time, my involvement in service has taught me about the institutional and intellectual issues that we all share in the study of religion. Together, these two kinds of experience have shaped my values and commitments deeply. Next year, we will celebrate the centennial of the AAR. I expect there will be a renewed sense of commitment to a common future throughout this organization’s very varied constituencies.

We all know that the AAR is at a crossroads in its history. I feel strongly that as an organization it is critical that we work concertedly to foster broad consultation. It is imperative to include every segment of the AAR membership in its operations and decision-making. One example where our ability to process members’ input will be crucial is in assessing both the practices and professional benefits of our new commitment to meet separately from, but at the same time and place as, the SBL each year. Our interorganizational cooperation can capitalize on the increasingly international roads in its history. I feel strongly that any organization is it critical that we work concertedly to foster broad consultation. It is imperative to include every segment of the AAR membership in its operations and decision-making. One example where our ability to process members’ input will be crucial is in assessing both the practic-

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area where we should provide leadership now are by calling upon to exercise our scholars in adjacent teaching positions. More broadly, the AAR needs to articulate effectively the contributions our field makes to the intellectual life of contempo-

rary universities.

New intellectual directions at our meet-

ings impact the creation and sharing of knowledge at the very heart of the study of religion. The recent focus on interna-
tional scholars and topics is particularly encouraging; we should continue this long-term. As our field continues to diver-

sify, both in terms of the demographics of its practitioners and the kinds of topics it takes up, we have new opportunities to expand our understanding of religion in all of its own diversity. I believe that a cen-
tral aim of the AAR should be to foster those kinds of interchanges that challenge us to speak not only to fellow specialists, but also to those in disparate corners of religious studies, as well as in disciplines outside our field altogether. As a specialist in Buddhist studies, I know how hard that can be, but I also know how productive it can be.

The larger the sights of our intellectual horizons, the better prepared we are to contribute the fruits of our work in the public arena. One very promising way we can capitalize on the increasingly interna-
tional purview of what we study is to expand our cooperation with organizations for the study of religion abroad. This will bring an even more diverse set of scholars into the conversation. It will also provide access to those diverse perspectives for our own development as scholars. Such engagement informs us in critical ways when we are called upon to exercise our public voice. We provide historical per-

spective, but perhaps even more so, we model how ideas are exchanged, and how alternate points of view can both be hon-

ored for their specificity and yet appreciat-

ed for what they can teach us all.

Statement on the AAR

T

HIS IS AN EXCITING and chal-

lenging time to study religion. On the one hand, religion has been on the public radar screen when people dis-
cuss American politics and global issues. Books on religion have made the New York Times bestseller list for weeks. On the other hand, surveys show that reli-
gious literacy remains quite low among the American public. Comments on reli-
gious matters in the media are made by a select few and are often reduced to sound-bites.

At the same time, within the discipline of religion, numerous changes are hap-
pening because of the self-reflexivity of the field’s practitioners. Scholars have raised questions about categories, such as “religion,” “world religion,” as well as other basic concepts, and they have con-
tested those assumptions and method-

ologies developed out of a colonial ethos under the dominance of a Christian par-
digm. As we face globalization, migra-

dation, diaspora, multiple religious belong-

ings, and hybrid religious identities, many have become aware of the need to reimagine the field in a postmodern and postcolonial world. AAR provides a stim-

ulating forum and meeting place for teachers and students with diverse assumptions about and approaches to religion to engage in dialogue and culti-

vate friendships that are crucial for intel-

lectual work.

AAR needs to promote understanding of religion in the public square through engaging scholars in other disciplines and savvy communications with the media. The contributions of international partici-

pants are invaluable if we want to develop a field of study that is global in outlook, multicultural in scope, and plurivocal in deliberation. For example, at this year’s Annual Meeting, we will have opportunities to hear South Asian scholars report on the study and teaching of religion in their various contexts.

The future development of the field depends on our ability to continue to attract talented and bright students. Graduates with a PhD in religion or theo-

Reprint from AAR Newsletter 5 October 2008
Chicago is a bustling, energetic city that never stops no matter the season. It's a destination with world-class cultural attractions, diverse neighborhoods, and architectural wonders. Chicago is known for critically acclaimed restaurants, famous museums, first-rate shopping, adventurous nightlife, action-packed sporting events, and a thriving theater scene.

Chicago's theater industry pushes the envelope with cutting-edge performances on historic and state-of-the-art stages. The Chicago Theatre, Goodman, Bank of America Theatre, Cadillac Palace, Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, and the Ford Center have made visiting downtown a must for theater lovers. Other distinctive stages, such as the Steppenwolf and The Second City, are woven among Chicago's various neighborhoods, solidifying the city's reputation as a world-class theater destination.

Once in Chicago, you never have to worry about finding a place to eat. Chicago features thousands of restaurants that offer culinary favorites to suit every taste, budget, and mood. Whether the preference is Chicago-style hot dogs or a burger, fried clams or smoked ostrich, pierogis or pizza, Chicago has it all. Soul food, Italian, Chinese, French, Japanese, Mexican, Asian, or Spanish . . . Chicago offers a virtual United Nations of eating choices. Ethnic neighborhoods such as Chinatown, Greektown, West Rogers Park, and Pilsen are among those offering tempting tastes from around the world. Chicago is also proud to be the home of award-winning restaurants and world-renowned chefs, as well as home to deep-dish pizza — one of Chicago's most important contributions to twentieth century culture.

Chicago is renowned for its diverse collection of museums that explore a variety of subjects, including history, art, African-American culture, astronomy, natural history, and much more. Those visiting Chicago should plan on spending time at Chicago's Museum Campus. This scenic park conveniently joins the Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum, the Shedd Aquarium/Oceanaarium, and the Field Museum of Natural History with easy access to all three locations.

The Shedd Aquarium offers one of the world's largest arrays of sea life, with more than 8,000 aquatic mammals, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, and fish. After exploring the oceans, attendees can gaze up at the heavens in the nearby Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum. The Field Museum offers exciting displays of mummies, Egyptian tombs, Native American artifacts, and dinosaur skeletons. It is also the permanent home of Sue, the world's largest, most complete, and most famous Tyrannosaurus rex.

The Chicago History Museum is located at 1601 North Clark Street. Contact 312-642-4600 or www.chicagohistory.org for more information. Public transit directions are available on the museum's website.

The Chicago Humanities Festival (www.chfestival.org/index2.cfm) is an annual event that celebrates the arts, drama, literature, and history through a series of lectures and performances each fall. The nineteenth annual Chicago Humanities Festival’s theme is “Thinking Big.” Programming takes a broad and interdisciplinary look at human works, concepts, ideas, and yearnings of large scope and high ambition. Panels, film screenings, theater performances, and more will be occurring on the same days as with the AAR Annual Meeting. Tickets are $5. Please visit www.chfestival.org for more information.

Other Chicago museums include the Chicago History Museum (the city’s oldest cultural institution), McCormick Tribune Freedom Museum (Chicago’s newest museum), the Museum of Science and Industry, the DuSable Museum of African-American History, the Art Institute of Chicago (one of the world’s leading art museums), the Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Museum of Contemporary Photography.

Of Special Interest in Chicago:

The Chicago History Museum is offering free admission to all AAR Annual Meeting attendees who show their meeting badge at the main visitor's desk. The admission includes the permanent exhibits and the Catholic Chicago exhibition. The first in a series of exhibitions to explore the contributions of the city’s religious communities, the Catholic Chicago exhibition illustrates how the experience of being Catholic in Chicago has transformed over time. Examined through a historical context are several themes — the parish, education, worship, social action, and community celebrations — that will introduce and reveal the lives of Catholics, past and present. The Chicago History Museum is located at 1601 North Clark Street. Contact 312-642-4600 or www.chicagohistory.org for more information. Public transit directions are available on the museum’s website.

Other Chicago museums include the Chicago History Museum (the city’s oldest cultural institution), McCormick Tribune Freedom Museum (Chicago’s newest museum), the Museum of Science and Industry, the DuSable Museum of African-American History, the Art Institute of Chicago (one of the world’s leading art museums), the Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Museum of Contemporary Photography.

Other Attractions

Right down the street from the Annual Meeting hotels, Chicago’s Millennium Park offers 24.5 acres of green space. It contains an outdoor performing arts pavilion, indoor year-round theater, restaurant, ice-skating rink, contemporary garden, and fountains. Promenade area for special events, landscaped walkways, and green spaces. Navy Pier is the city’s lakefront playground and the state’s most popular attraction, offering visitors a unique blend of family-oriented activities. It boasts the 150-foot-high Ferris wheel, a musical carousel, the Chicago Children’s Museum, Wave Swinger ride in Pier Park, the 3-D Time Escape ride, a variety of restaurants, and the famed Chicago Shakespeare Theater.

(continued on page 7)
E X H I B I T I O N S

Annual Meeting Performances and Exhibitions

The Chicago Cultural Center is described as a “neoclassical masterpiece” that features two art-glass domes and glistening mosaic walls. The many galleries in the Cultural Center exhibit contemporary art from around town and works from around the world.

Other Chicago attractions not to miss include Buckingham Fountain at Grant Park, the Hancock Observatory, and the Sears Tower Skydeck.

SHOPPING

A visit to Chicago wouldn’t be complete without a shopping spree. Shopping in Chicago first began on State Street with the opening of the original Marshall Field’s Department store in 1852. Today, the former Field’s flagship store is known as Macy’s on State Street, and shoppers will find an outstanding selection of men’s and women’s apparel, an extensive housewares department, several fine restaurants, a food court, and a visitor center.

A shopping spree must also include a visit to the famed “Magnificent Mile,” which runs along Michigan Avenue from Oak Street to the Chicago River. Amidst department store giants such as Marshall Field’s, Neiman Marcus, Lord & Taylor, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Bloomingdale’s are hundreds of specialty stores and international boutiques. Oak Street, just west of Michigan Avenue, is a boutique shopper’s dream.

An abundance of shopping can also be found at The Shops at North Bridge, Water Tower Place, the 900 North Michigan Avenue Shops, Chicago Place Shopping Center, Navy Pier, and “The Shops at the Mart,” located at Chicago’s Merchandise Mart. Chicago neighborhoods such as Bucktown, Lakeview, and Lincoln Park also offer unique and diverse shopping opportunities.

Visitors from around the world come to Chicago, the birthplace of the modern building, to admire its architectural marvels. From historic landmark buildings to contemporary technological masterpieces, Chicago is built with the unique and innovative designs that have shaped American architecture. The city is a living museum of architecture thanks to the work of such greats as Daniel Burnham, Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Helmut Jahn, and hundreds of others.

Chicago is home to the world’s first skyscraper, designed by William Le Baron Jenney in 1885. Although the Home Insurance Building no longer stands, today’s Chicago is also home to three of the world’s ten tallest buildings, including the Sears Tower, which opened in 1974. Other city landmark buildings include the Chicago Cultural Center — completed in 1897 in the Beaux Arts style — Adler and Sullivan’s 1889 Auditorium Building, and the Art Deco-era Chicago Board of Trade Building, designed by Holabird and Root in 1925.

To learn more about Chicago’s acclaimed architecture, the Chicago Architecture Foundation offers more than fifty walking or bus tours, conducted by knowledgeable guides. An architectural boat cruise on the Chicago River, as well as self-guided and taped walking tours are also available. The architectural boat tour has been highly recommended by Chicago natives and tourists alike as one of the best Chicago tours around. For more information on this tour, visit www.architecture.org/tours.aspx.

Visit the Chicago Convention and Tourism Bureau’s website at www.choosechicago.com for more great ideas of things to do in Chicago.

ARCHITECTURE

ACROSS TOWN AND WORKS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

ANNUAL MEETING NEWS

October 2008 RSN • 7

Reel Religion

Please see the Annual Meeting Program Book for more information.

Haro Haral Pilgrimage to Katara, Sri Lanka (A31–106)
Friday, 9:00–11:00 AM
This film chronicles the journey of a group of pilgrims down the war-torn east coast of Sri Lanka. The film documents the pilgrims as they meet with holy men, perform never before filmed rituals, and journey peacefully through areas plagued with conflict, on their way to Katara, the site of a multi-religious festival in Southeast Sri Lanka.

A Son’s Sacrifice, Ichthus, and Mouseholes (A31–107)
Friday, 9:00–11:00 AM
A Son’s Sacrifice follows the journey of Iman, a young American Muslim who struggles to take over his father’s halal slaughterhouse in New York City. On the holiest day of the year, Iman must lead a sacrifice that will define him as a Muslim, an American, and a son.

In order to unlock the secret of an ancient code of Ichthus, the protagonist Jonas finds himself searching for clues in his childhood haunt, a humble fishing village in the Philippines, casting his net into the hidden regions of a parable. Mouseholes treats the dying and death of filmmaker Helen Hill’s beloved grandfather, followed by his envisioned resurrection to join predeceased aunts at a tea party in heaven, and finally by the concluding narration on the possibility of opening a channel of communication with him metaphorically through enabling mouseholes.

A Purple State of Mind (A1–403)
Saturday, 9:00–10:30 AM
In this film, Christian Craig Detweiler and skeptic John Marks are reunited for several conversations on religion and politics, to reflect on the cultural and religious divide in the United States (“red” versus “blue”), and the possibilities of moving beyond the impasse.

Nobody Knows: The Untold Story of Black Mormons (A1–404)
Saturday, 9:00–10:30 AM
This film addresses the history of black Mormons, their little-known legacy, the effects of the Civil Rights movement, and how it was a pivotal force in the church’s releasing its restrictions on the priesthood for blacks.

On the Road with the Red God (A2–405)
Sunday, 8:30–10:00 PM
Every 12 years, impassioned devotees pull a 6-foot-tall unyielding chariot in the Kathmandu Valley, its rider an enigmatic god worshipped by Hindus and Buddhists, on a month-long journey preceded by abundant ritual and animal sacrifice. But the festival is an arena of gritty reality, where participants vie for everything from a share of ritual meat to status and proximity to the god.

Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter . . . And Spring (A3–401)
Monday, 8:00–10:00 PM
This film provides a sensual account of how the Aborigines handle the emotional complexities of death and mourning in their mortuary rituals. Finely depicting the interactions of tradition and lived experience, Members of Wicker Park Grace, an alternative congregation in Chicago’s art-focussed Wicker Park neighborhood, have created Stations of the Cross, imbibing an ancient form with modern spirituality. This session will showcase the Stations and feature comments from some of the artists.

Salem Baptist Church’s Gospel Choir (A2–408)
Sunday, 8:30–9:30 PM
From Thomas Dorsey to the Staple Singers, Chicago has long been a capital for gospel music. That music has rich roots in the city’s churches and popular culture. A choir from Salem Baptist Church, one of the city’s biggest and fastest-growing congregations, will offer a sampling of gospel’s vitality and diversity.

A Son’s Sacrifice

Haro Haral Pilgrimage to Katara, Sri Lanka

A Purple State of Mind

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A Son’s Sacrifice

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A Purple State of Mind
Sessions with a Focus on South Asia and South Asian Scholarship

T HE INTERNATIONAL Focus of the 2008 Annual Meeting is on South Asia and South Asian scholarship. The AAR has invited thirteen prominent South Asian scholars as our special guests, and their participation is noted below.

A31–106
Harv Harst Pilgrimage to Katasingama, Sri Lanka
Friday, 9:00–11:00 PM
A1–103
Globalization and South Asia religions: Redefining the Discourse beyond Diaspora
Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM
A1–202
The New Nuvi Movement in Buddhism: Challenges, Debates, and Promise
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
Featuring Premakumara De Silva, University of Colombo
A1–206
The Divine Child in South Asian Religious Traditions
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
A1–207
Competing Social Imaginaries in South Asian Islam: Perspectives on Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Reformer and Revivalist Movements
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
A1–209
Hinduism in Africa: Adaptation and Inagination
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
A1–215
Monal Anthropology in South Asia
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
A1–230
Contemporary ‘Ulama: Approaches to Reform, Critique, and Dialogue
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
Featuring Muhammad Khalid Masud, Council of Islamic Ideology
A1–306
Women’s Leadership and Monastic Organization in Theravada Buddhism
Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM
A1–309
Disent, Tradition, and Rights: Religion, Modernity, and Planetary Life in South Asia
Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM
Featuring: Vandana Shiva, Navdanya Research Foundation for Science, Technology, and Ecology
Fr. Tissa Balasuriya, Centre for Society and Religion, Colombo
Ashis Nandy, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies
A1–329
Heterogeneous Tantras in Practice: A Simulated Engagement of the Scholarship of David G. White
Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM
A1–336
Framing Issues in Sikh Studies
Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM
A2–107
Prosacism among Christians in India: Issues of Authenticity, Authority, and Identity
Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM
A2–121
Grammar and the Gods: When Metaphysics and Language Rule Collide
Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM
A2–128
The Power of Place
Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM
A2–200
Art, Aesthetics, and Performance
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM
Featuring: Ira Bhaskar, Jawaharlal Nehru University
M. A. Jayashree, University of Bangalore
A2–208
Buddhism in the South Asian Context: What Can Newars Teach Buddhist Studies?
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM
A2–217
Indo-Judaic Studies in the Twenty-First Century: Current Trends and Future Trajectories in the Comparative Study of Hinduisms and Judaisms
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM
A2–221
Categories and Trajectories of Modernity in the Late-Colonial Religious Milieu
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM
A2–251
Religion and the Environment in South Asia
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM
Featuring: Flavia Agnes, Majlis Centre for Rights Discourse
Monnmayee Basu, University of Delhi
Uma Chakravarti, Delhi University
A3–108
Islam as Discourse: Identity Construction in Medieval and Modern South Asia
Monday, 9:00–11:30 AM
Featuring: Dominique-Sila Khan, Institute of Rajasthan Studies
A3–128
Body and Medicine in Indian and Chinese Religions
Monday, 9:00–11:30 AM
Featuring: Uma Chakravarti, University of Delhi
Muhammad Khalid Masud, Council of Islamic Ideology
Golam Dastagar, Jahangirnagar University
Premakumara De Silva, University of Colombo
M. A. Jayashree, University of Bangalore
K. Srinivasan, Vivekananda College
A3–211
The Role of Miracles and the Miraculous in Creating and Sustaining South Asian Religions
Monday, 1:00–3:30 PM
A3–223
New Religions in South Asia
Monday, 1:00–3:30 PM
A3–312
Caste, Dalits, and Christianity
Monday, 4:00–6:30 PM
A3–325
Sufism and Society in South Asia
Monday, 4:00–6:30 PM
A3–329
South Asian Religions, Health, and Medical Issues
Monday, 4:00–6:30 PM

Kudos to Co-sponsors

The AAR congratulates the following institutions for their generous co-sponsorship of South Asian scholars. Such support immeasurably strengthens the international dimension of our Annual Meeting.

Lafayette College
Muhammad Khalid Masud, Council of Islamic Ideology
Missouri State University
Premakumara De Silva, University of Colombo

Future AAR Annual Meeting Dates and Sites

2008 — Chicago, IL
November 1–3
2009 — Montréal, QC, Canada
November 7–10
2010 — Atlanta, GA
October 30–November 2
2011 — San Francisco, CA
November 19–22
2012 — Atlanta, GA
November 3–6
TAKING RELIGION(S) SERIOUSLY: WHAT STUDENTS NEED TO KNOW

Featuring Krista Tippett, host of Speaking of Faith

Friday, October 31, 2008
Chicago, IL

The goal of the workshop is that all students learn to think seriously about the ways religion(s) impacts public life and their role as citizens. This may be a common goal of religion courses offered at all sorts of institutions; however, this objective is not always articulated and may be submerged in more specialized concerns. In this workshop we explore what this goal entails and then invite chairs to consider how the curriculum they oversee addresses (or could address) it; how the mission and culture of their institution shape this objective, and how it might contribute to assessment of their program's effectiveness. Exchange of experience and ideas will be central to the day's work.

Legal issues, conflicts, and life cycles will be addressed for individual, department, and administration concerns.

Preliminary Program

9–9:15  Introductions
9:15–9:45  Educating students for public life
9:45–10:15 Break-out session
10:15–11  Panel discussion: How does this interact with the mission and culture of your institution?
11–12  Break-out session
12–1:15 LUNCH
1:15–2  Assessment of your institution: How should this be assessed and how do you assess it?
2–3:30  Plenary session on objectives and assessments
3:30–4:30  Closing session

The workshop will be of benefit to a range of participants: faculty, administrators, and graduate students. The goal is to bring a diverse group of AAR members together in a lively and open discussion.

To Register

Complete the information below, arrange payment, and send via fax or surface mail. You can also register online as part of the Annual Meeting registration process: www.aarweb.org/meetings/annual_meeting/current_meeting.

Name
Department
Institution
Number of faculty in department
Serving as Chair since
Registration is limited to the first 75 participants. Send your registration form and payment of $100.00.

Payment Information

☐ Check: (payable to “AAR Annual Meeting,” memo “Leadership Workshop”)
Credit Card (Check one):
☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover
Credit Card Number  Expiration Date
CID
Cardholder Signature
Name on Card (Please Print)

For more information, contact Kyle Cole, Director of Professional Programs, at kcole@aarweb.org, or by phone at 404-727-1489.

The Leadership Workshop is arranged by the Academic Relations Committee of the American Academy of Religion, chaired by Fred Glennon.

We are fortunate to have Krista Tippett address this topic, said Kyle Cole, AAR director of professional programs. “She brings a front-line perspective to the topic of religion and public life.”

After questions and answers, a panel discussion will follow, addressing “How does the goal that all students learn to think seriously about the ways religion impacts public life and their role as citizens interact with the mission and culture of your institution?” The concluding plenary will concentrate on a principal question: “How should this goal be assessed and how do you assess it?” The workshop will expand a specific area addressed by the Teagle Foundation-funded “The Religion Major and Liberal Education,” which guided the theme of last year’s Leadership Workshop. “Assessment issues and student learning have been highly cited as potential workshop topics by past workshop participants,” Glennon said. “I’m very happy for the Academy that we can explore these areas and offer such a rich workshop topic.”

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

Registration is limited to the first 75 participants, and last year’s workshop filled up long before the Annual Meeting. The cost for the workshop is $100, which includes the entire day of sessions, lunch, and a book on the topic.

The topics for past workshops have been:

2007 Annual Meeting
Chairs Workshop – Best Practices: Diversifying Your Faculty – Honest Conversations
Leadership Workshop – The Religion Major and Liberal Education

2006 Annual Meeting
Chairs Workshop – Personnel Issues: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

2005 Annual Meeting
Chairs Workshop – Enlarging the Pie: Strategies for Managing and Growing Departmental Resources

2004 Annual Meeting
Chairs Workshop – Being a Chair in Today’s Consumer Culture: Navigating in the Knowledge Factory

2003 Annual Meeting
Chairs Workshop – Scholarship, Service, and Stress: The Tensions of Being a Chair

Summer 2003
Chairs Workshop – The Entrepreneurial Chair: Building and Sustaining Your Department in an Era of Shrinking Resources and Increasing Demands

2002 Annual Meeting
Chairs Workshop – Running a Successful Faculty Search in the Religious Studies Department

2001 Annual Meeting
Chairs Workshop – Evaluating and Advancing Teaching in the Religious Studies Department

2000 Annual Meeting
Chairs Workshop – Assessing and Advancing the Religious Studies Department

We look forward to seeing you in Chicago!

