2009 Annual Meeting News

Meet Me in Montréal 8–9
Highlights of the City and Getting Around
Performances and Exhibitions 9
Workshops 10–13
Leadership, Sustainability, Religion and Media, and Teaching Strategies
Québec and Canadian Focus 14
Twenty-Seven Sessions and Events
Globalization Focus 15
Twenty-six Sessions and Events
Reel Religion 16
Eight Films to be Shown
Special Topics Forums 16
Twenty-eight Sessions on a Wide Range of Topics
Wildcard Sessions 17
Eight Sessions of Interest
Visa Requirements 17
Passports and Visa Required for Many Participants
Students Events 18
Sponsor a 2010 Australian or Oceanian Scholar 18
An Early Glimpse of Québec 19
Cultural Pluralism in Québec

FEATURES
In the Public Interest 34
Religion and the Obama Campaign
Research Briefing 35–36
Saying Your Prayers, Constructing Your Religions: Medical Studies of Intercessory Prayer
From the Student Desk 36
Running With a MA in a PhD World

From the Editor ................................................................. 3
Officer Elections ................................................................. 3–5
Candidates for Vice President and Student Director
Centennial Celebration ......................................................... 6–7
Launch of Centennial Year and the New Look of the AAR
Academy Announces Annual Awards 20–22
Marty Award, Journalism, Excellence in Teaching, Religion and the Arts, and Book Awards
Introducing New Spotlight on Teaching Coeditors ......................................................... 23
Reid Locklin and Ellen Posman
Briefs ............................................................................. 24, 33
News from Around the Academy

The Academic Study of Religion in the Face of Budget Cuts From the Editor 3
Advice from Academy Leaders
AAR Guidelines for Teaching about Religion in K–12 Public Schools 27–28, 30
Parts One and Two
AAR/Luce Summer Seminar on Theologies of Religious Pluralism and Comparative Theology ......................................................... 29
A Report from Cohort One

The Problem that “Lies” Within: How “Collegiality” Undermines the Academy 31
The Wind Is in Our Sails .......................................................... 32–33
Important Milestone for The Fund for Theological Education

New Statement of Best Practices .................................................. 33
The Posting of Graduation and Placement Records by Graduate Programs in the Academic Study of Religion

Regional Meetings and Calls for Papers 37–40
Membership Corner ................................................................. 42
Academy Fund ..................................................................... 43–44
Contributors to the AAR
2009 Member Calendar

October

Religious Studies News October issue. Spotlight on Teaching Fall issue.

October 1. Deadline for Additional Meetings inclusion into the Annual Meeting Program Book. Deadline for Board of Directors meeting.

October 12. Annual Meeting Job Center pre-registration closes.

October 15. Regional development grant awards announced.

November

November 1. Research grant awards announced.

November 5. Regionally Elected Directors meeting, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

November 5. Executive Committee meeting, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

November 6. Fall Board of Directors meeting, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

November 6. Leadership Workshop at the Annual Meeting, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

November 6. Sustainability Workshop at the Annual Meeting, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

November 6. Annual Meeting registration and housing opens for 2010 meeting.

November 7–10. Annual Meeting, Montréal, Québec, Canada. The AAR Annual Meeting, the world’s largest gathering of scholars of religion, anticipates some 5,500 registrants, 200 publishers, and 125 hiring departments.

November 9. Annual Business Meeting at the Annual Meeting. From 11:45 AM–12:45 PM at the Palais des Congrès, Room 518C.

November 20. New program unit proposals due.

December


TBD. Program Committee meeting.

December 31. Membership renewal for 2010 due. Renew online at www.aarweb.org/Members/Due.

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Stephanie Gray
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Religious Studies News is the newspaper of record for the field especially designed to serve the professional needs of persons involved in teaching and scholarship in religion (broadly construed to include religious studies, theology, and sacred texts). Published quarterly by the American Academy of Religion, RSN is received by some 11,000 scholars and by libraries at colleges and universities across North America and abroad. Religious Studies News communicates the important events of the field and related areas. It provides a forum for members and others to examine critical issues in education, pedagogy (especially through the biannual Spotlight on Teaching), theological education (through the annual Spotlight on Theological Education), research, publishing, and the public understanding of religion. It also publishes news about the services and programs of the AAR and other organizations, including employment services and registration information for the AAR Annual Meeting.