The Academic Relations Committee: Fred Glennon, chair, Chester Gillis, L. DeAné Langerquist, Steve Young, Rosetta Ross, Edwin David Aponente, and Kyle Cole staff liaison.
in India, it would appear that the study of religion is very strong in Indian universities. For instance, when the call for papers for the International Conference on Religions and Cultures in India Civilization (held in December 2003 and 2005) went out, there were literally hundreds of proposals. More recently, scholars from Belgium have organized conferences on “Relothing Religion in India.” And almost every week, we get book catalogs from India with books on religion written by scholars in Indian universities. If one considers a few indicators like these, one may be tempted to say that religious studies is thriving. However, for reasons that we will discuss soon, these studies are done by scholars in the context of other fields and there is no separate department of “religion.” And so, it would be difficult to say that religious studies is flourishing when one could argue that it is not even alive; indeed, does not even exist formally in universities. One should also keep in mind the enormous strides made by other academic fields and disciplines in the last two decades in India. We all know that India has been at the cutting edge of information technologies. These areas have boomed — as have the areas of commerce, management, etc. And so, while one may say that a great deal has been going on in the last few years in topics connected with the study of religion, we have to put it all in perspective.

Narayanan: Many areas and topics that AAR members study in departments of religious studies are investigated in other departments in India. If one were to look at these studies in Indian universities, or see the avalanche of paper proposals submitted whenever there is a conference on “religion” in India, but the reasons themselves have been contested. There are many reasons given as to why religion is not a field of study in India, but the reasons themselves have been contested.

Narayanan: Indeed, yes, as you will see from the affiliations of the visiting scholars from South Asia this year, almost every department except religion is represented. There are many reasons given as to why religion is not a field of study in India, but the reasons themselves have been contested. A historical reason that is often stated is that when the British created the university systems in undivided India (that is, what is now India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh) around 1857, they modeled them after the curriculum at the University of London (Certainly this is true in structure — for instance, there are several undergraduate colleges around a city, all affiliated with a university system). Since there was no formal religious studies department there, none was started in India. However, many others believe that in the post-Independence period, the term “religion” did not have a positive connotation; in popular imagination, the word became identified with “communalism” or tensions between religious traditions. It is probably also true that the study of religion did not figure high in the priorities of the political leadership — under Prime Minister Nehru — in the 1950s.

Having said that, one could argue that there have been millennia of studies in and about religion in India. The understanding of religion is certainly different in many cultures and in the subcontinent, religion, culture, business, performing arts — all seem to combine into a seamless whole, depending on one’s perspective. The term “religion,” therefore, becomes a catch-all for many subjects there (as it does, sometimes, in other parts of the world!) but in some, it is identified with belief structures and theology (which, in many universities is “Indian philosophy”). Some scholars now think that “religion” in India is still seen with Western templates and they are struggling against it; others have adopted those templates and exult in them. Bottom line — the diversity of scholarship is as diverse as the Indian population itself.

RSN: Dr. Narayanan, thank you for taking the time for this interview. How would you describe the state of religious studies in South Asia?

Narayanan: Many areas and topics that AAR members study in departments of religious studies are investigated in other departments in India. If one were to look at these studies in Indian universities, or see the avalanche of paper proposals submitted whenever there is a conference on “religion” in India, but the reasons themselves have been contested. There are many reasons given as to why religion is not a field of study in India, but the reasons themselves have been contested.

RSN: Have there been any changes in religious studies there since you came to the United States?

Narayanan: Yes — I came to the United States in 1975, and at that time there was very little awareness of “religious studies” in India. A handful of universities now offer courses in “comparative religion.” The University of Madras, for instance, now offers graduate degrees in this area. The call for applications last April, for instance, said that the university would offer “MA in Comparative Religion and Philosophy with specialization in Saiva Siddhanta Studies, MA in Comparative religion and Philosophy with specialization in Christian Studies/Jainology Studies, MA in Islamic Studies.”

There is some unease with what the term “religion” or “Hinduism” covers — many “Hindus” do not have a ritual and embodied understanding of their heritage, and feel and act their ways through their traditions. And so, when the Vice Chancellor of Madras proposed — this was during the post-centennial celebrations of the university — a study of the religious traditions of India, many chairs were endowed and new programs were started. They have tended to focus on specific sectarian schools such as “Vaishnavism” (1984), “Saiva Siddhanta” (1983), or religious traditions such as “Islamic Studies” (2002), “Christian Studies” (1993), or “Jainology” (1983). But there is no department of Hindu studies there — many of these “Christian Studies,” began as endowment chairs (in this case, endowed by the Catholic Archdiocese of Madras/Mylapore) fairly early (1993) and then became full-fledged departments after a major reorganization in 2003. Several of these departments now come under the umbrella “School of Philosophy and Religious Thought.”

Another area where there has been a sharp focus in the last decade is the drawing of lines between what is called the “sectarian” or “pseudo-sectarian” approach and the “nationalist” positions, at least in rhetoric. A good many scholars are right in the middle, but one frequently hears voices from the ends of the spectrum. Also, in some universities at least, there are debates on how others do religious studies, how they imagine the field, and the historical contexts of academia in their culture. It could be the most enriching part of one’s scholarly career. The depth would add a new dimension on how we transmit knowledge of “religious studies” in classrooms. Just a study of India would give us an notion of what they mean by “philosophy,” the ways they “religion” (I’m using it awkwardly as a verb here!), and the ways they understand the academic study of this field. And our South Asian guests, in turn, would understand the complexity and diversity of how religion is studied in a secular country like the United States. I believe it was Frederick Buechner, who once quoted an African proverb: “Those who never visit, think their mother is the only cook.” Just a step here to go beyond “curry in a hurry” — there is a whole world of country cooking and haute cuisine out there — both for our guests to try in Chicago, and for us to try in India.
Especially for Students

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
2008 ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAMMING
CHICAGO, IL

Saturday, November 1
A1–138
ATLA Graduate Student Luncheon: Careers Beyond the Academy
11:45 AM–1:00 PM
Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee and American Theological Library Association
RSVP at www.aarweb.org/meetings/Annual_Meeting/Current_Meeting/RSVP/ATLA/main.asp
A1–302
Special Topics Forum
“If I Knew Then What I Know Now”: Lessons for the First Year of Teaching
3:30–4:00 PM
Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee and the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning
A1–407
Student Members’ Party
9:30–11:00 PM
Don’t forget your free drink ticket!

Sunday, November 2
A2–137
Mentoring Luncheon
11:30 AM–1:00 PM
Sponsored by the Status of Women in the Profession Committee and the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession Committee
This luncheon is by reservation only. Details are online at www.aarweb.org/meetings/Annual_Meeting/Current_Meeting/Program_Book
A2–202
Special Topics Forum
“Bringing Sexy Back”: A Town Hall Meeting for the AAR Student Community
Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee

Absentee and Early Voting

THE AAR RECOGNIZES that its Annual Meeting falls this year on the weekend before the United States Election Day on Tuesday, November 4. As this election is an important one for our country, and so many AAR members are politically involved, we want to minimize any conflict between attending the Annual Meeting and performing our civic duties. As such, we are not holding sessions on Tuesday, November 4. We do however recognize that many of our members may be staying in Chicago on the night of November 3 and returning home on Election Day. Given the uncertainties of travel, we would encourage those members to investigate the possibilities of absentee voting and early voting, which are options in many states. To aid in this endeavor, below is a comprehensive list of the websites for secretaries of state and election boards in each U.S. state and the District of Columbia.

Alabama
www.us.state.al.us
Alaska
www.elections.state.ak.us
Arkansas
www.us.arkansas.gov
Arizona
www.az.gov
California
www.us.ca.gov
Colorado
www.elections.colorado.gov
Connecticut
www.us.ct.gov/elections
Delaware
elections.delaware.gov
District of Columbia
www.dcbce.org
Florida
www.us.state.fl.us
Georgia
www.us.georgia.gov
Hawaii
hawaii.gov/elections
Idaho
www.us.ida.gov
Illinois
www.elections.state.il.us
Indiana
www.us.ind.gov/ind/ind/index.html
Iowa
www.us.state.ia.us
Kansas
www.us.kansas.gov
Kentucky
www.us.ky.gov
Louisiana
www.us.louisiana.gov
Maine
www.state.me.us
Maryland
www.elections.state.md.us
Massachusetts
www.us.state.ma.us/index.htm
Michigan
www.michigan.gov
Minnesota
www.us.state.mn.us/home/index.asp
Mississippi
www.us.state.ms.us
Missouri
www.us.mo.gov
Montana
us.mt.gov
Nebraska
www.us.state.ne.us/wildyindex.html
Nevada
us.mt.gov
New Hampshire
www.us.nh.gov
New Jersey
www.state.nj.us/elections
New Mexico
www.us.state.nm.us
New York
www.us.state.ny.us
North Carolina
www.us.state.nc.us
North Dakota
www.us.nd.gov
Ohio
www.us.oh.gov
OKlahoma
www.us.ok.gov/elections
Oregon
www.us.or.gov
Pennsylvania
www.us.state.pa.us/wildwhite
Rhode Island
www.us.ri.gov
South Carolina
www.scstate.sc.gov
South Dakota
www.us.sds.gov
Tennessee
www.us.tn.gov
Texas
www.us.state.tx.us
Utah
elections.utah.gov
Vermont
www.us.state.vt.us
Virginia
www.us.state.va.gov
Washington
www.us.state.wa.gov
West Virginia
www.wv.gov
Wisconsin
elections.state.wi.us
Wyoming
www.us.state.wy.us

Don’t Let Time Get Away from You!

Register for the AAR Annual Meeting Job Center by October 13. The Job Center is an efficient way for candidates and employers to communicate and participate in job interviews. Those who register by the deadline will receive the full benefits of the Center.

EMPLOYERS:
Unlimited use of the interview hall
Placement of job advertisement in the Annual Meeting edition of Job Postings
Seven months of online access to candidate CVs organized by specialization
Ability to use the message center to communicate with registered candidates

CANDIDATES:
Opportunity to place CV online for employer review
Personal copy of registered job advertisements and employers’ interview plans
Ability to use the message center to communicate with employers

For more information about the Job Center, see www.aarweb.org/jobcenter.
PLANNING TO COME to the 2009 AAR Meeting in Montréal? As of February 2008, all United States citizens must have a valid passport in order to travel to Canada. A passport station, hosted by the United States Post Office, Chicago District will be set up in the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel to accept new and renewal passport applications.

Getting a passport was never so easy! For new passports, please bring your birth certificate or naturalization certificate and a current driver’s license or state ID. New passports cost $100. If you need to renew, bring your old passport. Passport renewal will cost $75. Passport photos will be available onsite for $15. Only personal checks and money orders will be accepted. You will receive your new passport by mail after the Annual Meeting.

Registration and Housing for 2009 Annual Meeting in Montréal to Open Early!

Early Bird registration and housing for the 2009 Annual Meeting in Montréal will open on October 31, 2008. Both registration and housing will be open on this date at www.aarweb.org. Computers will be available in the Cyber Café and the AAR Booth in the Exhibit Hall of the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel for AAR members to preregister during the 2008 Annual Meeting in Chicago. The rates for the Early Bird registration will be $125 for regular members, $60 for students, and $85 for retired members. Early Bird registration will run through the dates of the 2008 Annual Meeting and will close on Tuesday, November 4. Registration for tours and workshops will be available beginning April 1, 2009. Members who have preregistered for the meeting will be sent an e-mail giving them the opportunity to add these to their registration.

Get your passport for 2009 at the 2008 Annual Meeting!

Quebec: A Unique Religious Culture in North America and the World

Richard Zoltz, Concordia University

The Quebec government has attempted to diffuse such tensions through the application of “reasonable accommodation,” defined in labor law as “the obligation of employers to change some general rules for certain employees, under the condition that this does not cause ‘undue hardship.’” According to this principle, the demands for special treatment by some religious groups should be met, to the extent that they do not impinge on the values of Quebec’s society. Typical issues have been allowance for prayer times and holidays, certain types of dress, and restriction of contact between men and women. Requests for such accommodations have come mainly from Muslims, but also from Jews, Sikhs, and others.

Controversies have arisen from the granting of accommodations to religious groups, which many see as a threat to the secular values of Quebec society. In 2007, the Quebec government appointed two well-known scholars, Charles Taylor and Gérard Bouchard, to head up a commission to investigate the practice of Reasonable Accommodation in the province and provide a report of recommendations. The commission toured the province for a year holding public forums and submitted its report in May 2008. It lay much of the blame for tensions on non-immigrant Quebecers, calling on them to be more tolerant of cultural differences. Clearly, even such an extensive project as the one undertaken by the Bouchard–Taylor commission will not be sufficient to resolve the issue, and Quebec will continue to be a dynamic test case for the building of a healthy, religiously pluralistic society.

Montreal is the second most important center of higher education in North America (after Boston), in terms of total student population, funding generated by research, and the role of education institutions in the local economy. The city boasts four major universities: two English-language institutions, McGill and Concordia, and two French, the Université de Montréal and the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). All have large and active religious departments, each with its own distinctive approach and strengths. Because the provincial government encourages and facilitates cooperation and integration of programs between the universities, students benefit from an extraordinarily high level of faculty and institutional resources and flexibility in creating their own programs of study. A joint PhD is offered by the religion departments of Concordia, UQAM, and the Université Laval in Quebec City, featuring a unique year-long seminar taught by faculty from the three universities.

Faculty and students from over twenty junior colleges (Cégeps) add to the exceptionally rich and lively community of religion scholars in Montréal and the province of Quebec.

The Annual Meeting of the AAR, to be held in Montréal in November 2009, will provide numerous possibilities for attendees to learn more about the unique and dynamic religious culture of Quebec. These will include a workshop/seminar on the history of Quebec, a keynote address, and several specialized panels addressing such topics as “The Quiet Revolution Forty Years Later,” “First Nations of Quebec,” “Religious Diversity in Quebec,” “Reasonable Accommodation,” “History of Catholicism in Quebec,” and “Multiculturalism in Quebec.” More information about Montreal, the province of Quebec, and special programs planned for the 2009 meeting will be available at the 2008 meeting in Chicago.

Bibliography:

Richard Foltz is Associate Professor in the Department of Religion at Concordia University, Montréal. A specialist on Islamic civilization who has also written extensively in the areas of environmental ethics and animal rights, his most recent book is L'Iran creuset de religions: De la préhistoire à la République islamique (Québec: Les Presses de l’Université Laval, 2007).

THE CANADIAN PROVINCE of Quebec stands apart from the rest of North America in its history, its language, and in its religious culture. Officially French-speaking and historically Roman Catholic, following the so-called “Quiet Revolution” of the 1960s, which rejected nearly four centuries of control by the Catholic church, Quebec society is now the most secular on the continent, and according to sociologist Michael Adams, the most liberal in terms of its social values (Adams, 2004). Quebec now has the lowest rate of church attendance in North America, and empty church buildings have been converted into condos, art galleries, community centers, and offices, as well as into mosques and temples. Quebec has always been a pluralistic society, as first French, then English, Irish, and other European settlers came to dominate lands occupied by a variety of indigenous groups. In recent decades a new challenge has been posed by the influx of immigrants from non-Western and non-Christian cultures, who have attempted to find their place in Canada’s “cultural mosaic” — a model that differs from the “melting pot” ideal of the United States in that immigrants are encouraged to retain and celebrate their distinct cultural identities. This officially endorsed pluralism occasionally runs into problems, however, especially when religious norms of immigrant communities clash with the secularist ideals of the majority culture.

The Annual Meeting of the AAR, to be held in Montréal in November 2009, will provide numerous possibilities for attendees to learn more about the unique and dynamic religious culture of Quebec. These will include a workshop/seminar on the history of Quebec, a keynote address, and several specialized panels addressing such topics as “The Quiet Revolution Forty Years Later,” “First Nations of Quebec,” “Religious Diversity in Quebec,” “Reasonable Accommodation,” “History of Catholicism in Quebec,” and “Multiculturalism in Quebec.” More information about Montréal, the province of Quebec, and special programs planned for the 2009 meeting will be available at the 2008 meeting in Chicago.

Bibliography:
In Memoriam
Catherine M. Bell, 1953–2008

Catherine M. Bell, Emerita Professor of Religious Studies at Santa Clara University, an internationally recognized authority on ritual and Chinese religions, died May 23, 2008, at age 55, after years of battling illness. Her seminal work, Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice, published in 1992 and soon considered a classic, won the 1994 American Academy of Religion Best First Book in the History of Religions award.

In response to news of Bell’s death, Barbara DeConcini, the AAR’s executive director at the time of the award, noted that “from the time she burst on the scene with Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice in the early 1990s, Catherine was a bright, shining star in our field’s firmament. Her prodigious contributions to our field and to the AAR — as scholar, teacher, and all-around good citizen — speak to her brilliance and generosity. That she accomplished so much even in the face of grinding and relentless physical suffering attests to her outsized spirit and courage.”

Bell served the Academy in various capacities, chairing the Ritual Studies Group from 1992 to 1994, serving on the steering committee of the Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group from 1994 to 1997, and on the JAR editorial board from 1999 to 2005. She was also a featured author for AAR panel discussions, and in 2007 edited a book called Teaching Ritual, for the AAR’s Teaching Religious Studies Series.

Mary McGee, who served on the Ritual Studies Group Steering Committee when Bell was its chair, and is now chair herself, described her as an “influential colleague and generous mentor,” who “stayed actively involved in the group, encouraging the work of younger scholars and helping to integrate awareness of ritual studies across the field of religious studies. Her vision of the field and influential scholarship helped reenergize the Ritual Studies Group at a critical juncture within the AAR’s history.”

Dennis E. Owen, then a professor of religion at the University of Florida, writing in Religious Studies Review, described it as “a rich and detailed interdisciplin ary analysis of the nature and functions of ritual.”

Bell spent twenty years on the religious studies faculty of Santa Clara University, until illness forced her to retire in 2005. Since 2000, she had been the department’s chair and, since 1998, the Bernard Hanley Professor of Religious Studies.

In addition to the AAR award, Bell garnered many more awards, including the University of Chicago Divinity School’s 2005 Alumna of the Year and several Santa Clara awards: a 1996 Brutocao Recognition Award for her scholarship and teaching. That Bell would win awards regarding teaching would be no surprise to McGee. “Many of us who celebrated Catherine admired her devotion to teaching,” McGee said. “Catherine was deeply concerned about the rituals of the classroom, and one always came away from a conversation with Catherine having learned more about not only what we teach but how we teach.”

Bell received fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies and the Mellon Foundation and multiple fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, her last in 2007 for a project she was unable to finish: Believing: Assuming Universality, Describing Particularity in the Study of Religion. She is survived by her husband, Steven M. Gelber, Professor of History, Santa Clara University, her mother, Blanche Coogan, and her siblings, James Bell, Linda Whalen, Daniel Bell, and Edward Bell.

Diane Jonge-Pace, Santa Clara’s vice provost for undergraduate studies — reflecting on Bell’s self-description as taking a “visceral pleasure in solving problems” — commented that “indeed, she did have an uncanny ability to perceive the real issues and the larger picture, and to rearrange pieces in creative and meaningful ways.” Jonge-Pace went on to note that Bell “saw texts as ways of shaping communities, ways that groups define and organize themselves. She not only created relationships through texts. She also theorized the ways that the social is inscribed in texts and that texts can function to structure and transform the social.”

Paul Crowley, the current chair, commented that “Catherine set a high bar for us, not only in academic achievement and intellectual brilliance, but in collegial grace and loyal friendship. She had a mar velous, wry sense of humor. In addition to bringing national prominence to our department, she was a deeply dedicated mentor to our students. In her lifetime, she was a towering figure here at Santa Clara, and she remains so. She has left a lasting legacy.” The department is recognizing her contributions to the field next year with colloquia on her writing and later with a conference on topics on which she focused her life and work.

The time is upon us for a millennial shift
To mark the moment we offer this gift
If it be more beginning or end
I cannot presume to suggest or pretend
But whether welcomed or welcomed not
Tis a moment of time not soon forgot . . .
Time is what binds us and tears us apart
But for every ending we can attempt a new start.

October 2008 RSN • 13
ANYA BRACHEAR of the Chicago Tribune, Lee Lawrence of the Christian Science Monitor, and Mohamad Bazzi, former Middle East bureau chief at Newsday, won the 2008 American Academy of Religion Awards for Best In-Depth Reporting on Religion.

Brachear won the contest for journalists at news outlets with more than 100,000 circulation or on the Web; Lawrence for journalists at news outlets with less than 100,000 circulation; and Bazzi for opinion writing.

The annual awards, given out since 2000, recognize “well-researched newswriting that enhances the public understanding of religion,” said John R. Fitzmier, Executive Director of the AAR.

Brachear submitted articles on the Jewish New Year and interpretations of the story of Abraham; the potential political challenges for Barack Obama as a member of Chicago’s Trinity United Church of Christ; debate over a revised edition of the Reform Jewish prayer book; a Catholic man’s pilgrimage to 365 churches in 365 days; and coverage of Willow Creek Community Church and its business model for surveying member satisfaction. “Newsy, ambitious, diverse. And she almost called the biggest story (so far) of the Democratic presidential primaries with an early profile of Trinity UCC,” said a judge. “A well-written and well-researched entry,” added another judge.

Lawrence submitted articles from a series on military chaplains. She was embedded with United States troops in Iraq and Afghanistan for three months and covered the day-to-day life of Army and Navy chaplains as they navigated such issues as suicide, baptism, family separation, patriotism, interfaith dialogue, and the mentoring of foreign military clergy. Said one judge, “This ambitious series on military chaplains . . . shows how effective it can be to approach a major news event from the often-overlooked religion angle. There is wonderful clarity in the writing. . . . Good use of detail and a smooth narrative flow bring the chaplains and their work to life.”

Bazzi, writing for the Nation and Newsday, submitted opinion articles on Iraqi cleric Muqtada al-Sadr’s struggle for power within Iraq’s Shi’ite community; the possibility of civil war in Lebanon between Muslim Sunnis and Shiites; and how the United States should respond to the statements of Iran’s President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Bazzi’s “focus on politics and religion in the Middle East provides insight into some of today’s most vexing topics,” commented one judge. “The opinions are clearly stated and well-supported,” said another, noting the articles are a “must-read for anyone trying to understand the political situation in the Middle East.”

Donny Brachear

WENDY DONIGER, a scholar whose eloquent analyses of the meaning of myths in culture has captivated scholars and the public alike, will receive the Martin E. Marty Award at the Annual Meeting in November.

The Marty E. Marty Award recognizes extraordinary contributions to the public understanding of religion. The award — which has recognized Robert Bellah, Andrew Greeley, John Esposito, and Diana Eck, among others — is given to someone whose work resonates with the public as well as with scholars, and whose work is known through a variety of media.

Doniger, one of the world’s foremost scholars of Hinduism, is a well-known author, editor, translator, teacher, blogger, lecturer, and commentator who is equally incisive whether she is discussing current movies or ancient civilizations. She has been widely praised for groundbreaking work that includes the books The Woman Who Pretended to Be Who She Was, The Implanted Spiral: Politics and Theology in Myth, and a new transcription of the Kamasutra. Her research is cross-cultural and includes literature, law, gender, and psychology. Her work has sometimes generated controversy; she has been occasionally accused of distorting Hinduism.

Doniger is the Mirecea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions at the University of Chicago Divinity School, where she has taught since 1978. She also teaches in the Departments of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, among others.

The annual Marty Forum at the Annual Meeting promises to be a lively conversation. Doniger will be interviewed by Laurie Patton, a scholar who has worked closely with her. Patton, the Charles Howard Candler Professor and a Professor of Early Indian Religions at Emory University, will interview Doniger from 1:00–2:30 pm on Sunday, November 2, 2008.

The AAR Committee on the Public Understanding of Religion encourages nominations for future award recipients. You may nominate online at the AAR website, www.aarweb.org/Programs/Awards.

2008 AAR Newswriting Contest Winners

News Outlets with Circulations over 100,000:
- First Place: Anya Brachear, Chicago Tribune
- Second Place: Yaroslav Trofimov, Wall Street Journal
- Third Place: Adam Parker, Post and Courier

News Outlets with Circulations under 100,000:
- First Place: Lee Lawrence, Christian Science Monitor
- Second Place: G. Jeffrey MacDonald, Christian Science Monitor
- Third Place: Brad A. Greenberg, Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles

Opinion Writing:
- First Place: Mohammad Bazzi, articles published in the Nation and Newsday
- Second Place: Yaroslav Trofimov, Wall Street Journal
- Third Place: Robert Sibley, Ottawa Citizen

Read some of the award-winning articles at www.aarweb.org/Programs/Awards/Journalism_Awards

The Committee on Teaching and Learning Seeks Nominations for the AAR Award for Excellence in Teaching.

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

Procedures for the nomination process are outlined on the AAR website at www.aarweb.org/programs/awards/teaching_awards.
The American Academy of Religion offers Awards for Excellence in order to give recognition to 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 affect decisively how religion is examined, understood, and interpreted.

Awards for Excellence are given in four categories: Analytical–Descriptive, Constructive–Reflective, Historical, and Textual Studies. Not all awards are given every year. More than one book may win an award in a given category. In addition there is a separate competition and prize for the Best First Book in the History of Religions. For eligibility requirements, awards processes, and a list of current jurors, please see the Book Awards rules on the AAR Web site, www.aarweb.org/programs/awards/book_awards.

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

**Analytical–Descriptive**


**Constructive–Reflective**


**Historical**


**Textual Studies**


**Best First Book in the History of Religions**


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**Glennon to Receive Excellence in Teaching Award**

Fred Glennon, Professor of Religious Studies and Director of Faculty Development at LeMoyne College, will receive the Excellence in Teaching Award at the 2008 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. A scholar of Christian social ethics, Glennon teaches courses on comparative religious ethics, “Ethics from the Perspective of the Oppressed,” and religion and healing, among others.

In addition to his own scholarly work, Glennon has written several essays on teaching, including “The Learning Covenant: Promoting Freedom and Responsibility in the Religious Studies Classroom”; “Service Learning and the Dilemma of Religious Studies: Descriptive or Normative”; and “Experiential Learning and Social Justice Action: An Experiment in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.” Glennon is the chair of the AAR Academic Relations Committee and has been a member of the Teaching and Learning Committee. He has also served on the Steering Committee of the Academic Teaching of Religion program unit.

Students express their appreciation for Glennon’s commitment to discerning their individual strengths as learners, his subtle and deft guidance of discussions, his ability to promote critical thinking through judicious questioning, and his unfailing energy and enthusiasm. Students describe his passion for learning as highly contagious, and colleagues observed that he has drawn many students into religion majors and minors. Students particularly value his ability to connect practical experiences outside the classroom, such as service learning, with both classroom discussions and more theoretical topics.

Colleagues praise Glennon’s “self-awareness of himself as a teacher [and] his vision of creating a community of scholar-learners with his students,” his ability to make the study of religion important and valuable to his students, and his ability to promote students’ sense of responsibility for their own learning. They also note with approval his ability to generate continuing interest in the study of religion from the students in his general education courses. Both in the academy and on his own campus, Glennon is a strong advocate for effective teaching, and is particularly effective at helping newer teachers find their distinctive teaching voices by encouraging them to take risks in the classroom in order to engage students, and by supporting sustained reflection on the practice of teaching.

At this year’s Annual Meeting, participants will again have the opportunity to engage in conversation with the Excellence in Teaching Award winner during a special session, scheduled from 1:00–2:30 PM on Sunday, November 2. The session is sponsored by the Committee on Teaching and Learning and will be chaired by Eugene V. Gallagher. Prior to the Annual Meeting, Glennon will post some of his teaching materials on the AAR website at www.aarweb.org/Programs/Awards/Teaching_Awards and they will serve as the basis for the session.

Fred Glennon is an impressive example of dedication to the craft of teaching, especially for his intense commitment to engaged pedagogy and the ethical dimensions of teaching. Along with the previous winners of the AAR Excellence in Teaching Award—Tina Pippin, Eugene V. Gallagher, William Placher, Janet Walton, Timothy Benick, Zayn Kassam, Patricia O’Connell Killen, and Stacy Floyd-Thomas—he demonstrates the resourceful, creative, and fully engaged teaching found among so many members of the Academy. The Teaching and Learning Committee greatly appreciates the opportunity to review and learn from the materials submitted by the candidates for consideration and acknowledges the commitment, ingenuity, and energy that they devote to teaching about religion.

The Teaching and Learning Committee encourages colleagues to send letters of nomination for this significant award to Jessica Davenport, Associate Director of Professional Programs at the American Academy of Religion, jdavenport@aarweb.org.

The guidelines for this award are on the AAR website at www.aarweb.org/Programs/Awards/Teaching_Awards.

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**Religion and the Arts Award Winners**

In multiple media, prints, collage, assemblage, sculpture, and installation, Betye Saar (b. 1926) and Alison Saar (b. 1956) push the boundaries and categories of art and religion. With works in the collections of the finest arts institutions and museums, the two have been hailed as “conjure women of the arts.” Each one practices a synthetic art, creating material shape for persistent spiritual and cultural questions of identity, ethnicity, race, religion, and gender. Betye Saar’s Liberation of Aunt Jemima (1972) has acquired virtual iconic status. The shrines and altars she creates explore mysticism and voudou as well as racial and sexual politics. Alison Saar’s installations, objects, and sculptures pursue relations among spiritualities in African cultural diaspora. Each one of these women might be justifiably hailed as “conjure women of the arts.” Each one practices a

Alison Saar (left) and Betye Saar (right)

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**Betye and Alison Saar**

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**October 2008 RSN • 15**
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- Attend professional development workshops specially designed to assist you at every level of your career.
- Help to shape the AAR by volunteering to serve on committees, task forces, and other leadership groups.
- Answer the urgent call from journalists, public policy makers, and your fellow citizens who rely on our community to foster the public understanding of religion.
- Gain access to AAR print and online publications like the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion (JAA)*, *Religious Studies News (RSN)*, and the monthly e-bulletins for the latest scholarship and news.

### Membership Categories, Dues, and Discounts

There are three membership categories — professional, student, and retired. The dues for the professional and retired categories are based on annual income. There are 11 income levels. Student members pay a flat rate of $30. Professional members who hold current membership in the Society of Biblical Literature are eligible for a 20 percent discount. Retired members receive an automatic 20 percent discount. Members who live outside the United States and make less than $15,000 per year pay a flat rate of $15.

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| $45 | $60 | $75 |

**Annual Income**

| $50,000 - $60,000 | $60,000 - $70,000 | $70,000 - $80,000 | $80,000 - $90,000 |
| $55 | $65 | $75 | $85 |

**Annual Income**

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| $65 | $75 | $85 | $95 |

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| $95 | $115 | $125 | $135 |

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| $135 | $155 | $175 | $195 |

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WELCOME to a new feature of RSN: The Book Corner. In each October and May issue, we will feature books that have recently been published by Oxford University Press in the various AAR/OUP book series. The books featured in this issue were published between January and June 2008. For more books published in the various series, visit www.aarweb.org/Publications/Books.


If forecasters are correct in labeling the twenty-first century “the Chinese century,” teachers and scholars of religious studies and theology will be called upon to illuminate the history, character, and role of Confucianism as a religious tradition in Chinese and Chinese-influenced societies. Although routinely included in courses on Asian and world religions, Confucianism has been the subject of much controversy both within the academy and in Chinese communities for over 100 years. Theories have debated whether and how it is “religious,” while historians have struggled to interpret archaeological finds and other evidence that suggest the existence of not one, but many “Confucianisms” from ancient times through the present. Philosophers have argued about Confucianism’s place in intellectual life, and theologians have engaged Confucianism as a rival, predecessor, and partner to Christianity. The one point on which all seem able to agree is that a grasp of Confucianism is crucial for an informed understanding of East Asia’s past development, present situation, and future prospects. But how does one teach a subject with so few established norms?

The essays in this volume address the pedagogical challenges of introducing Confucian material to non-East Asian scholars and students. Informed by the latest scholarship as well as practical experience in the religious studies and theology classroom, these essays are attentive to the needs of both experts in Confucian studies and those with no background in Asian studies who are charged with teaching these traditions.

ISBN: 978-0-19-531160-0


The Daode Jing, a highly enigmatic work rooted in ancient Chinese cosmology, ontology, metaphysics, and moral thinking, is regularly offered to college and high school students in religion, philosophy, history, literature, Asian studies, and humanities courses. As a result, an ever-expanding group of faculty with very different backgrounds and training routinely confront the question “How should I teach the Daode Jing?” Written for nonspecialists who may not have a background in ancient Chinese culture, the essays collected in this volume provide up-to-date information on contemporary scholarship and classroom strategies that have been successful in a variety of teaching environments.

A classic text like the Daode Jing generates debate among scholars and teachers who ask such questions as: Should we capitalize on popular interests in the Daode Jing in our classrooms? Which of the many translations and scholarly approaches ought we to use? Is it appropriate to think of the Daode Jing as a religious text at all? These and other controversies are addressed in this volume.


A number of critics and scholars argue for the notion of a distinctly Catholic variety of imagination, not as a matter of doctrine or even of belief, but rather as an artistic sensibility. They figure the blend of intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and ethical assumptions that proceed from Catholic belief constitutes a vision of reality that necessarily informs the artist’s imaginative expression. The notion of a Catholic imagination, however, has lacked thematic and theological coherence. To articulate this intuition is to cross the problematic interdisciplinary borders between theology and literature; and, although scholars have developed useful methods for undertaking such interdisciplinary “border-crossings,” relatively few have been devoted to a serious examination of the theological aesthetic upon which these other aesthetics might hinge.

The author proposes a new framework to better define the concepts of a Catholic imagination. He explores the many ways in which the theological work of Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–1988) can provide the model, content, and optic for distinguishing this type of imagination from others. Since Balthasar views art and literature precisely as theologies, the author surveys a broad array of poetry, drama, fiction, and film, and sets them against central aspects of Balthasar’s theological program. In doing so, the author seeks to develop a theology of criticism.


Are you interested in submitting a book proposal to one of our AAR/OUP book series?

Go to www.aarweb.org/Publications/Books/proposals.asp to find more about our five different book series and to get information on how to submit your proposal.
BRIEFS

Are you interested in the latest happenings in the field of religion? Would you like to post an announcement of an event, award competition, or other news of importance in the field? If so, please visit In the Field, for news of events and opportunities for scholars of religion published online by the American Academy of Religion.

Visit this link for more information: www.aarweb.org/Publications/In_the_Field.

Religious Studies News

Terrence W. Tilley Named President of Catholic Theological Society of America

Terrence W. Tilley, chair of Fordham’s Department of Theology, was installed as the 63rd president of the Catholic Theological Society of America at the society’s 2008 convention on June 8, 2008. In this position, Tilley hopes to improve the communications between theologians and bishops, and to help to integrate a new generation of theologians into the society.

“New patterns of relating theology to the life of the faith are emerging,” Tilley said, explaining his decision to establish “Generations” as this year’s convention theme. “Younger theologians—meaning those who either entered the field or were born after the Second Vatican Council—have neither the baggage nor the ballast that their older colleagues have.”

The author of many scholarly books and articles, Tilley came to Fordham in 2006. He has also taught at Georgetown University, St. Michael’s College, the University of Vermont, and the University of Dayton, where he chaired the Department of Religious Studies. A native of Milwaukee, he earned his bachelor’s degree at the University of San Francisco in 1970 and his doctoral degree at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, in 1976.

Charles S. Prebish to Head Religious Studies Program at Utah State University

Charles S. Prebish has been named head of the Religious Studies Program at Utah State University (USU). Prebish has been a part of the program since 2006 and holds the Charles Redd Chair in Religious Studies. He is a well-known Buddhist studies scholar who taught at Pennsylvania State University for more than thirty-five years. Prebish joined the faculty at USU in January 2007. He has published many books and articles about Buddhism as a subdiscipline in Buddhist studies.

Mary Elizabeth Moore Named Dean of Boston University School of Theology

After a nine-month search, Boston University’s oldest school has a new dean. Mary Elizabeth Moore, a professor of religion and theology and director of the Women in Theology and Ministry Program at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University, will assume duties as dean of the School of Theology beginning January 1, 2009. She will succeed Ray L. Hart, a School of Theology professor of religious diversity, who will be appointed ad interim in 2003, following the resignation of Robert C. Neville.

Willem B. Drees Selected as the Next Editor for Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science

The Joint Publication Board of Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science has announced the appointment of Willem B. Drees as the journal’s new Editor-in-Chief. Drees is Professor of Philosophy of Religion and Ethics and outgoing Dean of the Faculty of Religious Studies of Leiden University. He is author of seven books, the editor or co-editor of twenty books, and has lectured widely in Europe and the United States. Zygon, founded in 1966, is an academic journal exploring the interactions between religious convictions, science, and technology in the modern world.

New Center for Engaged Religious Pluralism at Saint Mary’s College of California

Saint Mary’s College of California recently announced the opening of the Center for Engaged Religious Pluralism, a research center that will focus on issues of religious pluralism in political culture and public policy. The center will provide forums for representatives of various religious orientations, including academics and activists, to cross the political spectrum, in an effort to find common ground on specific issues in the public square.

Sir John Templeton, Famed Philanthropist, Dies on Tuesday, July 8

Sir John Templeton, the legendary fund manager and philanthropist, died in a hospital in the Bahamas on Tuesday, July 8, at the age of 95. The cause of death was pneumonia. Templeton contributed a sizable amount of his fortune to his foundation. In 1972, the Templeton Foundation began awarding the Templeton Prize for Progress toward Research or Discoveries about Spiritual Realities. The foundation, which is now run by his son John Jr., gives its honorees a financial prize of $1.6 million, the largest single annual financial prize given to an individual for intellectual merit. In 2007, a devout Presbyterian, was a trustee on the board of Princeton Theological Seminary, the largest Presbyterian seminary, for 42 years and served as its chair for 12 years.

Call for Papers: Darwin’s Impact on the Humanities and Social Sciences

Call for Papers for a symposium on “150 Years of Evolution: Darwin’s Impact on the Humanities and Social Sciences” to be held at San Diego State University on November 20–22, 2009. Papers should address the impact of Darwin’s ideas in the humanities and social sciences, especially religious studies. Both discipline-specific and broadly interdisciplinary papers are encouraged. Abstracts of no more than 500 words to mark.wheeler@sdsu.edu no later than November 30, 2008. Accepted papers must be completed by the date of the symposium to be included in the proceedings of published proceedings. Accepted papers will be announced February 1, 2009.

Call for Papers: Religion and Buildings

The Australasian Religion Studies Review (www.aarsonline.org.au/rr/newreview.html) is a leading journal of the Pacific region dealing with all aspects of the academic study of religion. It is fully refereed and published by Equinox Press. The call for papers is interested in papers on religious buildings and buildings and buildings and religious buildings. The journal welcomes papers on the symbolic representation of religious buildings; religious buildings as a social, cultural and political phenomenon; the construction of religious buildings as a religious concept tied to place; the symbolic representation of religious buildings in art and literature; and religious buildings as a religious concept tied to place.

Are you interested in the latest happenings in the field of religion? Would you like to post an announcement of an event, award competition, or other news of importance in the field? If so, please visit In the Field, for news of events and opportunities for scholars of religion published online by the American Academy of Religion.

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Online Bibliography of Theology and Peace

The Institute for Theology and Peace (ITP), a research center at Fordham University, has published the eighth edition of its Online Bibliography Theology and Peace, at www.itppeace.de/bibl. The bibliography contains 155,000 citations, and use of it is free of charge. The Institute (www.itppeace.de) was established in 1978 and is actively engaged in research projects on peace ethics. It publishes the series Theologie und Frieden (Theology and Peace) and Beiträge zur Friedensethik (Contributions on Peace Ethics), has a library, and documents the literature comprehensively.

New Online Journal Religion Compass

Religion Compass is an online-only journal publishing original, peer-evaluated, state-of-the-art surveys of current research from across the entire discipline. The journal guides students, researchers, and non-specialist scholars through the accumulating body of literature, and navigates the field by laying out the territory, describing divisions and subdivisions of religious studies, and identifying the major issues within those sections. Fields covered by Religion Compass include African Religions, Ancient Near East, Buddhism, Christianity, Indian Traditions, Islam, Japanese and Chinese Traditions, Judaism, Religion in America, New Religions, and Women in Theology.

For further information, contact Johannes Schloesser at schloesser@itpde.de.

Association of Theological Schools and Luce Foundation Name Seven Faculty Members as 2008-2009 Henry Luce III Fellows in Theology

Selected on the basis of the strength of their proposals to conduct creative and innovative theological research, the seven Fellows (below) will engage in year-long research in various areas of theological inquiry. The 2008–2009 Fellows constitute the fifteenth class of scholars to be appointed since the inception of the program in 1993, bringing the total number of Luce Fellows to 105. The program is supported by a grant from The Henry Luce Foundation, honoring the late Henry Luce III.

• Douglas E. Burton-Christie, Loyola Marymount University
• Margot E. Fasler, Yale University Divinity School
• Carole R. Fontaine, Andover Newton Theological School
• Arryn W. Jones, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
• Demetrios S. Katos, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology
• Elizabeth Newman, Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond
• Allen D. Verhey, Duke University Divinity School

EBSCO Publishing and American Theological Library Association Announce Digital Archives

EBSCO has partnered with the American Theological Library Association (ATLA) to preserve and make available collections of indexes, monographs, and serials in digital format. The collections will contain more than 29,000 monographs covering religion and theology. The majority of the monographs are from 1850 through 1923, with the earliest one dating back to 1322. The monograph collections are estimated to include 7.5 million pages of content. With each collection, researchers can view all of the typographic, graphics, and drawings as they were originally presented.

For more information, contact: pr@ebscohost.com; ATLA: www.atla.com; EBSCO: www.ebscohost.com.
AAR Career Services
Visit the AAR’s new Career Services webpage at www.aarweb.org/jump/careers for these services:

- Job Postings
- Annual Meeting Job Center
- Candidate CVs
- Workshop Information
- Employment Statistics
- Articles Discussing Career Issues

Also see the ad on page 11 for information about the 2008 Job Center.
**Sustainability Task Force Update**

**THE SUSTAINABILITY Task Force has been looking at ways to create a more sustainable AAR and to promote issues of sustainability within the study and teaching of religion. The task force is dedicated to making the AAR as sustainable as possible by looking into resources, consumption and reduction at meetings and while traveling to meetings, workshops geared for infusing curriculum with sustainability issues, and working with publishers to offer updated textbooks with sustainability topics and printing them on recycled paper.**

The task force asked the AAR Board of Directors to consider an ecological audit of the AAR and of the Annual Meeting. Sustainability Task Force Chair Sarah McFarland Taylor reported to the Board that the task force would be researching and pursuing options for a low-cost or donated commercial “comprehensive environmental audit” of the AAR. There are a variety of organizations that specialize in assessing the environmental impact of nonprofit organizations and make recommendations for reducing their “ecological footprint.”

In the course of researching sustainability options, one common point has emerged. The chief environmental impact of the AAR as a whole comes from the greenhouse gases generated by our members’ travel to and from our Annual Meeting. In response, the task force is discussing several measures:

- Meeting when possible in major cities that have more direct flights rather than multiple connecting flights (reducing take-offs and landings);
- Choosing cities for the Annual Meeting with excellent public transportation (or very walkable locations) to minimize taxi and short use (including regional meetings);
- Publicizing well the public transportation options for travel to the conference and within the conference city;
- Promoting ride-sharing to the conference and within the conference city;
- Reducing our use of products, such as plastics used for cups, badge holders, etc.;
- Working with hotels to provide more local sources of food and other reception fare (foods with fewer “fossil fuel miles” on them);
- Asking that task forces and committees meet face-to-face at the AAR Annual Meeting and then (when feasible) meet electronically through conference call or video conferencing instead of flying to Atlanta for meetings during the rest of the year; and
- Purchasing Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) to offset greenhouse gases.

The purchase of RECs to offset greenhouse gas production is controversial, since there are those who argue that offsetting simply transplants pollutants; others see these gases in the first place, rather than eliminating them altogether. However, for business travel, which will occur anyway, the consensus seems to be that implementing an offsetting program, on balance, is better than doing nothing and can actually contribute to environmental and social justice efforts in the communities these credits benefit.

The task force is recommending that a volunteer carbon offset option be included in the online registration page for future Annual Meetings. Members could be invited to follow a link to calculate their carbon emissions for travel to the conference and purchase RECs. This measure has already been implemented at the AAR Midwest Regional meeting, although it has not been linked to its registration page. A separate e-mail goes out from the Midwest Regionally Elected Director inviting members to purchase credits.

The task force is also recommending conserving other resources, such as:

- Stationery/Paper — The AAR Executive Office has already made huge strides in reducing paper use and moving toward more electronic means of communication. For the paper that the organization still consumes, the task force researched options for the purchase of more sustainable paper stock and found that the major paper supplier used by Emory University, where the office is located, is Mohawk paper. Mohawk is a watermarked, archival quality paper that is 100 percent post-consumer recycled paper product, which can be used in virtually all Xerox machines and laser printers. Mohawk’s production plant is also 100 percent “carbon neutral,” offsetting its carbon emissions through the purchase of Renewable Energy Credits. The task force recommends that the AAR purchase its paper from Mohawk.

- Hotel Sustainability Requests — The task force recommends working with our partner hotels as much as possible to encourage them to implement sustainability measures at host hotels, including the following:
  - Providing guests a way to opt out of daily linen laundering by providing a sign placed on the bed or in the bathroom (or other comparable system);
  - Using compact fluorescent bulbs;
  - Using more environmentally sustainable cleaning products;
  - Providing a living wage to hotel domestics hired to clean and service rooms; and
  - Making sure that recycling bins are numerous and prominently displayed throughout the hotel.

The task force has called for more research paper awards at the regional level for work dealing with religion, environment, and sustainability. The AAR Midwest Region has gone ahead and endowed a paper prize in this area, and hopes other regions will follow with similar awards.

At the Annual Meeting this year, the task force encouraged the Program Committee to expand the Religion and Ecology program unit session limits, which was granted. It also successfully proposed South Asian environmental activist and author Vandana Shiva as a speaker for the 2008 Annual Meeting in Chicago. The task force’s first special session will be “The Greening of Faith: Religious Environmentalism and Beyond.”

There are several items the task force will be exploring in the next few years. One of the issues is to find ways of providing more local, bioregionally grown, sustainably produced food options for the Annual Meeting. Task force members are talking with the American Humane Society’s Sustainability in Food and Farming program and with VegAdvantage, a free service provided by vegetarian chefs who work with conferences, hotels, schools, universities, businesses, and other organizations to integrate more vegetarian options into menus, as well as more locally produced foods. VegAdvantage also works out all the logistics, which frees up conference planners to focus on other things.

Another project the task force is considering is the Sustainability Teaching Initiative. Task force members are exploring a variety of opportunities to create a series of workshops on teaching about religion and sustainability. Additionally, part of the initiative includes working with textbook publishers to include more sustainability content in their books and sponsoring a workshop or seminar for book vendors run by the “Green Publishing Initiative.” Committee member Laurel Kearns continues to work on the Greening Seminars initiative.

The committee will also be building future links between AAR’s syllabus project website and the Forum on Religion and Ecology’s syllabus website.

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**AAR Goes to Capitol Hill to Advocate for Humanities Funding**

In March, the AAR and 34 other associations involving higher education co-sponsored Humanities Advocacy Day, an annual event in Washington, D.C., organized by the National Humanities Alliance (NHA).

A total of 94 humanities advocates representing 34 states and the District of Columbia visited 127 Senate and House offices. The AAR participants were board member Brian K. Pennington, Maryville College; member Charles B. Jones, Catholic University of America, and his son, Trevor; and AAR staff member Margaret Jenkins, Director of Development. John R. Finney, the AAR’s Executive Director, represented the AAR at the NHA’s annual meeting held the day before.

The AAR, along with other members of the NHA, is advocating a budget of $177 million for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) in fiscal year 2009, an increase of about $32 million over the fiscal year 2008 appropriation. The NEH is the largest funder of humanities programs in the United States. The AAR also supports fiscal year 2009 funding of $12 million for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), the grant-making arm of the National Archives and Records Administration.

As of the AYS copy deadline, the House of Representatives and the Senate had yet to vote on bills funding NEH and NHPRC for fiscal year 2009.

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**Oxford University Press Book Series Name Change**

The name of the Oxford University Press/AAR book series formerly known as Texts and Translations has been changed to Religion in Translation. Religion in Translation seeks to make available to research scholars and classroom teachers alike significant primary texts in English translation, significant new secondary scholarship on religious texts, and reprints of major theoretical works in the field of religious studies. To serve this broad mandate, we seek proposals from all areas of the discipline that will bring to an English-speaking audience texts of major importance to the world’s religious traditions; monographs that open up specific texts to wider audiences; and new translations of classic works of secondary scholarship that are perennially relevant to the understanding of religious phenomena, values, ideas, and practices.

For further information on the series, please go to www.oxfordup.com/ideas/religion/translations.asp.

To reach one of the two editors for this series, please contact either Anne E. Monius, Harvard Divinity School, anne_monius@harvard.edu, or Kevin Madigan, Harvard Divinity School, kevin_madigan@harvard.edu.

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20 • October 2008 RSN

**Religious Studies News**
The Religious Studies Major in a Post-9/11 World: New Challenges, New Opportunities

I. Opportunities

New Perceptions

These days, it is hardly news when a publication prints a retraction. When the retraction is for an eight-year-old obituary, though, people tend to stand up and take notice. As the 1990s came to a close, The Economist was so certain of the imminent demise of organized religion that it featured God's obituary in its final issue of the millennium.1 The editor’s perspective was clear, if myopic. Change was occurring, and in the arena of Western Europe was in free fall. “The cynical, questioning, anti-authoritarian West,” often led by college professors, had just completed a century of relentless (and frequently effective) attacks on religious belief. For politicians, intellectuals, and even some clerics, “religion was becoming marginal to public life . . . [and] faith an irrelevant in foreign policy.”2 The U.S. Secretary of State at the time, Madeleine Albright, was of the opinion that any given world problem was “complicated enough without bringing God and religion into it.”3 And when Henry Kissinger published his 900-page, career-summarizing, Diplomacy in 1999, the word ‘religion’ did not even appear in the index. Religion was on the way out. So if the defenders of the Enlightenment canon declared:

How times have changed.

A recent study reports that the proportion of the world’s population that claims membership in the world’s four largest religions — Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism — actually increased over the past century, from 67 percent in 1900 to 73 percent in 2005.4 The number is predicted to increase over the next century, from 67 percent in 1900 to 73 percent in 2005.5

Of course, those of us in the field of religious studies know that religion has always been an inescapable part of politics, as well as an inescapable part of economics, foreign policy, social mores, and domestic interactions. The waning years of the twentieth century were certainly no exception. While the reality has not changed in recent years, public perceptions doubtlessly have. World events have led Americans to a new appreciation of the importance of knowledge about religion and to a vivid awareness of the dangers that emerge when we fail to recognize religion as a potent source of motivation and behavior. In a world shaped not merely by 9/11 but by Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo, and the West Bank — not merely by abortion, but by gay marriage, intelligent design, euthanasia, and stem cells — Americans increasingly accept the idea that we need better to understand the diverse range of religious phenomena. In one recent survey, over 80 percent of Americans responded affirmatively to the question, “Do you think people should learn more about religions other than their own?”6

If we truly wish for students to engage the tremendous variety of human understandings of life, death, suffering, love, and meaning, there is perhaps no more direct path than through the study of religion.

In a sense, our jobs as scholars of religion became a lot easier on September 11, 2001. Suddenly, the arguments we had been making for years about the importance of understanding world religious traditions were being made by others: not merely by former Secretaries of State and magazine editors, not merely by the general public, but by college deans, provosts, and presidents — at times, even by our “cynical, questioning, anti-authoritarian” colleagues.

A Return to Liberal Education?

Concurrent with (if largely coincidental to) these changes in public perceptions of the importance of religious literacy, there emerged a new (or reemerged at an age-old) debate about the quality of the education provided by American colleges and universities. In 2006, former Harvard President Derek Bok reported that American college students “improve far less than they should in such important areas as writing, critical thinking . . . and moral reasoning,” and lamented that students fail in “learning what they need to know to become active and informed citizens.”7 In 2007, UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute, after surveying over 100,000 college students, released a national study of students’ engagement with issues of “meaning and purpose,” categorizing “spiritual development as a core component of a liberal arts education.”8 Meanwhile, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) was conducting a multi-year study of liberal education that concluded, “The world in which today’s students will live is characterized by forces and circumstances that are not simply one of disruption rather than certainty; and of interdependence rather than isolation.”9 It called for a widespread shift in the “focus of schooling from accumulating course credits to building real-world capabilities.” In its influential 2007 report, College Learning for the New Global Century, the AAC&U mapped out five essential learning outcomes for all American college students:

• Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World, “focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring.”
• Intellectual and Practical Skills, including “critical and creative thinking,” “inquiry and analysis,” and “written and oral communication.”
• Personal and Social Responsibility, including “civic knowledge and engagement — local and global,” “intercultural knowledge and competence,” and “emotional reasoning and action.”
• Integrative Learning, including the synthesis and application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems.”10

For many of us in the field of religious studies, these “new directions” for American college students seemed anything but novel. The four essential outcomes embraced by the AAC&U outline themes that religious studies has been focused on for decades: intercultural engagement of big questions, critical thinking and writing, moral reasoning, and the application of all of these skills to new global contexts and lived behaviors. It is safe to say that few disciplines in the academy more centrally and more naturally address the AAC&U outcomes than does the field of religious studies.

At a time when leaders in higher education are increasingly asking students to engage the large issues of life’s meaning and to think critically and responsibly about their role in the world, religious studies offers unique opportunities. Other disciplines such as philosophy, literature, and the creative arts doublelessly engage questions of ultimate meaning. Yet these endeavors are largely the province of the talented few: the philosopher, the novelist, the poet, the painter, the dancer. The rest of us are left out of the audience.

While, to be sure, we can learn to appreciate the creations of these artists and scholars, we remain observers. Religion, by contrast, is largely created by its adherents. Millions of worshipers and hundreds of thousands of local religious communities — through their prayers, rituals, devotions, and acts of charity; their conversations about scriptures; and their hierarchies and institutions — shape and are shaped by the religious meanings of their traditions. If we truly wish for students to engage the tremendous variety of human understandings of life, death, suffering, love, and meaning, there is perhaps no more direct path than through the study of religion.

Clearly, the field of religious studies now finds itself at a pivotal moment. An unprecedented confluence of world events, public perceptions, and educational insights has created exciting possibilities for the growth and re-imagining of the field — possibilities that were unthinkable even a decade ago. The current moment presents important opportunities for the academic study of religion — and poses a series of challenges.

How we, as scholars of religion, respond to these challenges will hang, in large part, on our ability to think critically and creatively about the future of the discipline — not to mention the future of American public literacy about a broad range of religious phenomena.

II. Challenges

The Religious Studies Major in Transition

The religious studies major is in a state of flux. By most indicators, the field is growing, perhaps significantly. The number of religious studies majors increased by 22 percent in the past decade (to an estimated 47,000 students), with like percentage increases in the number of total courses offered, course enrollments, and faculty positions in the field.11 The number of religious studies majors at public institutions has grown even more rapidly, by 40 percent during the same period, signifying a sea-change in the field. What was once a major situated largely within liberal arts colleges and denominationally-linked institutions is now establishing a widespread presence at state universities. In the past five years alone, new degree programs or departments of religion have been proposed or established at the University of Texas, Ohio
State University, Florida State University, Georgia State University, the University of Minnesota, the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, the University of North Carolina, Asheville, and Towson State University, among other public institutions. In part shaped by this trend, the number of religion degree programs that are housed in free-standing religion departments also appears to be on the rise, with the total now topping 50 percent.

New Global Emphasis

What constitutes the religious studies major is also undergoing rapid change. The American Academy of Religion conducted comprehensive surveys of undergraduate course offerings in religion in both 2000 and 2005. The results are striking, if not surprising. The number of sections taught of courses in Islam and Hinduism each almost doubled during the five-year period; by most indications, courses in Christian Theology, Old Testament, and New Testament were flat or down. Sections of Introduction to World Religions grew in number, sections of Introduction to the Bible declined.14 There is a very real shift occurring in the field of religious studies — not a shift away from the study of religion, and other state-school contexts, though, the religious studies major (though Section III of this report suggests that the depth of these debates may be exaggerated at times). Unlike a number of undergraduate discipline degree programs, religious studies is relatively new and evolving. In strong interdisciplinary content complicates assessment further, as the major often straddles multiple departments. A final problem is the lack of reliable data collected by departments and the discipline about the career paths of religious studies majors. On a campus where “Christianity isn’t a religion, it’s a life,” such undertakings can be controversial. As Frank Ames reports, “Although many parochial institutions maintain high academic standards for students and appoint competent scholars and teachers to their faculties — and often succeed in providing excellent education — it is fair to say that religious commitment at times diminishes empathy toward the Other and awareness of the Self, which are essential in religious studies.”15 While Ames and his colleagues at Colorado Christian are currently negotiating the at times subtle lines between personal religious commitment and the scholarly study of religious traditions, they are convinced of the importance of the academic study of other religious amid a very real shift occurring in the field of religious studies.

At Santa Clara, the department is consciously involved in efforts to “explore the shape and function of theological studies in relation to other approaches to religion,” including political science, history, women’s and gender studies, and environmental studies.16 Colorado Christian and Santa Clara are part of a larger movement in which departments and curricula in religious studies at public, private, and church-related institutions are gradually, persistently, and unevenly shifting from a “seminary model” for the study of religion (in which courses in Bible, Christian history, and Christian doctrine are seen as primary and courses on other religions and aspects of religion are deemed secondary or even unnecessary) to a comparative model (in which the focus is on promoting student understanding of student fields of historical perspectives).17 Such sentiment is prevalent in the face of nearly unanimous legal consensus. As early as Abington v. Schempp in 1963, the United States Supreme Court declared the constitutionality of religious studies in the state setting. Speaking for the majority, Justice Thomas Clark wrote: “[I]t might well be said that one’s education is not complete without the study of religion. . . . Nothing we have said here indicates that such study of the Bible or of religion, when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education, may not be effectuated consistent with the First Amendment.”18 Despite such assurances, the concerns of some faculty members, in Texas and elsewhere, who fear that religious studies may not be consistent with the practice of religious practice.19 The practice was declared unconstitutional in the mid-1980s, but a perception that religious studies is indistinguishable from religious practice remained in the minds of many administrators and faculty members across the state. The permission granted in May 2007 by the University of Texas, Austin to establish the first-ever Department of Religion within the state system represents a significant change in state policy.

But old perceptions die slowly: on one university campus in Texas, while 98 percent of the students believe that religion is important in world events in significant ways, 10 percent of the faculty members are still of the opinion that religious studies courses are, by their very nature, not constitutional. Such sentiments prevail in the a religious studies major (though Section III of this report suggests that the depth of these debates may be exaggerated at times). Unlike a number of undergraduate discipline degree programs, religious studies is relatively new and evolving. In strong interdisciplinary content complicates assessment further, as the major often straddles multiple departments. A final problem is the lack of reliable data collected by departments and the discipline about the career paths of religious studies majors.

Given that the content of the religious studies major is in flux and information about what students do with the major after graduation is incomplete at best, the tasks of defining the major and then assessing it represent continuing challenges across the discipline.

Growth in Community Colleges

At any given moment, 46 percent of American college students are attending community colleges. Community colleges offer courses in world religions, introduction to religion, philosophy of religion, Bible, and even Islam are increasingly common in these settings. However, such courses are now offered coursework, the field often burdened by high teaching loads and no travel support — are members of the AAR. By one counting, a total AAR membership of 11,000, only about 100 members are on the faculties of community colleges. In light of the rapid increase in the number of religious studies majors at state universities, it is safe to assume that community colleges provide the training ground for many majors in the field. For the subset of community college students who do not continue on to four-year institutions, their community-college education might provide their only formal opportunity to take courses in religious studies (as well as the only substantive exposure to apply in real-world situations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other locales). In many cases, contact, let alone coordination, between the faculties of four-year colleges and those of the “feeder” community colleges in their areas is all but non-existent. How can
The AAR–T Eagle Working Group makes the following two recommendations to the Annual Meeting:

1. Beginning in 2009, the AAR should parallel its highly successful “Syllabus Project” web pages by launching a new webpage dedicated to providing a compendium of discipline-wide information on central aspects of the undergraduate major.

2. In light of a growing consensus about the characteristics of the religious studies major, the discipline and its members should work to distinguish the religious studies major from undergraduate majors in the fields of history, theology, philosophy, sociology, classics, and other distinct disciplines.

The American Academy of Religion will celebrate the centennial of its founding in 2009. In conjunction with this landmark, it is appropriate that the AAR and its members commit themselves to a series of actions for improving the major.

The discipline of religious studies must begin to define, develop, and nurture practices and structures for sustained scholarly discussion of the undergraduate major. Toward this end, the AAR–T Eagle Working Group makes the following two recommendations to the AAR Board:

1. Starting with the 2009 Annual Meeting, the American Academy of Religion should inaugurate a consultation on “The Religious Studies Major” with the goal of integrating the section into the permanent structure of the Annual Meeting.

While the AAR Annual Meeting features hundreds of sessions each year, there is no continuing forum for the discussion of the shape of the major. Currently, multiple sessions focus on teaching and on strategies for individual courses, but we rarely pausing as scholars to compare and engage ideas concerning the aim and content of the undergraduate curriculum in religious studies, as such. Adding a consultation on “The Religious Studies Major” would contribute to the initial step in filling this void. Individual sessions could focus on topics such as “The Capstone Course and Its Role in the Major,” “Building Interdisciplinary Bridges,” “Integrating the Major and the Goals of Liberal Education,” “Balancing Required Courses and Electives,” “Making the Case for the Major with Administrators,” and “The Challenge of Teaching Ethics in the Major.” The aim would be to provide a forum for scholars to share challenges, best practices, successes, and failures. Additionally, the creation of a consultation on “The Religious Studies Major” would provide an administrative structure for continuing a conversation that is sustained in various settings (including regional meetings) throughout the year. This structure would also serve to support step 2, outlined below.

2. In beginning in 2010 and continuing through 2012, the AAR should convene three annual, day-long workshops on the Religious Studies Major, with each workshop focusing on a different theme related to the major.

Colleagues across the discipline are grappling with a range of issues — from trying to establish the religious studies major amid hostile environments to re-conceiving long-entrenched curricula to address the evolving needs of a liberal education. Sharing best practices for the formulation, implementation, and assessment of learning outcomes, exploring the successes and failures of particular curricula for the major; and exploring the lines between serving students’ academic and spiritual needs are all undertakings that demand our attention. To guide our work, the workshop will be divided into three sessions over an extended period of time. The workshop model has proven highly effective in such contexts, and is merely in allowing for dialogue but in helping to establish a core network of stakeholders and leaders in the discussion. There appears to be much enthusiasm for the workshop idea among the membership of the AAR; the day-long workshop on “The Religion Major and Liberal Education” held at the 2007 Annual Meeting in San Diego drew record attendance, filling with virtually 75 registrants from almost 50 institutions. Continuous on the ability to secure outside funding to support the initiative, the Working Group recommends that the AAR “jump start” the scholarship of the major by holding a series of three annual “Leadership Workshops” on the major between 2010 and 2012.

The discipline must continue to work to articulate and to orient ourselves to the evolving religious studies endeavor and to define the specific characteristics and value of the religious studies major. Toward this end, the Working Group recommends the following two recommendations to the AAR Board:

1. The AAR–T Eagle-supported Leadership Workshop on “The Religion Major” can be found here.

2. The AAR–T Eagle-supported Leadership Workshop on “The Major Project” and collecting data on the major can be found here.

The AAR–T Eagle Working Group makes the following two recommendations to the AAR–T Eagle initiative on the religious studies major has revealed at least one obvious and strong affinity: the religious studies major is the fact that the discipline and its members commit themselves to a series of actions for improving the major. The discipline of religious studies must begin to define, develop, and nurture practices and structures for sustained scholarly discussion of the undergraduate major. Toward this end, the AAR–T Eagle Working Group makes the following two recommendations to the AAR Board:

1. Starting with the 2009 Annual Meeting, the American Academy of Religion should inaugurate a consultation on “The Religious Studies Major” with the goal of integrating the section into the permanent structure of the Annual Meeting. "The discipline of religious studies must begin to define, develop, and nurture practices and structures for sustained scholarly discussion of the undergraduate major. Toward this end, the AAR–T Eagle Working Group makes the following two recommendations to the AAR Board:

- **The AAR–T Eagle Working Group makes the following two recommendations to the AAR–T Eagle initiative on the religious studies major has revealed at least one obvious and strong affinity:** the religious studies major is the fact that the discipline and its members commit themselves to a series of actions for improving the major.
- **The discipline of religious studies must begin to define, develop, and nurture practices and structures for sustained scholarly discussion of the undergraduate major. Toward this end, the AAR–T Eagle Working Group makes the following two recommendations to the AAR Board:**
  1. **Beginning in 2009, the AAR should parallel its highly successful “Syllabus Project” web pages by launching a new webpage dedicated to providing a compendium of discipline-wide information on central aspects of the undergraduate major.**
  2. **In light of a growing consensus about the characteristics of the religious studies major, the discipline and its members should work to distinguish the religious studies major from undergraduate majors in the fields of history, theology, philosophy, sociology, classics, and other distinct disciplines.**
As a prototypical course of study in liberal education, the undergraduate major in religious studies rightly makes no claim to being a professional degree. Its requirements and nature should not solely or even primarily be determined by their usefulness and applicability to the job market, per se. Such valid sentiments, however, do not mean that our responsibilities to our students, to their graduation or to the knowledge we require in the major should not be informed by an awareness of the lives students will lead after college. Almost 50,000 undergraduates currently are majoring in religious studies in the United States. Yet most religious studies programs have only limited and anecdotal knowledge of what happens to students after their final classes. As one faculty member at Wartburg College put it, at present “it’s really more a matter of students” keeping track of us than our keeping track of them.

What have students found helpful about the religious studies major? What needs to be improved? Is the discipline equipping students with skills that they feel serve them well in life after college? Effective assessment of such changes, at least upon student input, and there are rich insights to be mined from graduates who have gained the perspective afforded to them by life experiences and a little distance from their undergraduate studies. The discipline needs to develop a set of best practices for the tracking of undergraduate majors post-graduation, including models for overcoming the practical challenges in the process and complexifying the array of survey instruments that might be employed in various contexts.

Continuously upon the lookout for the securing of external funding for the initiative and perhaps in cooperation with the AAR Job Placement Task Force, beginning in 2009 the AAR should collaborate with a group of three or four institutions to pilot potential tracking techniques and survey instruments with an eye towards sharing effective models with the larger AAR membership.

2. Beginning in 2009, the AAR should coordinate national pilot programs designed to connect community-college faculty who are teaching courses in religion with colleagues in the field at four-year institutions and in the larger professional community. The goal will be to produce best practices for fostering effective collaborations between such faculties. As the field of religious studies matures, it increasingly must address challenges that, in some instances, have been faced by other academic disciplines for decades. Twenty years ago, the number of community colleges offering courses in religious studies was significantly nominal; today, over 40 percent of community colleges offer courses in the discipline. How faculties at two-year and four-year institutions collaborate to train students in religious studies will significantly shape the health of the discipline in the years ahead. There is a need for scholars of religious studies to develop mechanisms that effectively bridge the often deep institutional and bureaucratic chasms between two- and four-year schools and to establish common expectations, content, and goals in religious curricula in the latter. In cases in which community colleges are not offering courses in religious studies, the faculties at neighbor- ing four-year institutions may offer unique critical resources in fostering awareness of the nature and importance of the discipline. Contingent on the securing of external funding to support the initiative, in 2009 the AAR should begin to coordinate a series of two to three pilot programs connecting the faculties at a small number of established religious studies programs at four-year universities with the faculties at neighboring community colleges. The goal will be to engage in this dialogue and to share with the AAR membership a series of best practices for productive collaboration in such contexts.

3. Starting with the 2009 Annual Meeting, the American Academy of Religion should inaugurate a consultation on “The Assessment of the Religious Studies Major” with the goal of integrating the section into the permanent structure of the Annual Meeting. In 2010, the AAR should add to the proposed “Major Project” web pages listing assessment plans from various institutions. The argument that calls for increased collaboration and consultation among members of the AAR with regard to the nature and structure of the major also applies to the major’s assessment once it has been established. As we learn more about students, their strengths and weaknesses, we need to systematize to establish structures that will promote a sustained dialogue on effective means of maintaining and developing what we do well, identifying and improving what we do less well. Establishing a consultation at the Annual Meeting is a first step in this direction. Shifting the assessment plans and ideas through the AAR website provides another means of promoting dialogue and the exchange of ideas. As with the proposed “Major Project,” the goal of the accompanying Assessment Web pages will be for colleagues across the discipline to voluntarily submit the assessment plans from their home institutions and agree to serve as resources to others who might have questions or need advice.

Even collectively, the seven actions outlined in this section represent only a starting point for a much larger discussion of the religious studies major within the discipline. Through developing mechanisms for a sustained conversation about the major, defining the major more fully and carefully, filling gaps in our present knowledge about the major, and assessing it more robustly, the hope is that we, as scholars of religion, can foster a rich and productive dialogue that creates a genuine “scholarship of the major” in the years ahead.

IV. The Task Ahead

In 1999, precisely the time when The Economist was releasing its obituary of God, historian D. G. Hart was publishing an obituary of another sort. In The University of the Almighty, Hart presented a bleak picture of the academic study of religion, declaring it a “field in search of a rationale.” He concluded: “As religious studies strives to sever ties with the religious undergroung, the field is treading a path that is self-immolating.”

Like The Economist’s declaration of God’s death, Hart’s prediction may have been premature. The last decade has seen rapid growth in the academic study of religion and, by many indicators, this growth has been spurred on by an emerging consensus, both public and academic, about what the scholarly study of religion entails and why it is important to students and society. If Madeleine Albright is correct that the failure of Americans to understand world religious traditions “poses one of the great challenges to our public diplomacy,” then the members of the American Academy of Religion face an awesome responsibility in the years ahead. With almost 50,000 students majoring in religious studies in American colleges and universities at any given time (and with that number increasing rapidly), we, as scholars of religion, will play a significant role in shaping what the next generation of Americans knows, thinks, and does with regard to religion. Clearly our efforts to improve the major in religious studies and to strengthen its links to the goals of liberal education are anything but purely academic.

Notes

2. See, for instance, Albright’s recollections in Religion and Ethics Newsweekly, May 19, 2006.
12. Ibid.
13. All statistics in this paragraph are derived from the American Academy of Religion, Census of Religion and Theology Programs, 1996, 2000, and 2005. The data supporting the changes cited in this paragraph refer to the number of sections offered of the particular course as a percentage of the total number of sections offered during each survey period.
The Work of the Scholar/Activist Teacher

Rebecca Alpert and Traci West

This featured article is dedicated to the memory of Letty M. Russell (1929–2007), whose life was a pioneering example of how to bring scholarly and activist commitments together. Letty Russell was an architect and builder of feminist liberationist theology. She was one of the first women ordained in the United Presbyterian Church and subsequently a Professor of Theology at the Yale Divinity School. Her life work at Yale began in 1975 and continued up until her death.

In May 2007, a group of activist scholars met for a consultation, “Teaching Scholars, Changing Models.” The consultation was envisioned by Letty and those she mentored as a way to encourage the next generations of teachers and scholars to further Letty’s passion: to envision a world in which we bring liberation and feminist/womanist practice into our classrooms and institutions of learning. Its goals were to develop transformative strategies for combining feminist/womanist activism and scholarship in academic institutions, encourage mentoring relationships between senior and junior scholars, build a network of the many scholars who want to work on educational transformation, and develop models of teaching to combine both social analysis and action for transformation. It was an opportunity for an intergenerational, interracial, and interfaith group to share transformative strategies with one another and to ensure the life to be there with Letty Russell and move forward her vision. We have selected comments from some of the participants and organized them to reflect differing dimensions of the practical and value-based wisdom we gained in terms of transforming our institutions and our individual classrooms. We begin with two descriptions of activist, political work to create change for the sake of building good community within our own academic institutions, realizing that it will not always happen organically.

Letty Russell and Margaret Farley:

Forces for change in educational institutions can be creative or destructive; in either case, communities of learning will not flourish if they remain passive. For five years, from 1995–2000, many faculty, students, alumn/i/ae, and friends of Yale Divinity School engaged in a struggle with the university central administration to retain the location and historical buildings of the divinity school. The struggle was not about “bricks and mortar,” but about sustaining and improving place and space for shared study, life, worship, learning, and action. Against needless demolition, loss of historical integrity, and diffusion of community life, the struggle was for life-giving leadership and future transformative community strategies in theological education, providing service to church and society.

Kate Ott:

Institutions are created and sustained by people — creating change requires matching strategy and intentional action with those who prefer to maintain the status quo. I worked with other Christian ethicists on a proposal to promote the adoption of policies and guidelines, such as flexible work policies and scheduling and childcare benefits, to foster family-friendly departments across the academy. As I encountered colleagues who were not sure about the appropriateness of such advocacy, this organizing work taught me how timid our society can be about collective action — rendering our convictions all the stronger. The doing of ethics is not confined to the classroom — it is meant to transform the classroom, the department, the field, and hopefully the world.

Kate Ott is the Associate Director of the Religious Institute, where she advocates for and educates about sexual and reproductive justice in faith communities.

The scholar-activists all agreed that “the devil is in the details” and described assignments that compel students to consider the lived applications of the texts and traditions they were studying. These assignments raise our hopes, but also our fears, as we try to encourage students to make changes. What follows are examples from the scholar-activists discussion of pedagogic strategies to foster activist learning in the classroom.

Traci C. West:

In my “Sexual Ethics” PhD seminar, students are invited to examine examples from a controversial photography exhibit by Robert Mapplethorpe that includes homoerotic photographs of black males as well as black male/white male sexualized interactions. I fear reinforcement of heterosexist and racist stereotypes, but hope for scrutiny of the criteria for morally and aesthetically appreciating human bodies and sexuality in public life. Students write down the issues of comfort/discomfort that surface for them based upon their own gender, race/ethnicity, and religious background. The class discusses those issues and how they inform our judgment about whether we consider these photographs to be art or pornography, and the public benefit, if any, of such an exhibit.

Traci C. West is professor of Ethics and African American Studies at Drew University Theological School.

Judith Plaskow:

I teach “Nature and Experience of Religion” to undergraduates. For each tradition studied, we read selections from scripture and then a text relating that tradition to the contemporary world. My determination to include Islam in the course, which I had not done before 9/11, was itself considered a political decision stemming from my conviction that it would be irresponsible to teach this course in 2008 without including Islam. If we did nothing else all semester, it would be valuable for the students to own, open, and read parts of the Qur’an and experience some of its remarkable similarities to the Bible as well as its important differences. I hope students will leave the course with a more complex view of Islam. I fear that they will read their own preconceptions into the material.

Mary C. Churchill:

In “Indians and Allies: Approaches to Social and Cultural Issues Facing Native Americans,” I employ the case method, which uses fictional scenarios of real issues in Native communities. I hope that students will move beyond their stereotypes to an empathic understanding of American Indians, but I fear that the strategy might be dehumanizing or construed as endorsing appropriation. Students research Native and non-Native roles in preparation for role plays in which they explore a problem and possible resolutions. Students learn not only about themselves, their assumptions, fears, and strengths, but also about some of the concrete realities American Indians experience and the role of religious traditions for real people in living communities. The scenarios prompt students to see the inseparability of Native and non-Native peoples and problems.

Mary C. Churchill teaches in Women’s and Gender Studies, Native American Studies, and American Multicultural Studies at Sonoma State University and she co-chairs the AAR Native Traditions in the Americas program unit.

(continued on page 26)
Anne Joh:

I have found that out of the assigned readings in “Introduction to Theology,” the books that generated the most rage from many of the white students in my class are Missionary Compust by George Tinker and God of the Oppressed by James Cone. I wanted students to examine why and where the rage came from. In order to tap into deeper analysis of their rage, the class broke into small groups that asked questions of how we can engage in “social relocation” to listen to what the scholars were saying and why they might be making those particular theological reflections. I believe that we learn best from one another through listening and what Gayatri Spivak refers to as “non-coercive rearrangement of desire.” My hope is that through this learning from one another, our own desire for change emerges from within each person. My fear is that there is part of us that simply and willfully refuses to listen to the heart of the other.

Kristen J. Leslie:

Academic theories and classroom explorations are only as helpful as their ability to understand and reflect the specifics of lived human suffering. To introduce a wider notion of pastoral care that attends to the structures and causes of suffering, I invited students to join in my research and consulting at the United States Air Force Academy. On the military base, we faced many new pastoral considerations and had lengthy discussions about transforming theologies and authoritative allegiance. After returning, we watched what happened when pastoral care that involved race and gender. Students get a rich tableau of many ways their lives are defined by race and gender. They often comment that they never would have noticed or thought about the experience they described if they didn’t have to for this assignment. They then analyze one of the events they describe so they can make connections between their lived experience and the systems of oppression we study in class.

M. Shawn Copeland:

The market culture in which we live not only drains our humanity, creativity, and spirituality, but subordinates us to oppressive power arrangements. In the undergraduate core course “Person and Social Responsibility,” classroom work is combined with service or advocacy work in preselected field placements: youth work (mentoring and tutoring), the correctional system, emergency shelters, literacy, international refugee centers, domestic violence, suicide prevention, and HIV/AIDS services. Such service or advocacy work provides students with up-close-and-personal contact with the breakdowns in United States society and helps them to grasp the impact of social oppression, social injustice, and social indifference on the lives of concrete human persons.

M. Shawn Copeland teaches Theology and African and African Diaspora studies at Boston College.

Rebecca Alpert:

I assign students in a Women’s Studies class to observe how race and gender function in their daily experiences so that they can see how such common-place events are woven into the pattern of social discrimination by default. One assignment is to write a one-page descriptive narrative describing in detail an experience the student had that involved race and gender. Students get a rich tableau of many ways their lives are defined by race and gender. They often comment that they never would have noticed or thought about the experience they described if they didn’t have to for this assignment. They then analyze one of the events they describe so they can make connections between their lived experience and the systems of oppression we study in class.

Rebecca Alpert is Associate Professor of Religion and Women’s Studies at Temple University and author of Whose Torah? A Concise Guide to Progressive Judaism.

Jung Ha Kim:

I think scholars often assume a fictive dichotomy between the academy and the community. The classroom may be a privileged space and time for both teachers and learners to consciously reflect and analyze what’s going on, but not necessarily an isolated experience from everyday life that is deeply rooted in communities of belonging and accountability. In my course for graduate students on “Asian-American Experience,” over half of the classes take place outside of the classroom. The community setting of the classes allows “leaders” from varying Asian-American ethnic groups to “eavesdrop” on class discussions and to participate by sharing their stories and community needs. We watch documentary films and discuss them together and engage in a “fish bowl” dialogical process of intentionally listening in on certain conversations, such as a group of Vietnamese elderly, after which we come together to address the issues that we heard.

Jung Ha Kim is a sociologist at Georgia State University and also works with the Pan-Asian Community Center.

Shannon Clarkson:

Doctor of Ministry programs could benefit by including women from countries of the global south, expanding the horizons of both United States participants and global southern women. I participated in founding an International Feminist Doctor of Ministry in 1993. With its Asian women coordinators in Japan and Korea, we created guidelines to ensure the inclusion of women in countries of the global south and participants who do not want to be ordained. The advent of the Internet cafe and Internet discussion groups brought a sea of change in the program’s administration. This technology has enabled instant submission of papers as well as collective justice work. A week does not go by without requests for response to a human rights issue one of the participants is facing.

Shannon Clarkson directs the International Feminist DMin program at San Francisco Theological Seminary.

Janet Jakobsen:

Without connections to the world beyond the academy, scholars cannot realize the potential impact of their work, nor can they draw on external resources to support change within the academy. We could enhance the effectiveness of our scholarship and our activism by building more institutions that serve as hybrids, institutions that are in the academy with access to academic resources and also operate at and beyond its borders. Hybrid centers or projects allow activists to enter, but on terms that are different than those of usual academic practice, enabling us to shift our work to make it more useful to activists who don’t share our institutional paradigms. Bridge institutions allow for collaborative knowledge production between activists and academics, but we will have to create them ourselves.

Janet Jakobsen is the Director of the Center for Research on Women at Barnard College.
IN THIS ISSUE

What’s My Job? Academic Citizenship and the Well-being of Schools, Departments, and Programs . . . . 27–28
Trends in Faculty Status, 1975–2003 . . . . . . . 29
Looking the Other Way? Accreditation Standards and Part-time Faculty . . . . . . . . . . . . . 29–32
New Impacts Seen for Faculty Unions . . . . . . . 32
Students Speak: A Faculty Union . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 32
T rends in Faculty and Programs . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 27–28
and the Well-being of Academic Citizenship
What’s My Job?
IN THIS ISSUE

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What’s My Job? Academic Citizenship and the Well-being of Schools, Departments, and Programs

Fred Glennon, Le Moyne College, glennon@lemoyne.edu

Fred Glennon is Professor of Religious Studies and Director of Faculty Development at Le Moyne College, where he teaches courses on religious social ethics, introduction to the study of religion, and religion and healing, and directs the Faculty Excellence Program. His research focuses on the ethics of poverty policy, the justice of labor markets, and teaching and learning for social justice. He is co-author of Introduction to the Study of Religion (Orbis Books). He is currently chair of the Academic Relations Committee and a member of the Board of Directors of the AAR.

EVERYONE AGREES that changes in higher education are having an effect on the work of faculty members, departments, and programs. A key change is the growth of the corporate model into academia and its corollary of moving away from hiring tenure-track faculty toward hiring contingent faculty (both full-time and part-time). In a recent book (The Last Professors, Fordham University Press, 2008), Frank Donoghue contends that higher education is coming increasingly under the management philosophy of the “casualization” of labor, the global norm practiced by employers everywhere, in which employees are paid more by the job than with the traditional salary, benefits, and job security to which academics have accustomed. The same financial corporate values of lowering labor costs and the need for flexibility in the hiring process to reflect more efficiently changing demographics, interests, and programs now dominate most institutions of higher education. The new institutional reality is worse for those teaching in the humanities who have few connections to external funding sources or competitive options in the private sector. Donoghue contends, “We depend entirely on our home institutions not only to pay us a fair salary but to determine both the kinds of work and the amount of work we have to do (publishing, teaching, service, outreach) in order to earn that salary” (Higher Education Update, June 11, 2008).

But what are the effects of such changes on the work of faculty members in departments and institutions? What does the traditional three-legged stool of publishing, teaching, and service look like today in light of these changes? What impact does the corporate model have on conceptions of shared governance, collaboration, collegiality, and representing the academy in/to the public? How does the growing percentage of part-time and temporary faculty members in our institutions affect the service or “academic citizenship” requirements of the shrinking tenure-track faculty? What citizenship responsibilities accompany part-time and temporary faculty work? What responsibilities do tenure-line faculty members have toward part-time and temporary faculty as fellow citizens of our institutions?

These and other questions were the backdrop for the Special Topics Forum entitled “What’s My Job? Academic Citizenship and the Well-being of Schools, Departments, and Programs,” held at the 2007 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion in San Diego and sponsored by the Academic Relations Committee. The committee invited panelists to reflect on these themes on the basis of their backgrounds and experience: Mark Schwehn, Professor of Humanities at Christ College, Valparaiso University; Jane Dammen Mc Alpine, former Dean and Professor in the College of Arts and Sciences at Georgetown University and now President of Bryn Mawr College; and Louis A. Ruprecht, Associate Professor and William Suttles Chair of Religious Studies at Georgia State University.

Mark Schwehn began the discussion with his concern over the concept of “job” in the title of the forum. He believes that most professors see their work as a career and profession, not a job. That is why he prefers the term “vocation.” Vocation transcends the mundane activities of the work we do to provide a sense of meaning and identity. We not only choose our vocation, our vocation chooses us and defines in part who we are. So the first question he addressed is “What is my vocation? What is fundamental to it?” In Schwehn’s view, our vocation is not a three-legged stool but a partial description of the manifold ways in which we teach. He suggests that we should focus on what we are good at and think of ourselves as teachers first, which is the fundamental component of our vocation as faculty members. In his view, the other two legs of scholarship and service are ways of teaching — we teach through our publications and through the various ways we serve the academy and the broader communities.

Second, Schwehn raised the question of responsibility — to whom should we turn for leadership in the academy? He suggests that we must look to ourselves and then to those we trust in academic leadership positions, who demonstrate responsibility and practical wisdom. He recognizes that there are many competing goods and demands in the academy these days coming from students, parents, administration, trustees, funders, and the public at large. At times, we must take responsibility for the whole; we need to stand up for the health of the academy in the context of these competing goods and demands.

(continued on page 28)
Third, what does citizenship look like in light of the growing number of adjuncts and contingent faculty? Schwenk contends that, in this context, senior faculty should assume more ownership of governance, while junior faculty should focus more on mission. Senior faculty need to protect junior faculty and the school from their lack of experience.

We need to develop junior faculty into the mission of the department and the institution, so that they can develop their vocation as teachers and so that their teaching in all of its forms reflect that mission. He contends that this is true regardless of institutional setting — classroom teaching should look the same. This is not true, however, for shared governance. The deliberative task of departments, he suggests, is to think together about the best ways to live out our vocation. Teaching is a “corporate vocation.”

Although in his view we should consider our work as vocation, he recognizes that the changes taking place in the world and in the academy make this ideal more difficult. He asked those present to think about the following question: “To what extent have material and social conditions reduced our vocation to a job?”

The notion of changing conditions in the academy was central to Jane McAuliffe’s reflections. She noted that when she came into the academy there was a “Mr. Chips” model prevalent in the profession (see film Goodbye, Mr. Chips or James Hilton’s book by the same name): faculty stay at one institution throughout their careers, are married to the job, and think of serving that institution the same name); faculty stay at one institution into the academy there was a “Mr. Chips” Academy was central to Jane McAuliffe’s career.

It was an effect of this change and not a cause. For many the sense of “college” is gone and in its place is a feeling of isolated individualized workers in a knowledge factory.

Yet in this context, the need for faculty to affirm service and to take their rightful place as academic citizens of their institutions and communities becomes all the more important. As one participant observed, service is the “democratic work of the polis.” The political work of the faculty within the institution is what allows us to fight the corporate model. Moreover, the community can be an element of a democracy and the role that academics play as public intellectuals in centers, institutes, and the like enable the faculty to articulate such values as democracy, collegiality, and the cultivation of humanism, which challenge the narrowness of the economic and corporate models.

Some affirmed that perhaps we should think of the forms of engagement with faculty members’ institutions and communities as more of a spectrum or continuum and less of a tripod. Yet we are still discussing how faculty members invest their time and energies.

The questions related to the impact of the growth of contingent faculty on academic citizenship were brought to the forefront by Louis A. Ruprecht, who indicated that a title for his reflections might be “Where the virtues of the polis meet the late capitalist academy.” As a person who struggled for ten years to find a permanent position in the academy, able to produce only one-year or multiple-year contracts, he noted that the three legs of the academic profession’s stool vary. For contingent faculty, the primary focus is on teaching more and their work is structured as a job in the narrow sense, but that their labor is not fully recognized. Moreover, they cannot be recognized as outstanding teachers because the teaching awards go to full-time, tenure-track faculty members. Indeed, in this context, the need for faculty to articulate such values as democracy, collegiality, and the cultivation of humanism, which challenge the narrowness of the economic and corporate models.

Some observed that faculties are no longer self-governing bodies, a characteristic central to professional life. Instead, external forces are shaping the professorate. There is a big difference between being a “professional” and being an “employee.” In the world of employer-employee relations, one participant observed, “Free from the duties of the polis, one can be a teacher.” Instead, Ruprecht advocates for more democracy and diversity in determining how faculty members invest their time and energies in their institutions.

What followed was a lively discussion between the panelists and the audience. Is the academy corrupt by economic structures and the corporate model? Some observed that faculties are no longer self-governing bodies, a characteristic central to professional life. Instead, external forces are shaping the professorate. There is a big difference between being a “professional” and being an “employee.” In the world of employer-employee relations, one participant observed, “Free from the duties of the polis, one can be a teacher.” Instead, Ruprecht advocates for more democracy and diversity in determining how faculty members invest their time and energies in their institutions.

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Contingent faculty members often feel that their work is structured as a job in the narrow sense, but that their labor is not fully recognized. Moreover, they cannot be recognized as outstanding teachers because the teaching awards go to full-time, tenure-track faculty members. Indeed, in this context, the need for faculty to articulate such values as democracy, collegiality, and the cultivation of humanism, which challenge the narrowness of the economic and corporate models.

Some affirmed that perhaps we should think of the forms of engagement with faculty members’ institutions and communities as more of a spectrum or continuum and less of a tripod. Yet we are still discussing how faculty members invest their time and energies.
Looking the Other Way? Accreditation Standards and Part-Time Faculty (2008)

Earl Henry (Music), Webster University

With PURVIEW from Maine to Guam, the six different regional accrediting organizations provide their member institutions with guidelines for managing issues of educational integrity and long-term financial viability, and also study sensitive issues in higher education. Most of the regional accrediting organizations contain separate commissions that deal with different types of educational institutions (for example, K–12 schools, technical schools, and colleges and universities). This report traces the following entities: the Middle States Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (hereafter Middle States commission); the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (New England commission); the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (North Central commission); the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (Northwest commission); the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (Southern commission); the Commission on Colleges of the Central Association of Colleges and Schools (Central association commission); the Commission on Community and Junior Colleges (Community and Junior commission); and two divisions of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges: the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (Western junior commission); and the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities (Western senior commission). The New England Association of Schools and Colleges has a separate commission, not included in this discussion, that accredits technical and career institutions.

According to their mission statements, accrediting organizations serve “the common good by assuring and advancing the quality of higher learning” (North Central) and by mustering an authority that “defines, maintains, and promotes educational excellence” (Middle States). As the Western senior commission phrases it, the goal of accreditation is to foster “institutional engagement with issues of educational effectiveness and student learning.” The influence of accrediting organizations is enhanced by the fact that accreditation is required for access to federal funds such as student aid. There is no shortage of verbiage in the documents written by accrediting organizations to direct institutions of higher learning in their efforts to “assure educational quality, enhance institutional effectiveness, and foster continuous improvement” (Northwest). All of the organizations publish handbooks that explain and amplify their standards, requirements, and procedures. These documents range from twenty-eight pages (Northwest) to nearly two hundred pages (North Central). While repetition is legion, the seven handbooks studied, together with their supplementary publications, comprise nearly one thousand pages.

Since their founding, the regional accrediting organizations have confronted and established positions on many contentious issues in American higher education. To one extent or another, for example, agencies have issued guidelines to address faculty evaluation, academic freedom, diversity, distance learning, and intellectual property rights. With commissions and evaluators trained and experienced in higher education, one might expect them to be in the vanguard of the debate over part-time faculty. They are not. While the AAUP, the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, among others, have documented the growth of non-tenure-track appointments and detailed the ensuing deterioration of the profession, accrediting agencies have been largely silent. Most accreditors take no position on faculty who, whether full- or part-time, are off the tenure track—and the term “contingent faculty” appears nowhere in any of the standards documents. Because accreditors do not address the whole spectrum of contingent faculty, the present study is a survey of accreditation handbooks and selected statements relating to part-time faculty (“part-time” and “adjunct” are used synonymously in this document). Many of the guidelines and principles in accreditation handbooks are drafted in such general terms that, given an effective spin, virtually any topic or issue could be said to have been addressed. Often, handbooks refer to requirements for “the faculty” in ways that make it unclear whether full-time faculty or all faculty are meant.

The statements explored in the following pages are those that touch directly on faculty employment status: definitions, qualifications, training, and evaluation; guidelines for faculty sufficiency; and academic freedom.

**Definitions**

While the existence of contingent employment in the academy is well documented, accreditors differ substantially in their recognition of full- and part-time faculty status (Table 1). Only two accreditors, the Northwest and Western senior commissions, provide true definitions of the term “part-time faculty.” The two statements are nearly identical, and both appear in the respective glossaries (and not in guidelines themselves). A part-time faculty employee, according to the Northwest commission, is one “whose major responsibility is not related to the institution in question.” The Middle States commission regards the term “faculty” as inclusive: “the term faculty shall be broadly construed to encompass qualified professionals such as third parties contracted by the institution, part-time, or adjunct faculty, and those assigned responsibilities in academic development and delivery.”

**Table 1: Definitions and Requirements for Public Identification of “Part-time Faculty”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditor</th>
<th>Definitions and Requirements</th>
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<tr>
<td>Middle States commission</td>
<td>No definition or requirement for public identification; stipulates that “whenever used in these standards, the term ‘faculty’ shall be broadly construed to encompass qualified professionals such as third parties contracted by the institution, part-time, or adjunct faculty, and those assigned responsibilities in academic development and delivery.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England commission</td>
<td>No definition. “The institution publishes a list of its current faculty . . . distinguishing between those who have full- and part-time status.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central commission</td>
<td>No definition or requirement for public identification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest commission</td>
<td>Part-time faculty are those “whose major responsibility is not related to the institution in question; [they are] customarily assigned one or two classes with class-related responsibilities only.” <em>Catalogs and other official publications should be readily available and accurately depict . . . faculty (full-time and part-time listed separately).</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern commission</td>
<td>No definition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western junior commission</td>
<td>No definition. Catalogs and other official publications should “accurately depict,” among other things, “faculty (full- and part-time listed separately).*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western senior commission</td>
<td>“Part-time or adjunct faculty [are those] whose major responsibility is not related to the institution in question. These faculty are customarily assigned one or two classes with class-related responsibilities only.” *The institution should have publications that accurately depict faculty . . . distinguishing between those who have full- and part-time status.”</td>
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**Trends in Faculty Status, 1975–2003**

- **FT Tenured**
- **FT Tenure Track**
- **FT Non-Track**
- **Part-time**

Source: U.S. Department of Education, IPEDS Fall Staff Survey; EEOC; EEO-6 Survey. Compiled by AAUP Research Office, Washington, DC; John W. Curtis, Director of Research (5/05)

contracted by the institution, part-time or adjunct faculty, and those assigned responsibilities in academic development and delivery.10

Even when accreditors avoid the issue of contingent faculty in their standards guidelines, they may still require that statistics on faculty be separated into full- and part-time categories. The Northwest commission’s standards state that “the institution should maintain statistics concerning all faculty employed by a partner organization.”12

As used by some college and university administration today, the term “part-time faculty” is a misnomer. A large percentage of those designated part-time are actually full-time faculty with part-time pay and few or no benefits. In its glossy definitions of “faculty,” however, the Western senior commission adds an instructive caveat: “Part-time or adjunct faculty [are those] whose major responsibility is not related to the institution in question. These faculty are customarily assigned one or two classes with class-related responsibilities only.” The definition used by the Northwest commission is nearly as limiting and also includes the phrase “one or two classes.” While we have no evidence that accreditation agencies ever number of courses taught by individual adjuncts, institutions that regularly employ part-time faculty to teach three or more courses clearly practice outside accepted standards of the Western senior and Northwest commissions.

Qualifications, Training, and Evaluation

Although accreditation commissions are reluctant to recognize differences between full- and part-time faculty, they are in general agreement that the latter group must be supported and integrated into the college or university community (Table 2). In assessing “Organizational Structures to Ensure Sustainability,” the Western senior commission asks for information and policy documents that address ways in which faculty and students are oriented, supported, and integrated appropriately into the academic life of the institution. “The Northwest commission takes the most comprehensive position suggesting that part-time faculty should be well informed not only about the institution, but also about their individual rights: ‘Employment practices for part-time and adjunct faculty should include dissemination of information regarding the work assignment, rights and responsibilities, and conditions of employment.’” The Middle States commission specifies that institutions relying on part-time, adjunct, temporary, or other faculty on time-limited contracts should write employment policies and practices that are as carefully developed and communicated as those for full-time faculty. The North Central commission simply asks institutions to describe how they “use part-time faculty.”

As the numbers of part-time faculty have risen steadily over the past two decades, questions have increasingly arisen about the qualifications of individuals who work amid constant turnover and who are often appointed at the last minute. That part-time faculty should be qualified is self-evident; the Northwest commission, however, weighs in with a dedicated statement: “Part-time and adjunct faculty are qualified by academic background, degree(s), and/or professional experience to carry out their teaching assignment and/or other prescribed duties and responsibilities in accord with the mission and goals of the institution.” Other accrediting bodies are less energetic in separating the criteria for full- and part-time faculty qualifications (Table 3). The New England commission sums up the institutional priorities recommending “that all faculty pursue scholarship designed to ensure they are current in the theory, knowledge, skills, and pedagogy of their discipline or profession.”

As many institutions, tenure-track faculty build a record of interaction with peers, present papers, undergo rigorous evaluations by department and school committees, and conduct research or creative projects that are open to public scrutiny. Part-time faculty, on the other hand, may be evaluated solely on the basis of unsigned student course evaluations. Both the North Central and Northwest commissions acknowledge that part-time faculty should be evaluated. In an appendix, the North Central commission states that “policies related to the employment, orientation, supervision, and evaluation of full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate teaching assistants” should be available to the evaluation team; a Middle States option for “Analysis and Evidence” is nearly identical.

As AAUP general secretary Ernest Benjamin has written, however, the institution is the body that ensures that only qualified and effective adjuncts are hired and retained, and there is ample evidence that where part-time faculty are evaluated at all, methods are diverse and unreliable. None of the accrediting groups acknowledges that the evaluation of a tenure-track colleague is rather different from the professional assessment of a part-time colleague (who may be on campus only two or three hours a week). The Middle States commission asks for evidence that “criteria for the appointment, supervision, and review of teaching effectiveness for part-time, adjunct, and other faculty [are] consistent with those for full-time faculty.” Without mentioning faculty specifically, the North Central commission supposes that “the organization’s mission, vision, values, goals, and priorities should help it choose the self-study and evaluation processes that afford the greatest value.”

Dependence on Part-Time Faculty

With 68 percent of college faculty holding non-tenure-track positions, an institutional dependence on contingent faculty might be expected to set off warning signals for accreditation. As noted, accrediting bodies generally do not distinguish between tenure-track and non-tenure-track full-time faculty. With regard to part-time faculty, only one agency offers direct guidelines (Table 4). The New England commission requires that “the institution avoids undue dependence on part-time faculty, adjuncts, and graduate students to conduct classroom instruction.” While the inclusion of the guideline is distinctive, exactly what constitutes “undue dependence” is left to the institution to determine. The Southern commission instructs that the use of part-time faculty should be “judicious.” In a rare reference to part-time faculty, the North Central commission holds “the organization’s responsibilities for program integrity and faculty status: ‘General education must be valued and owned by the organization whether its courses are created, purchased, or shared; whether or not they are full-time taught or employed by a partner organization.’”

For other accreditors, instructional priorities are “valued and owned” by the faculty “whether their employment is full- or part-time. The

![Table 2: Employment Policies and Requirements for Training and Integration of Part-time Faculty](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditor</th>
<th>Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle States commission</td>
<td>Employment policies and practices for part-time faculty should be as carefully developed and communicated as those for full-time faculty. The greater the dependence on such employees, the greater is the institutional responsibility to provide orientation, oversight, evaluation, professional development, and opportunities for integration into the life of the institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England commission</td>
<td>Faculty categories (e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct) are clearly defined by the institution. . . . Should part-time or adjunct faculty be utilized, the institution has in place policies governing their role. &quot;Institutions that employ a significant proportion of part-time, adjunct, clinical, or temporary faculty assure their appropriate integration into the department and institution and provide opportunities for faculty development.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central commission</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest commission</td>
<td>&quot;Employment practices for part-time and adjunct faculty include dissemination of information regarding the institution, the work assignment, rights and responsibilities, and conditions of employment.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern commission</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western junior commission</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western senior commission</td>
<td>Institutions should have policies designed to integrate part-time faculty appropriately into the life of the institution.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Table 3: Policies Specifically Addressing Qualifications and Evaluation of Part-time Faculty](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditor</th>
<th>Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle States commission</td>
<td>“Criteria for the appointment, supervision, and review of teaching effectiveness for part-time, adjunct, and other faculty [should be] consistent with those for full-time faculty.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England commission</td>
<td>“The preparation and qualifications of all faculty are appropriate. . . . The institution has equitable and broad based procedures for evaluation applying to both full- and part-time faculty.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central commission</td>
<td>Accreditation guidelines request information on evaluation of part-time faculty. (appendix).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest commission</td>
<td>Part-time faculty should be “qualified by academic background, degree(s), and/or professional experience to carry out their teaching assignment and/or other prescribed duties and responsibilities.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern commission</td>
<td>Institutions should report the qualifications of full- and part-time faculty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western junior commission</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western senior commission</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Table 4: Policies Regarding Dependence on Part-time Faculty or Sufficient Numbers of Full-time Faculty](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditor</th>
<th>Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle States commission</td>
<td>The institution should have “a core of faculty with sufficient responsibility to the institution to assure the continuity and coherence of the institution’s programs.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England commission</td>
<td>The institution avoids undue dependence on part-time faculty. . . . The institution employs “an adequate number of faculty whose time commitment to the institution is sufficient to assure the accomplishment of class and out-of-class responsibilities essential for the fulfillment of institutional mission and purposes.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central commission</td>
<td>The institution “periodically assesses institutional policies concerning the use of part-time and adjunct faculty.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest commission</td>
<td>The number of full-time faculty members should be adequate to support the mission of the institution. &quot;The work of the core faculty may be supplemented and enhanced by judicious assign-ment of part-time faculty.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern commission</td>
<td>The institution should have “a substantial core of qualified faculty.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western junior commission</td>
<td>The institutional staffing plan that includes a sufficient number of full-time faculty and should employ “a faculty with substantial and continuing commitment to the institution sufficient in number, professional qualifications, and diversity to achieve its educational objectives, to establish and maintain high standards of teaching, and to ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western senior commission</td>
<td>The institution should employ at least one full-time faculty member for each graduate degree pro-gram offered.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued on page 31)
Western junior commission states this position with clarity: the institution "relies on faculty expertise for quality of programs." The Southern commission allocates responsibility in a similar way, saying that "the institution places primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of its curriculum with its faculty." At least one accreditor holds faculty responsibility directly responsible if they choose to build programs largely on the backs of adjuncts. "The greater the dependence on [part-time] employees," writes the Middle States commission, "the greater is the institutional responsibility to provide orientation, oversight, evaluation, professional development, and opportunities for integration into the academic community." The Northwest commission advises a candidate institution to demonstrate "that it periodically assesses institutional policies concerning the use of part-time and adjunct faculty relative to the mission and goals of the institution." While only the New England commission cautions specifically about a dependence on adjuncts, most accreditors recommend that institutions employ "sufficient" numbers of full-time faculty. The Western senior commission statement is typical of these relatively weaker guidelines. While avoiding a reference to adjuncts, it acknowledges the possibility of limits on part-time appointments. "The institution demonstrates that it employs a faculty with substantial and continuing commitment to the institution sufficient in number, professional qualifications, and diversity to achieve its educational objectives, to establish and oversee academic policies, and to ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs wherever and however delivered." A reference to "out-of-class" responsibilities in the New England commission handbook acknowledges that faculty do more than transfer knowledge in the classroom. Institutions using adjuncts who are listed only to appear for class and absent from campus issues along with their eventual resolution might be included in a self-study document. The North Central commission talks about "freedom of inquiry," asking member institutions to create a climate that "celebrates intellectual freedom." The commission is alone, however, in excluding from its handbook any reference to the term "academic freedom." New England commission Past five commission meetings. North Central commission Past four commission meetings. Northwest commission No "recent actions" information, but status of member and candidate institutions available in directory. Southern commission Past two commission meetings. Western junior commission Actions for last three years. Western senior commission Current and previous two commission reports.
FACULTIES THAT ARE unionized have significantly higher percentages of courses taught by tenured or tenure-track faculty members, as opposed to adjuncts, according to research presented this week at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. At the same time, colleges that are unionized tend to spend less per student on academic support services, the analysis found.

Officials of the national faculty unions said they did not know of similar research findings. Much of the previous research on faculty unions has focused on the most direct bread and butter issues: wages and benefits. But the authors of the new research — two doctoral students at Vanderbilt University — said that it was important to explore as well questions of how faculty unions affect college issues that relate to the student experience.

Based on the premises that students benefit from having more tenure-track and tenured faculty members, and from more spending on academic support categories (everything from advising centers to study abroad centers), the researchers said they wanted to see if there are patterns that could relate to unionization.

The scholars — Marc Stein and David Stuit — are "agnostic" on faculty unions (in Stein's words), study at a university without them, and have no ties either to academic unions or those who oppose them.

Their study arrives at a time that the national unions have all started campaigns to try to both improve adjunct pay and benefits and also to reverse the decline in the percentage of tenure-track jobs. The issue is a sensitive one, however. While many of the unions who support tenure-track jobs push the applause, others suspect that any gains won't help them, and resist policies based on the assumption that students benefit from not having adjunct instructors. The research cited by Stein and Stuit to back their assumption doesn't fault the quality of teaching or commitment of adjuncts, but does point to many reasons that students benefit from a full-time faculty in that these professors are more likely to stay offices on campus and not have the time to work off-campus.

To make their comparisons, Stein and Stuit used data from the National Center for Education Statistics from 1989 to 1999, focusing on 500 public four-year colleges and universities. They then used a series of controls — enrollments, enrollment levels, classification and technology courses, Carnegie classifications and location — all to insure that groups of institutions were being compared to like institutions.

Their findings: "Faculty unions are associated with fewer contingent faculty. Generally a student that enrolls in a non-unionized institution will be 10 percent more likely to have a contingent faculty instructor than one who selects a unionized school." Added up over the course of an undergraduate degree, a student at a nonunionized college is likely to have a semester's more courses taught by contingent faculty members.

On academic support services, taking similar steps to compare like institutions, the study found that campuses with faculty unions spend about 10 percent less than do nonunionized institutions. In both cases, the scholars speculate that the trends could be the result of faculty bargaining efforts. Many unions have made a priority of preserving or expanding tenure-track slots. While faculty unions are not known to advocate cuts in academic support programs (indeed many faculty unions represent the professionals who work in academic support), the authors suggest that faculty wage and benefit demands may limit what colleges can spend elsewhere.

In an interview, Stein said that the study did not analyze whether there were different results at institutions depending on whether faculty unions covered both tenure-track and adjunct positions. At some unionized campuses, a single unit represents both; at others there are different units, and at still others, one category of professors is unionized.

Union leaders said that while they hadn't done similar studies, the results rang true — at least with regard to adjunct positions. Union officials said it was important to note that advancements for more full-time, tenure-track positions was not inconsistent with pushing for better pay and benefits for adjuncts. Many have said, in fact, that because of the motivation to shift tenure-track slots to adjunct slots is to save money, when colleges are pushed to pay adjuncts more money, part of that motivation is lessened.

Craig P. Smith of the American Federation of Teachers — which has both tenure-track and adjunct members — said he hadn't yet seen the Vanderbilt study. "But we have consistently asserted that creating better faculty jobs both through pro-rata compensation for contingent faculty and more full-time tenure-track faculty lines will result in a better environment for teaching and learning at our colleges and universities. We believe that unions who have the power of collective action through negotiations and political action have proven to be the leaders in working toward these goals, despite resistance from some college administrators." And he said that such changes benefit students. "As the old saying goes, faculty members' working conditions are students' learning conditions," he said.

Valerie Wilk, higher education coordinator for the National Education Association, said that the findings reflected the way many faculty union have negotiated caps or ratios for the use of non-tenured or tenure-track positions.

Keith Hoeller, chair of the Adjunct Faculty Committee of the Washington State Conference of the American Association of University Professors and a member of the national AAUP's Committee on Contingent Faculty and the Profession, also hadn't seen the report but was intrigued by it. He said the report could provide evidence for his view that the national faculty unions favor more full-time faculty as the solution to adjunct problems. Whatever the correlation between unionization and the use of contingent faculty, Hoeller said it was important to question the authors' assumption that students are hurt by having adjunct professors. "If adjuncts were treated equally, the differences [in the student experience] would disappear," he said. So in looking at the study, he cautioned against using it to justify policies that may favor full-time faculty over part timers.

On the study's other finding — that unionized campuses spend less on academic support services — Wilk questioned the link. She noted that faculty unions represent many people in those departments. Further, she said that all kinds of college expenditures might be responsible for a smaller slice of the budget piece going to academic support. She noted, for example, that if a college spends more on administrators or heating or noninstructional technical staff, such spending could have an impact.

Endnotes
5 Western senior commission, Handbook of Accreditation, 26; Northwest commission, Accreditation Handbook, 63; Middle States commission, Characteristics of Excellence, 38; North Central commission, Handbook of Accreditation, 6.4–6.
6 Northwest commission, Accreditation Handbook, 65; New England commission, Standards for Accreditation, 15;
8 North Central commission, Handbook of Accreditation, 9.4–2; Middle States commission, Characteristics of Excellence, 39.
9 Ernst Benjamin, "How Over-Reliance on Contingent Appointments Diminishes Faculty Involvement in Student Learning," Peer Review (Fall 2002): 7.
10 Middle States commission, Characteristics of Excellence, 38; North Central commission, Handbook of Accreditation, 5.3–2.
13 Western junior commission, Accreditation Reference Handbook, 18; Southern commission, Resource Manual, 46; Middle States commission, Characteristics of Excellence, 38; North west commission, Accreditation Handbook, 63.
14 Western senior commission, Handbook of Accreditation, 25.
15 New England commission, Standards for Accreditation, 14; Western senior commission, Handbook of Accreditation, 21; Western junior commission, Accreditation Reference Handbook, 9; Middle States commission, Characteristics of Excellence, 37; North west commission, Accreditation Handbook, 31; Southern commission, Resource Manual, 16.
16 North Central commission, Handbook of Accreditation, 3.2–11, 3.2–12, 3.2–14.
17 New England commission, Standards for Accreditation, 15; Middle States commission, Characteristics of Excellence, 21.
18 Western senior commission, Handbook of Accreditation, 21.

Scott Jaschik

New Impacts Seen for Faculty Unions

Editor's Note: This article was reprinted by permission of Inside Higher Ed, the online site for news in all fields of higher education (www.insidehighered.com/).

Religious Studies News

(continued from page 31)
**Students Speak: A Report on the AAR Graduate Student Survey**

David V. Brewington, Emory University

**Survey Mechanics and Response Rate**

On March 24, 2008, 2,439 survey invitations were e-mailed to current AAR student members. The survey included questions about demographics, education, why students were pursuing an advanced degree, what students knew about advanced degrees and job markets when they entered the program, mentoring at their institution, and their relationship with and expectations of the American Academy of Religion. After several follow-up messages, the survey was closed on April 3, 2008. A total of 1,154 respondents started the survey (47.3 percent), while 1,046 completed it, making for a response rate of 42.9 percent.

**Program and Job Market Expectations/Realities**

Most respondents (approximately 82 percent) indicated that they are pursuing an advanced degree as a result of their interest in the subject matter and their desire to become part of the professoriate (when given the option to choose more than one reason). When asked to choose a specific reason, interest in the professoriate (when given the option to choose more than one reason) — 80.6 percent indicated they had no or only some understanding of this (see Figure 1). Only 12.7 percent had a clear understanding of their program’s job placement success in their field of study when they started.

For the most part, students had a good understanding of the expectations placed on them by their departments (e.g., over 85 percent have a clear or some, understanding of when they were expected to take exams, when they were expected to graduate, and criteria used for determination of graduation). However, students indicate that they were less clear about the state of the job market in their specialty — 80.6 percent indicated they had no or only some understanding of this (see Figure 1). Only 12.7 percent had a clear understanding of their program’s job placement success in their field of study (see Figure 2).

**Figure 1**

**Did you have a clear understanding of the job market for PhDs in your specific field of study when you started?**

- 4.4% N/A
- 14.9% Clear understanding
- 31.7% No understanding
- 48.9% Somewhat of an understanding

**Figure 2**

**Did you have a clear understanding of the job placement success for graduates from your institution in your field of study when you started?**

- 5.4% N/A
- 12.7% Clear understanding
- 38.9% Somewhat of an understanding
- 43.0% No understanding

Most respondents clearly prefer a tenure-track faculty position (86.7 percent — see Figure 3). Working as a nontenure-track faculty member is the next desirable position after a tenure-track job. The least preferred employment outcome for students is teaching in secondary schools, followed by working in journalism, working in government, and working in academic administration. However, students have the perception that they are much more able to receive a nontenure-track faculty job over a tenure-track faculty position (Figures 4 and 5). At the same time, students know little about their ability to get nonacademic jobs.

**Figure 3**

**Job preferences: tenure-track faculty**

- 86.7% Most Preferred
- 2.4% Least preferred
- 8.2% Somewhat preferred
- 2.7% Don’t know

**Figure 4**

**Perceived ability to receive a nontenure-track faculty position**

- 61.2% Most able to receive this job
- 37.8% Somewhat able to receive this job
- 0.0% Don’t know

**Figure 5**

**Perceived ability to receive a tenure-track faculty position**

- 51.4% Most able to receive this job
- 33.5% Least able to receive this job
- 15.1% Don’t know

When given a chance to rank their most preferred academic setting, liberal arts colleges garnered the highest preference, while working at a research university was the second highest preference. The least desired academic setting was a community college. However, over half (51.4 percent) of respondents indicated that getting a satisfactory job will be harder than they originally thought when they matriculate (Figure 6). Individuals cite their own experience in the job market, hearing peers talk about it, and seeing that “quite a few people who completed degrees in the past few years still have not gotten a job,” amongst many other reasons.

Around 50 percent of respondents indicated that their departments offer teaching development centers, readily available resources on teaching, teaching assistant training courses, and academic job seminars. Only 31.8 percent indicated their department offers seminars or workshops on nonacademic position opportunities.

**Figure 6**

**Since beginning your advanced degree program, has your perception of the likelihood of ultimately receiving a job changed?**

- 7.0% I think getting a satisfactory job will be easier than I had originally thought.
- 6.6% I’m not sure.
- 35.0% My perceptions have not changed since I began my program.
- 51.4% I think getting a satisfactory job will be harder than I had originally thought.

**Mentoring**

Students met with their advisors predominately once a semester (56 percent), and almost a third met with their advisors once a month. Nearly 10 percent met with their advisors once a year or less (Figure 7). Reasons given include the following (comments verbatim):

- I have no advisor.
- My advisor is only in the States one quarter per year.
- I am still with my default advisor, who is not a particularly gifted administrator. I will meet more frequently with my “real” advisor once I have moved on in my program to my area of specialization.
- The advisor is hard to reach. I talked more with the Dean of Advanced Studies and another adopted professor as my mentor.
- Professors are much too busy, have little interest in the MA program, and little knowledge about teaching positions available to graduates with MA degrees.
- We met about once a month in the early stages of writing, but the last year of writing, we met every few months. In the last stages, we went four months with- out meeting because his direction was becoming paralyzing. I had a “ghost advisor” work with me to complete the dissertation.
Most students rated the quality of their time with advisors as somewhat or very high (71.9 percent), but over 20 percent indicate some level of low satisfaction (Figure 8). Dissatisfaction with advisors included personality conflicts, poor communication, micromanagement, advisor had too many advisees or too much work, differences over conflicts, poor communication, micromanagement, advisor had too many advisees or too much work, differences over

![Figure 8](image)

**How would you rate the quality of time you have with your advisor?**

- 37.6% Somewhat high
- 15.1% Very high
- 34.3% Very low
- 5.1% Low
- 7.9% Don’t know

... continues (from page 33)

![Figure 7](image)

**On average, about how often do you meet with your advisor?**

- 9.8% Once a week or more
- 9.6% Once a year or less
- 36.0% Once a semester
- 32.9% Once a month
- 11.6% Once every 2 weeks
- 5.0% Once a month or less
- 5.1% Very low
- 7.9% Don’t know

![Figure 9](image)

**Is job placement part of the conversation with your advisor in the course of your program?**

- 53.5% Yes
- 46.5% No

![Figure 10](image)

**How do you pay for your health insurance?**

- 25.9% Completely out of my pocket
- 20.5% I am on a family member’s health plan
- 17.8% My school or program provides complete coverage
- 14.6% My health care is publicly funded for all citizens in my country
- 4.0% My health care is publicly funded for citizens under the government
- 4.0% Health care is publicly funded for all citizens in my country

Emergent Themes and Next Steps

At this point in the analysis, emergent themes seem to be the lack of information on and preparedness for the academic job market, a lack of information on nonacademic jobs, and a desire for tenure-track positions in liberal arts and research universities, combined with a sense of the lack of ability to attain these positions. To address these and other related themes, AAR Career Services is working to implement improvements that will expand AAR’s employment resources. These improvements include regional meeting workshops that will provide insight into the job market as well as online links and resources about nonacademic career opportunities. In addition to Career Services, various constituencies of the AAR — particularly the Job Placement Task Force and the Graduate Student Committee — will use this data to inform their work with graduate institutions, administrators, faculty, and students as we continue to address the realities for future scholars and leaders of the study of religion.

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 speaks 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 30, 2009, to

Marty Award, AAR
825 Houston Mill Road NE, Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30329

Health Insurance

Given national attention to issues of health insurance, the AAR included a question in the survey about how graduate students in religion pay for health insurance. Over 25 percent indicated they pay for health insurance completely out of pocket (see Figure 10). Only 17.8 percent indicated that their school or program provides complete coverage. Of the 14.6 percent of respondents who responded “other” to this question, there are a surprising number of students who indicated they have no health coverage. There are also many who indicated they receive health insurance through a part-time or full-time job.

Relationship to AAR

Most students indicated that they join the AAR to network (74.6 percent), and secondly to attend the Annual Meetings (59.2 percent). Most students cited networking as the most important role that AAR has played in students’ graduate careers, with networking and hearing others’ research a close second at 67.7 percent.

Nearly 26 percent of students responding to the survey provided some comment or thoughts on specific suggestions for how the AAR could be more helpful in job placement issues. These comments are instructive and deserve much more detailed analysis than can be provided here. However, non-systematic analysis indicates that graduate student members of AAR are very interested in seeing more attention devoted to job placement as a whole, and in light of a lack of tenure-track academic jobs, they would like to see more information coming from AAR about nonacademic job settings. Suggestions include the following (all comments verbatim):

- Perhaps spotlight/give publicity to programs that makes a significant effort in this regard, especially since the best programs are often rather neglected in this area.
- I think one of the best things that AAR could do would be to encourage or coercive institutions and/or departments to begin keeping and reporting a variety of helpful statistics about admission, funding, retention, degree completion, job placement, and careers of alumni. If that information was widely available it would go a long way towards cleaning up current practices.
- It’s a catch-22 because if more students knew about the current job realities and the high costs, they would probably not start a graduate program right now. . . . Graduate programs do need to begin to advise students of possible ways to structure career paths given the current context. I think, for the most part, the baby boomers will just retire and let recent grads figure it out for themselves. Little responsiveness or mentoring is happening, let alone if you are a minority or a woman.
- Encourage hiring institutions outside of academia to become more of a presence within the meetings, particularly in the job search process, and involve students in mentoring for job considerations from the beginning of their careers.

There should be less pressure to get into research-based positions upon graduation and more acceptance of alternative uses of the religious studies PhD.

I wish that MUCH more is offered to empower and encourage us in work outside of academia, particularly as independent scholars in bivocational settings.
Why does sex play such a large role for fringe sects?

Kimberly Winston  © 2008 Religion News Service

WAT IS IT WITH SECTS AND SEX? The Texas probe into alleged child abuse at a polygamous compound started with an anonymous phone call about underage girls having sex with adult men. Reports circulated of rumpled bed linens inside the sect’s glistening temple. Its imprisoned leader, Warren Jeffs, reportedly has dozens of wives and would grant and deny wives to his male followers depending on their perceived worthiness. Without multiple wives, he taught, they could never achieve salvation.

Yet Jeffs isn’t the first sect figure to come under legal scrutiny for sexual practices that outsiders might consider unusual, immoral, or even aberrant. Indeed, many new religious movements (NRMs) are distinguished not only by their unconventional beliefs but also by the sexual propensities of their male leaders. All of which raises the question: Why do people join or remain members of a group that practices unusual sexual behaviors? And what’s more, what kind of sexual power do the leaders of NRMs hold over their followers?

“Every group has its own dynamics and diversity,” said Catherine Wessinger, an expert in NRMs at Loyola University in New Orleans. “A leader can use sexual activity to diminish ties between followers and direct their affections and emotions. But the thing to remember is that no one has that charisma unless the people behind him or her believe that he or she has it.” Often, the leader believes that God or other divine beings communicate through the leader, something that can endow the leader’s sexual relations with a special holiness or sanctity, Wessinger said.

In the case of the Branch Davidians, sex with prophet David Koresh was seen as normal and desirable — even when it involved girls as young as 14. Similarly, in the Peoples Temple, whose members committed mass suicide in the Guyana jungle in 1978, sex with leader Jim Jones was sometimes a reward — for both men and women, married and unmarried.

“You would think that if you stole someone’s wife that you’d piss them off,” said veteran religion writer Don Miller, Pike, and Wessinger. “These pieces work together to suggest that there is further need for informed coverage of stories about religion, particularly unorthodox religion.

The April 2008 Texas child protection officials’ removal of 416 children from a Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (FLDS) community was widely covered by national news media. But much of this coverage disdained the religious and historical contexts for the state’s actions. Journalist Kimberly Winston of Religion News Service interviewed AAR member Timothy Miller, Sarah Pike, and Catherine Wessinger for a story about sexuality in sectarian movements that ran in several newspapers.

Winston was particularly interested in exploring the reasons behind the uneasy marriage of sexual experimentation and sectarianism. Winston’s story is followed by responses from Miller, Pike, and Wessinger. These pieces work together to suggest that there is further need for informed coverage of stories about religion, particularly unorthodox religion.

Yet while groups like Jeffs’s may garner headlines, they’re neither new nor unusual. American history has seen the rise — and often the decline — of NRMs, many with unusual sexual attitudes:

- In the late 1700s, the Shakers established a celibate community in upstate New York.
- The Oneida Community, a utopian commune established in the 1840s in upstate New York, held sex with someone “spiritually higher” advanced one’s spirituality.
- Joseph Smith, founder of Mormonism, proclaimed polygamy a divinely revealed concept, and it remained so until the mainstream Mormon Church disavowed it in 1890. That initiated the rift that would lead to the founding of the FLDS church.
- David Berg, the charismatic founder of The Family, reinterpreted Jesus’s teachings on love as sanctifying multiple sexual partners, including underage girls and boys. The group renounced sex with minors in 1986. Wessinger also links “millennial” NRMs — those that focus on a coming end of the world, like the FLDS sect — with unusual sexual attitudes. Such groups, she says, often exact relationships they believe will exist in the afterlife.

That’s what prompted members of Heaven’s Gate, a millennial sect that committed mass suicide in San Diego in 1997, to practice celibacy and male castration — they believed there would be no sexual activity or relationships in their longed-for afterlife. “I think it is absolutely connected because in a millennial movement there is a belief that there is going to be an imminent transition to a collective salvation in which relationships will be completely transformed,” Wessinger said. “They are anticipating the way they think relationships will be after their collective salvation.”

Many spiritual experiences involve the body — Pentecostal speaking in tongues, fire-walking Hindus and Buddhists, or even the bleeding wounds (stigmata) attributed to some Catholic mystics and saints. It isn’t such a leap, then, for NRMs to marry the sexual with the spiritual. “Intense religious experiences often involve the body,” Lattin said. “It is a spiritual ecstasy that can be like a sexual ecstasy. You have that physical experience of body which is very real and very integral to religious experience.”

Sarah Pike, a religious studies professor at California State University, Chico, says there may be something distinctly American about NRMs and sex. “I think it has something to do with the fact that from the very beginning Americans have had this sense that they are in the process of creating a new society and new governance,” Pike said. “It seems there is a willingness to experiment.”

But other scholars disagree, saying unusual sexual activities were once part of many mainstream religions. Early Christians, led by Saint Paul, wrote of celibacy as a means to holiness — an outrageous idea to ancient societies that placed high value on procreation. “Paul writes long passages about being celibate, like he is, because the kingdom of heaven there will be no marrying or giving in marriage,” Wessinger said.

Timothy Miller, a professor of religious history at the University of Kansas, says he sees very little different between the sexual activity in NRMs and other, more traditional religious groups. “I think it happens in regular religious movements,” he said, citing the recent sexual abuse scandals in the Hare Krishna movement and the Catholic Church, among others. “You see the same situation — someone with authority and a lot of trust has the same weaknesses and desires as anyone else. These people are human. I think that is the bottom line.”

One of the points I stressed to Kimberly Winston is that ethical values relating to sexuality change, in mainstream society and alternative religions. Conflicts sometimes arise due to the interactions of the shifting values of mainstream and marginal groups. For example, David Koresh was functioning in a social context in which sexual activity by young teenage girls was not unusual. Among the Branch Davidians, it was deemed best to channel youthful female sexuality toward bearing “God’s children.” Conversely, when Fundamentalist Latter-day Saints moved to Texas, legislators raised the age a girl could be married with parental consent from fourteen to sixteen. Members of new religious movements will reform unconventional sexual practices, especially to retain custody of children.

State authorities have the responsibility to investigate and prosecute those engaging in abusive and illegal sexual activity, but the definitions of these changes. Authorities who get carried away by the hysteria promoted by the “cult” stereotype may take excessive actions, which harm the children they are aiming to protect.

Catherine Wessinger, Loyola University
Envisioning Hinduism: Raja Ravi Varma and the Visual Canon
Karline McLain, Bucknell University

WHERE SIPPING steaming tea one hot morning in the studio of Pratap Mullick in Pune, western India, I asked the artist about his influences. He quickly reeled off a list of Western artists who have worked in the same genres as Mullick: oil and watercolor painting, as well as the popular media of comic books and advertising posters. “But what about Indian artists?” I asked. “Of course,” he replied almost dismissively, as if the question were so obvious it need not even be posed, “Ravi Varma, other Indians. All Indian painters know other Indians’ work. I have many books, many posters around to look at.” As we browsed through his personal reference library of Indian and Western lithographs, posters, books, and comic books, I was amazed at the stacks of aged lithographs that he had carefully preserved, including many from the Ravi Varma Press.

Raja Ravi Varma (1848–1906) was one of the earliest artists in India to use the medium of oil and to embrace a Western academic style in his portraits and narrative paintings of Hindu mythological subjects. Varma’s technique and subject matter were popular with Orientalists and with elite Indian nationalists; but his paintings were especially popular with the Hindu masses, who waited in line for days just to glimpse his images of the gods. For many Hindus, these new “realistic” paintings of the gods were an exciting way to engage in darshan, the ritual exchange of glances between devotee and deity that could previously only be experienced in the temple. To meet the growing demand, Varma founded his own lithographic press in Bombay in 1894, which made his images of the Hindu gods affordable to the middle classes and rapidly spread them across India.

Several art historians have recognized Varma’s substantial contribution to modern Indian art, noting that the Indian tradition of careful image preservation has meant that for more than a century now popular art has been indebted to his vision. This is certainly attested to by my conversations with Pratap Mullick and other artists. What is far less studied, however, is Varma’s impact on devotional Hinduism. Varma’s reproductions of Hindu gods were purchased by middle-class women, who hung them in their kitchens and used them in domestic puja (worship) ceremonies, and by Hindu priests who installed them in temples. Today, Varma’s images of the Hindu gods — and others modeled on them by later artists — are ritually used in homes, shops, street shrines, and temples throughout India.

In summer 2007, I spent several weeks traveling from New Delhi to Jaipur and then on to Mumbai. I interviewed several artists (working in the media of god posters, comic books, and oil painting) about Varma’s influence, in order to explore the lasting impact that Varma has had on Hindus picture and worship the divine. While in India, I also visited many small Hindu temples and modest street shrines to take note of the range of god posters and other visual imagery used in their devotional services, and I met with several Hindu families to discuss the images used in their home-based worship practices. Finally, I collected god posters from various vendors during my travels. Following this field research, I examined the South Poster Archive, a collection of 3,500 Indian devotional posters created in the twentieth century by the generations of artists following Varma, which is housed at the Special Collections Research Center in the Syracuse University Library.

In fall 2008, I will return to India for further research on Hinduism’s visual canon. As a religion, Hinduism is notoriously difficult to define: there is no single historical founder, no single body of texts that all Hindus revere as sacred, and no single soteriological system of belief. Instead, Hinduism is characterized by an array of regional gods, stories, and scriptures. This diversity has led several scholars to claim that one can only speak of Hinduism in the plural, of many Hinduisms. My research explores artist Raja Ravi Varma’s contribution to the definition of Hinduism as the shared religion of all Hindus by examining the legacy of the visual canon established by his paintings and lithographs. In his lifetime, Varma traveled throughout India to paint Hindu gods from every major region and sect, seeking to define a Hinduism united through its very diversity. Today, those featured by Varma are the deities that are known, worshiped, and reimaged again and again by Hindus throughout India.

I am grateful to the American Academy of Religion and to the National Endowment for the Humanities, both of which made it possible to begin this new research project. I will continue this research in 2008–2009 under the auspices of the American Institute of Indian Studies, which has generously funded four months of further field research in India.
J ust a little over a year ago, I was sitting in a room of academics discussing the privileges and perils of being queer in the religious academy and the conversation turned to job searches. One of my conversation partners was about to embark on the job search process and asked advice from others as to how “out” she should be in the process of interviews, since she had already determined that she should certainly not be out in her curriculum vitae or cover letters. I have to admit that I didn’t hear any of the advice that my other colleagues offered her, because her question sent me spiraling on my own journey of anxiety. As one with queer personal and professional identities, and whose academic work is deeply involved with queer theory, I was beginning to worry. “What am I going to do?” I thought, “My CV has queer written all over it.”

Perhaps the fact that I had not yet thought of this “problem” shows my naiveté, but I, of course, prefer to believe that it has more to do with the changes I have experienced in my lifetime. After all, I grew up in the Will and Grace generation—a generation who has experienced public images of gay and lesbian people in television, movies, and print media, a generation for whom pride parades, rainbow flags, and equality bumper stickers abound, a generation that has known out lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) family members, teachers, pastors, and friends, and a generation that has seen LGBT lives, experiences, and perspectives become “legitimate” sources of academic inquiry with the presence and growth of gay, lesbian, and queer studies in academic settings. Of course, the burgeoning visibility of LGBT lives has not been all sunshine and roses. Accompanying these generational shifts, there have been many public, often religious, voices condemning homosexuality and denouncing any practices by LGBT people. So I find myself trying to choose between glossing over this obvious lack in my qualifications, experience, or scholarship, or saying right out that as a gay person I could not be ordained. As a ministerial vocation, or saying right out that as a queer person who studies queer things (among others), the job search process is fraught with complex negotiations and countless permutations. So I find myself struggling to negotiate my queer religious academy, which is itself deeply enmeshed in conflicts around sexuality, sexual orientation, and gender identity, and entering it as a queer person who studies queer things (among others).

For LGBT academics in the fields of religion, the job search process is fraught with complex negotiations of identity. This characteristic is not unique to LGBT academics; such negotiations are always part of the performance of identity, no matter what the identity is. But there are some unique negotiations that come with this particular identity. For example, many of the postings for positions to which I am applying list ordination as a requirement. I, like many LGBT academics, have been a member of one of the majority of Christian denominations that refuse to ordain gay people. So I find myself trying to choose between blossoming over this obvious lack in my qualifications by emphasizing my view of teaching and scholarly work and my commitment to my queer identity, or saying right out that as a gay person I could not be ordained.

The heart of the matter is that regardless of my qualifications, experience, or scholarship, my queerness is a stumbling block for many institutions who are ready to head in that direction too.

Staying Straight/Going Queerly Forward: Navigating a Job Search When Your CV Has Queer Written All Over It

Pen Name: Emmy Russorde

Emmy is in a PhD program in religious studies near you. She is writing her dissertation and hopes to find a tenure-track job teaching in a religious studies department somewhere.

From the Student Desk

NEW TITLES IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES FROM SORIN BOOKS

When God Is Gone, Everything Is Holy
The Making of a Religious Naturalist
Chet Raymo

In what he describes as a “late-life credo,” renowned science writer Chet Raymo narrates his half-century journey from the traditional Catholicism of his youth to his present perspective as a “Catholic agnostic.” Raymo combines rigorous work in the scientific academy and a reverence for creation born of Catholic sacramental tradition to articulate his perspective as a religious naturalist. Visit Chet at www.scienccemusings.com

“...Charming and full of verve. . . . Highly recommended.”

Library Journal

Hardcover • 160 pages • $22.95

When in Doubt, Sing
Prayer in Daily Life
Jane Redmont

Drawing on her own prayer life, as well as the prayer experiences of friends from Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Buddhist, and agnostic backgrounds, Jane Redmont explores both the gifts of diverse communities and the individuality of prayer, stressing that what is effective and meaningful for one person might not be so for another. Visit Jane at www.actsforhope.blogspot.com

Library Journal

Paperback • 448 pages • $18.95

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October 2008 RSN • 37
Regional Meetings and Calls for Papers

For information about our ten regions and more detailed Calls for Papers, go to www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Regions.

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**Eastern International**

Information on the 2009 Eastern International regional meeting is not yet available. For more information, please see www.aarweb.org/about_AARRegions/ eastern_international.

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**Mid-Atlantic**

Radisson Hotel at Cross Keys
Baltimore, MD
March 26–27, 2009

We invite scholarly proposals in any area of religious studies; especially those that address the 2009 conference theme, “Religious Studies and Sustainability: Conversations and Crossroads”.

Proposal Submission
Send proposals by e-mail attachment to Devorah Schoenfeld at dshoenfeld@mcm.edu no later than November 15, 2008. You may submit no more than two proposals to the Program Committee. It is advantageous to send proposals as soon as possible.

Call for Session Presidents
The MAR–AAR will offer a discounted registration rate for any member ($10 for one day/$20 for two days) who presides at a session. The preseression form will have an area where you may check off if you are interested in presiding at a session. Note that this discounted rate will only apply to members who are not presenting during the meeting.

Mid-Atlantic Regional Awards
MAR–AAR will award $200 to the most innovative proposal for a group session (or panel) dealing with peace issues or women's studies. To help foster graduate student participation, the Robert E. Streeterman Prize of $200 will be awarded for the best student paper presented by an AAR regional member. Those interested in the Streeterman prize should submit their entire paper by November 15, 2008, and clearly indicate they are submitting the paper for prize consideration.

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**Midwest**

Dominican University
River Forest, IL
April 3–4, 2009

Conference Theme: Religion and Play

The Midwest Region invites research presentations proposals related to the academic study of religion from a variety of disciplinary perspectives and encompassing a wide range of religious and cultural phenomena. This year, we especially invite proposals dealing with topics related to our conference theme: “Religion and Play.” Proposals might include research engaging such things as: ritual performance and inverted roles and identities — gods at play; “playing” with religious convention, tradition, and symbols; theological “play”; dramaturgy: religious plays or religious dimensions of theatrical performance; religious institution theater groups; religious games and toys; religion in online virtual gaming worlds; religion and sporting games; and so forth. This year’s conference will feature a special interactive gaming session and we invite proposals for other sorts of “play-based” opportunities for conference attendees to have “serious fun.”

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**New England–Maritimes**

Instead of holding a NEMAAR regional meeting in 2008–2009, the region will continue to co-sponsor events proposed and organized by regional members from all parts of the region. For this coming year, for example, we will help to support the following:

1. A conference held in different parts of the region, focusing on the work of regional authors (these can be works in progress). NEMAAR will provide grants of up to $400 to help support regional-related costs; 2. Assistance with resources to facilitate conference planning, including best-practice planning schedules; and 3. Access to regional e-mailings to publicize the event. Proposals should be sent to Barbara Darling-Smith, Wheaton College, bdsmith@wheatonma.edu, and should include a postcard title, abstract, list of projected speakers and/or facilitators, schedule, contact person, and a budget that indicates how the NEMAAR grant will be used. If submitted by graduate students, a faculty mentor must be identified. Rolling deadline.

Teaching Workshops: The topics of greatest interest to our members include course development and teaching skills. If you would like to organize a teaching workshop, NEMAAR will provide: 1) Grants of up to $800 to help support conference-related costs; 2) Assistance with resources to facilitate conference planning, including best-practice planning schedules; and 3) Access to regional e-mailings to locate presenters and/or to publicize the event. Proposals should be sent to Barbara Darling-Smith, Wheaton College, bdsmith@wheatonma.edu, and should include a workshop title, abstract, list of projected speakers and/or facilitators, schedule, contact person, and a budget that indicates how the NEMAAR grant will be used. If submitted by graduate students, a faculty mentor must be identified. Rolling deadline.

Salon Series: A lunch and/or dinner series, held in different parts of the region, focusing on the work of regional authors (these can be works in progress). NEMAAR will provide grants of up to $400 to help support related costs and access to regional e-mailings to publicize the series. Proposals should be sent to Michael Hartwig, Emmanuel College, partyp reps@gmx.net, and should include a title, abstract, list of authors and/or facilitators, schedule, contact person, and a budget that indicates how the NEMAAR grant will be used. If submitted by graduate students, a faculty mentor must be identified. Rolling deadline.

If you have an idea or inquiry and want feedback, please send it to Linda Barnes, Boston University, linda.barnes@bmc.org. Applications should be sent to individuals listed in the call.

Co-Sponsoring Conferences: NEMAAR will function as a co-sponsor of conferences proposed by members around the region. NEMAAR’s contribution will include: 1) Grants of up to $800 to help support conference-related costs; 2) Assistance with resources to facilitate conference planning, including best-practice planning schedules; and 3) Access to regional e-mailings to publicize the event. Proposals should be sent to Grove Harris, Cambridge, MA, gwenhar@post.harvard.edu, and should include a conference title, an abstract, list of projected speakers, schedule, contact person, and a budget that indicates how the NEMAAR grant will be used. If submitted by graduate students, a faculty mentor must be identified. Rolling deadline.


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(continued on page 39)

you have an idea or inquiry and want feed-
Pacific Northwest
Pacific Lutheran University
Tacoma, WA
April 24–26, 2009
Papers will be accepted for the following program units at our Call for Papers website available in November 2008. The official Program Unit calls will appear in our fall 2008 newsletter and on our website (www.pnw-aarsbl.org).

Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (ASOR)
Gloria London, gloudo@earthlink.net.

Asian and Comparative Studies
Nicholas F. Gier, University of Idaho, ngier@uidaho.edu.

Hebrew Scriptures
Heidi Spreck, Central Washington University, spreckh@cwu.edu.

History of Christianity and North American Religions
Suzanne Crawford-O’Brien, Pacific Lutheran University, susanne.crawford@plu.edu, and Priscilla Pope-Levison, Seattle Pacific University, popej@spu.edu.

New Testament and Hellenistic Religions
Paul N. Anderson, George Fox University, pander@georgefox.edu.

Religion and Society
Kevin O’Brien, Pacific Lutheran University, obrien@plu.edu.

Theology and Philosophy of Religion
Dennis Jour, Faith Seminary, djourn@faithseminary.edu, and Mari Kim, Emsy University, maymer@itc.edu.

Women and Religion
Andy Bass, Gonzaga University, hason@gonzaga.edu, and Kendra Irons, George Fox University, kiron@georgefox.edu.

Special Topic Session in Arts and Religion
Susan G. Carter, Maryhurst University and the California Institute of Integral Studies, sncarter@yahoo.com or scarter@citc.edu, and Louise M. Pare, lmpare89@aol.com.

Program Committee. All members of the AAR/SBL, Rocky Mountain–Great Plains Region who are willing to serve on the Program Committee and review proposals are asked to notify Randy Lumpert at rlumpert@regi.edu by November 3, 2008. It is hoped that at least one faculty member from each of the participating schools in the region will serve on the Program Committee. Details on the Program Committee proposal review process will be e-mailed to those who self-identify by the deadline.

Please send all proposals and inquiries in MS Word Format to: Randolph E. Lumpert, Regis University, Department of Religious Studies, 3333 Regis BLVD, E-4, Denver, CO 80221; W: 303-458-3511; F: 303-964-5467; rlumpert@regi.edu.

Rocky Mountain–Great Plains
Regis University
Denver, CO
March 6–7, 2009
The Regional Program Committee cordially invites you to submit proposals for papers and panels to be presented at the 2009 Regional Meeting in Denver, Colorado. The deadline for submissions is November 3, 2008. Each proposal should consist of a one-page abstract describing the nature of the paper or panel. Please be sure to include reliable contact information. If you require technical support for your presentation (such as Internet connection, or audio and projection equipment), you must request it with your proposal. Proposals are welcome in all areas of religious and biblical studies. The Program Committee also welcomes proposals for panels and thematic sessions in the following areas:
- Religious Studies among the Disciplines
- Religion and Popular Culture
- Women and Religion
- The Bible and Cognate Literature
- Interreligious and Interfaith Dialogue
- Pedagogical Methods and Technologies
- Syro-Palestinian Archaeology

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

Student Paper Awards: Graduate students are encouraged to submit proposals. There will be awards for the best AAR and SBL student papers. The awards are presented during the luncheon on Saturday and carry a stipend of $100 each. To be considered for the award, a student should submit a copy of the completed paper, along with an abstract, by November 3, 2008 (Papers not chosen for an award will be considered for the program). A student's name and contact information should appear only on the cover page of the paper; student papers will be judged anonymously. The paper should be 12–15 pages double-spaced (for a 20 minute presentation). Requests for supporting technology (Internet connection, projector, etc.) must accompany your proposal.

The Program Committee also invites undergraduate students to present papers on the "Theta Alpha Kappa National Honor Society Undergraduate Panel." There will also be an award for the best paper in the panel.

Regional Scholars Award: The SBL offers a Regional Scholars award ($1,000 plus national recognition as a Regional Scholar) for an outstanding paper presented at the regional meeting by a Ph.D. candidate or recent Ph.D. (four years or fewer). If you are interested in competing in the Regional Scholars competition, you must indicate so with your paper proposal. See the regional website for more information (www.rmrg.org).

Southeastern
Sheraton–Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC
March 13–15, 2009
Call deadline: October 1, 2008. For complete information on the Call, themes, and submission guidelines, log onto the AAR website or visit www.secsorappstate.edu. Please use the proposal submission form available on the SECSOR website.

Consultation on Teaching
Feminism/Womanism
Margaret Suare, Meredith College, suarenm@meredith.edu, and Letitia Campbell, Emory University, letitia.campbell@emory.edu.

(AAR) Joint Session on Places of Redemption
Mark Medley, Baptist Seminary of Kentucky, mark.medley@bsky.org, Emily Aymer, Lexington Theological Seminary, eaymer@lexsem.edu, Michelle Voss Roberts, Rhodes College, robertmm@rhodes.edu, and Emily Holmes, Rhodes College, bhunte@rhodes.edu.

(AAR) Academic Study of Religion and Pedagogy
Margaret Aymer, Intenational Theological Center, maymer@itc.edu.

(SBL) Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament
Bryan Bibb, Furman University, bryan.bibb@furman.edu, or David Garber, Mercer University, garber_dg@mcrel.edu.

(AAR) History of Christianity
Michael Simmons, Auburn University, bishopmichael@centurytel.net.

(AAR) History of Judaism
Gilya Schmidt, University of Tennessee, gchmidt@utk.edu.

(AAR) Islam
Julianna Hamer, University of North Carolina, charlotte.jhammer@uwc.edu, and Rachel Scott, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, rvacon@vt.edu.

(SBL) New Testament
C. Kevin Rowe, Duke University, krowe@div.duke.edu.

(AAR) Philosophy of Religion
Mark Wells, Montreat College, maweil@montreat.edu.

(AAR) Religion, Culture, and the Arts
Megan Summers, Berkeley Preparatory School, summeneg@berkeleyprep.org, and Adam Ware, Florida State University, amworm@gmail.com.

(AAR) Religion, Ethics, and Society
Grace Kao, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, gkaow@vt.edu, and Darla Schumm, Hollins University, dschumm@hollins.edu.

(AAR) Religion in America
Lynn S. Neal, Wake Forest University, nealalwefsu.edu.

(AAR) Religions of Asia (formerly, History of Religions)
Steven Ramey, University of Alabama, steven.ramey@ua.edu.

(AAR) Women and Religion
Michelle Voss Roberts, Rhodes College, robertmm@rhodes.edu, and Emily Holmes, Rhodes College, bhunte@rhodes.edu.

Undergraduate Research
Send submissions by December 15, 2008, to chair Bernadette McNary-Zak, Rhodes College, mcnary_zak@rhodes.edu.

Southwest
Marriott Hotel, DFW Airport
Irving, TX
March 7–8, 2009
Submit proposals to the section chairs as listed below. Please indicate if the proposal is being submitted to more than one section. The deadline is November 1, 2008.

Arts, Literature, and Religion
Papers are solicited on the role and power of art to represent cultural values or to criticize them, the relationship between American
Religious Studies News

(continued from page 39)

culture and the practice of religion, and whether religious tolerance and tolerance of religion are abiding cultural principles.

Proposals/abstract should be submitted to Katherine Downey, The Hockaday School, kdowney@mail.hockaday.org.

History of Christianity
Three areas are of special interest: 1) 500th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin; 2) 400th anniversary of John Smyth's founding of the first Baptist Church in Amsterdam; and 3) 200th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln.

Submit proposals to Arthur A. Torpy, atorpy@grandecon.net.

Philosophy of Religion and Theology
All topics are welcome. A joint session with the Asian and Comparative Religion section and ASSR on the topic “Design and Evolution: The Encounter of Traditions and Modern Science,” is planned. Send proposals to the chairs of each section. All proposals should be no more than two pages, pasted into the body of the e-mail.

Submit proposals to both Steve Oldham, University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, soldham@umhb.edu, and Rebecca Hukey, University of Oklahoma, rhukey@ou.edu.

Ethics, Society, and Cultural Analysis
All topics welcome, including politics and religion, race and religion, social ethics, poverty and economic justice, ecological and environmental ethics, medical ethics, theological ethics, sexual ethics, and the use of scripture or tradition in ethics.

Send proposals to Melanie L. Harris, Texas Christian University, m.l.harris@tcu.edu.

Comparative and Asian Studies in Religion
All topics welcome, especially religion and science, taxonomy in religious studies, nationalism, politics, and possession, and trance in comparative perspective. A joint roundtable session with Philosophy of Religion and Theology section and ASSR on “Design and Evolution: the Encounter of Traditions and Modern Science” is also planned. Proposals should not exceed 500 words (Word attachment preferable).

Send proposals to Ivette M. Vargas, Austin College, ivette@austincollege.edu.

Theta Alpha Kappa
Student members in the Southwest Region are invited to submit papers. Submissions must come from the chapter advisor and include: 1) Presenter's name and contact information; 2) Entire paper (preferred) or an abstract of the paper (acceptable); 3) Name of the school; and 4) Venue for which the paper was prepared (e.g., honors project, senior thesis, etc.).

Submit proposals to Nadia Lahursky, Texas Christian University, n.lahursky@tcu.edu.

Teaching the Bible and Religion
Matthew Skinner, Luther Seminary

Undergraduate Research
Lori Brandt Hale, Augsburg College, and Bruce Forbes, Morningside College

SBL Sessions:
Old Testament/Hebrew Bible
Paul Niskanen, University of St. Thomas

New Testament
Juan Hernandez, Bethel Seminary, and Daniel Scholz, Cardinal Stritch University

Christian Apocrypha
Casey Elledge, Gustavus Adolphus College

Religion in the Ancient World
Glen Menzies, North Central University

Greek and Roman Religions
Philip Sellew, University of Minnesota

Early Judaism and Judaic Studies
Michael Wise, Northwestern College

Archaeology and Excavation Reports
Mark Schulter, Concordia University

Multiple Submissions

(No policy) Scholars may submit only one paper proposal to one session of the Upper Midwest regional meeting. Subsequent submissions will be declined.

Questions and Other Topics
Questions about the upcoming meeting or the appropriate section for proposals should be directed to Deanna A. Thompson, Hamline University, 1556 Hewitt Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104, dtthompson@gwu.hamline.edu. Proposals for papers or topics not listed in the call for papers are to be brought to her attention.

Notice to Graduate Students
The Upper Midwest region is pleased to announce the availability of travel scholar- ships in the amount of $100 and $250 for graduate students whose papers are accepted for presentation at the regional meeting. A limited number of these scholarships are available and they will be awarded on a competitive basis. Details may be requested at the time of making a paper proposal.

Upper Midwest Regional Officers
President: Bruce Forbes, Morningside College, Sioux City, IA

Vice-President: Susan Hill, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA

Program Committee: Amy Marga, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, and Phil Stoltzfus, University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN

Regional Director: Deanna A. Thompson, Hamline University, St. Paul, MN

Upper Midwest
Luther Seminary
Saint Paul, MN
March 27–28, 2009

Submit proposals after September 15 online at www.��ro-aarrld.org. The program for the 2009 Regional Meeting will be announced in January 2009.

Joint AAR/SBL Sessions:
Multicultural Perspectives on Theology, Religion, and Biblical Interpretation
Pruceilla Eppinger, Graceland University

AAR Sessions:
Native American Religions
Dennis Kelley, Iowa State

Ethics
Mary Gaebler, Gustavus Adolphus College

Historical Perspectives on Religion
Jim Kroemer, Marquette University

Religions in North America
Murphy Pizza, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

Religion and Science
Greg Peterson, South Dakota State University

Religion and Ecology
Nancy Vinaris-Vangerud, Hamline University

Religion, Art, and Culture
Phil Stoltzfus, University of St. Thomas

Religion, Gender, and Sexuality
C. Neal Keye, College of St. Scholastica

Philosophy of Religion: Systematic Theology
Paul Capets, United Theological Seminary, and Courtney Wilder, Midland Lutheran College

World Religions
Mark Berkson, Hamline University

Standing at the Crossroads: Twenty-First Century Challenges in Ethics, Religion, and Social Justice — Reclaiming Traditions and Renewing Commitments

This year’s theme is intended to foster discussion about responses generated by diverse faith traditions to new and old issues of social justice and equity, including, but not limited to, globalization and structural violence; civil rights, genocide, and war; intersections of race, gender, poverty, and social injustice; sexual, gender, and identity issues; and ecologic devastation/habitat destruction caused by the techni- cal, biologic, and economic developments of the twenty-first century.

Section chairs are encouraged to develop individual calls that will produce papers and panels that offer critical reflections on these themes in relation to the ongoing interests of their sections. Joint sessions and interdisciplinary panels are encouraged, if relevant to the needs and interests of the section. Panels and papers may focus on, but are not limited to, the following themes: 1) Discussions of selected religious traditions and their social and ethical behavioral commitments, with particular attention to how these commitments are reflected in ongoing/everyday practices; 2) Explorations of the use of local and global faith-based strategies to promote cultural pluralism and peace; 3) Reviews of contemporary religious responses to new technologies, biomedical developments, scientific discoveries, and/or environmental concerns; 4) Investigations of the ongoing relationship between religious traditions and evolving social justice values; 5) Studies of the ability of marginalized groups (e.g., women, racial, ethnic, religious, or caste minorities, and the poor) to successfully engage with, or challenge, marginalizing religious traditions, practices, and political, spiritual, or clerical authority, leading to new/renewed faith commitments, new interpretations of traditional practices, new understandings of scriptural text(s) and authority, new practices and rituals, or new laws; 6) Reflections on the challenges that arise for religious traditions during periods of migration, genocide, war, or other volatile situations; and 7) Historic analyses that compare and contrast spiritual, reli- gious, and ethical responses to globalization and structural violence, as well as gender and race relations in the past with current responses and realities today. For further information, visit www.sjsu.edu/wecsor.
ACADEMY FUND

Member contributions are crucial to the continued support of AAR programs.
Thank you to the following members for their generous donations!
This list reflects gifts received between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008.
Faculty

**John J. Thatamanil**, Assistant Professor of Theology, Vanderbilt Divinity School, Project Director. Thatamanil is the author of *The Ironman's Divine: God, Creation, and the Human Predicament* (Fortress Press, 2006). He is currently at work on a book tentatively entitled *Religious Diversity After “Religious”* (Fortress University Press). He is Chair of the Theological Education Steering Committee and a past President of the North American Paul Tillich Society.

**Francis X. Clooney**, S. J., Parkman Professor of Divinity and Professor of Comparative Theology, Harvard Divinity School. Clooney is one of the leading figures of comparative theology in its contemporary form. He is the author of numerous books, including *Theology After Vedanta: An Experiment in Comparative Theology* (SUNY Press, 1993); *Hindus, God, Christian God: How Reason Helps to Break Down the Boundaries Between Religions* (Oxford University Press, 2001); *Divine Mother, Blessed Mother: Hindu Goddesses and the Virgin Mary* (Oxford University Press, 2005); *Beyond Computer, St. Francis de Sales and Sri Vaisnava Deities on Loving Surrender in God* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2008); and *The Truth, the Way, the Life: Christian Commentary on the Three Holy Names of the South Indian Theologian Nimbarkacarya* (Pariscien, 2008).


**S. Mark Heim**, Samuel Albert Professor of Christian Theology, Andover Newton Theological School. Mark Heim is the author of several books on Christian approaches to religious pluralism. Among these, two have been recognized as foundational offerings that have changed the very terms of conversation within the field: *Salvation, Truth and Difference in Religion* (Ochs, 1995) and *The Depth of the Riches: A Trinitarian Theology of Religious Truth* (Eerdmans, 2000).


**John Makransky**, Associate Professor of Theology, Boston College. Makransky's publications include *Buddhahood Embodied: Sources of Controversy in India and Tibet* (SUNY Press, 1997); *Historical Consciousness as an Offering to the Trans-Historical Buddha* (Cambridge University Press, 2005). He is currently at work on two book projects: *Another Reformation: Postliberal Christianity and the Jews* (Beacon Press) and *Conve: Study Teaching and Learning Scriptural Reasoning* (Eerdmans Press).


**Prakriti Pandey**, Assistant Professor of Religion, Philosophy, Asian Studies, St. Olaf's College. Ramdahani’s monographs include *Deciphering the Deciphered: The Versa in a Source of Valid Knowledge in Sankara* (University of Hawaii Press, 1993); *The Limits of Scripture: Vivekananda’s Interpretation of the Authority of the Vedas* (University of Hawaii Press, 1994); and most recently, *The Advaita Worldview: God, World, and Humanity* (SUNY Press, 2006).

These week-long seminars will provide training to theological education faculty who are often preparing students for future religious leadership and ministry. The Theological Education Steering Committee invites applications from theological educators interested in pursuing these questions. The seminars will help address the question of religious diversity as a question of faith, that is to say, as a properly theological question: What is the meaning of my neighbor's faith for mine? While we expect that the bulk of applicants will come from seminaries and divinity schools, we also welcome theological educators who teach in theology and religious studies departments.

**Cohort One**

June 7–14, 2009, Union Theological Seminary, New York City

May 30–June 6, 2010, University of Chicago Divinity School

**Cohort Two**

June 13–20, 2010, Union Theological Seminary, New York City

May 29–June 5, 2011, University of Chicago Divinity School

Two separate cohorts will each be composed of 25 participants and 8 instructors and will meet for a week-long event the first summer, then a one-day event the following fall at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, followed by another week-long event the next summer. The seminars are designed for those relatively new to the theologies of religious pluralism and comparative theology, allowing them to learn from scholars and advance their understanding. The result of the summer seminars will be to increase the number of theological educators who can teach in the areas of theologies of religious pluralism and comparative theology, in a variety of institutions in which theological education takes place.

All accepted applicants will be awarded a cash stipend of $1,000, plus the grant will cover their expenses incurred in their participation in the seminars.

**The goals of these summer seminars are to provide theological educators with the following:**

- **Substantive introduction to the best in current scholarship and teaching resources in the areas of theologies of religious pluralism and comparative theology;**
- **The opportunity to engage in an interreligious conversation about the meaning of religious diversity;**
- **The opportunity to bring their own specific areas of research expertise into conversation with theologians of religious pluralism and comparative theology;**
- **Support in developing teaching resources, syllabi,** and other programming appropriate to the particular needs of their home institutions;
- **The opportunity to disseminate their learning by means of publication or other appropriate media;** and
- **A cohort of scholar-teachers who can support each other in their own ongoing scholarly and teaching development in the areas of theologies of religious pluralism and comparative theology.**

To be assured of consideration for Cohort One, applications must be received by December 5, 2008. Applicants will be notified by mid-January 2009.

The application deadline for Cohort Two will be in the fall of 2009.

For more information, please go to www.aarweb.org/Programs/summer_seminars or contact John J. Thatamanil at john.j.thatamanil@vanderbilt.edu.

Further information will also be available in the AAR booth (501) in the Book Exhibit hall at the AAR Annual Meeting in Chicago, November 1–3, 2008.
THE POLITICS OF LOVE

A constellation of internationally prominent theorists—philosophers, theologians and psychoanalysts—will gather to discuss the question of whether the concept of love can be redefined as a political concept. Is love necessarily a private matter or does it also have a public meaning? Can love become part of a political project? In addition to an ethics or religion of love, can there be a politics of love?

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
April 16-18, 2009

Coordinators
Linda Martín Alcoff, Professor of Philosophy
John D. Caputo, Thomas J. Watson Professor of Religion and Humanities

Registration
Fee: $125, Students: $60
Preregistration is recommended.
Made Possible in Part by a Grant from the Ray Smith Symposium.

Accommodations and all sessions at
The Sheraton Syracuse University Hotel and Conference Center

For more information and on-line registration visit our website at http://pcr.syr.edu/

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