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

2009 Staff Directory

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FROM THE EDITOR

Stephanie Gray  
Editor

We hope that this issue of Religious Studies News finds you enjoying the beginning of a new academic year. We are very happy to announce that the election of our new Vice President and Student Director is now underway. The Vice President sits on the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, and the Program Committee, and will be in line to be confirmed as President-elect and eventually President. The Student Director also sits on the Board of Directors and communicates the concerns and issues of our student members. This is your chance to cast your vote to determine our future leadership, so please do so if you have not already. Go to www.aarweb.org to vote. A link to the elections ballot will be available on the home page. Elections close on Wednesday, October 28.

In 2009, we mark the beginning of our Centennial year. We have several unique events planned for the Montréal Annual Meeting to kick off a year of celebration. From a plenary panel focusing on global perspectives of religious studies, to a lecture on “Our Home and Native Land: Colonial Encounters and the History of Religion, Spirituality, and the Secular” by the American Lectures in the History of Religions program, to a Centennial Celebration reception, we hope you will take the time to help us commemorate this most auspicious time in American Academy of Religion history.

The October Spotlight on Teaching focuses on past Excellence in Teaching Award winners and asks them to relate how their pedagogy and teaching methods have changed in the years since they won their awards. This issue also has many suggestions of places of interest, things to do, and sessions to attend during the Annual Meeting in Montréal next month. We hope this Annual Meeting provides an enriching experience for all our members. We hope to see you in Montréal!

Stephanie Gray  
Editor

The next issue of Religious Studies News will be released in March 2010 in online format. There will no longer be a print version of RSN. Current 2010 members will receive an e-mail link to our new online version of RSN in early March. From an open forum to comments on articles from readers, we hope that you will find the online version of RSN an exciting way to interact with contributors and the wider membership on topics of relevance and timeliness in the field of religious studies and theology.

AAR Officer Elections

Call for Nominations

The Nominations Committee will continue its practice of consultation during the Annual Meeting in Montréal to begin the process of selecting nominees for Vice President and Secretary in November 2010. 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 2009 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 Wednesday, October 28, 2009, 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. He will be in line to be confirmed President-Elect in 2010 and President in 2011. During his tenure, the Vice President will have the opportunity to affect AAR policy in powerful ways; in particular, during the presidential year, the incumbent makes all appointments of members to openings on committees.

Student Director

The Student Director is a member of the Board of Directors, representing the particular concerns and issues of AAR student members at large. In addition, the Student Director works with the Graduate Student Committee (GSC).

A Message from the AAR Nominations Committee

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

Once again, AAR members will be able to vote by electronic ballot. A paper ballot will be mailed to members whose e-mail addresses are not on file. Please know that we guarantee the privacy of your vote. We expect a large number of our members to vote in this election. Please be among them.

Rebecca Alpert, Chair
Nominations Committee

See page 4 for candidates’ statements

November 2010 AAR Annual Meeting Dates and Sites

2009 — Montréal, QC, Canada  
November 7–10

2010 — Atlanta, GA  
October 30–November 1

2011 — San Francisco, CA  
November 19–22

2012 — Atlanta, GA  
November 3–6

2013 — Baltimore, MD  
November 23–26
The American Academy of Religion has been an important venue for the exchange of ideas and dialogue among scholars of religion. But is the AAR poised to effectively respond to the rapidly changing methodologies and demographics of the twenty-first century? Are we, who are the AAR, can dream our collective future role as scholars of religion if we are willing to commit to the necessary changes.

As American, the AAR should strive to be ever more inclusive of scholars of religion and methodologies from all United States ethnic and racial communities, and of the religion issues on which these scholars and methodologies focus their research and attention. We, who are the AAR, have a choice: either we become a truly inclusive society, representative of the evident future of the United States and of religion scholarship, or we will become increasingly associated with the methodological and demographic past. Furthermore, we must find effective ways of expanding our contacts and dialogue with scholars of religion and methodologies from the other areas of the American continent (i.e., Central and South America, as well as all of North America), without disregarded for other areas of the world, and especially those regions and peoples that have historically been disregarded by our religion scholarship or treated exclusively as voiceless objects of our study.

As an Academy, the AAR should strive to implement the original meaning of the term “academy” (i.e., a creative and multi-vocal ambience of dialogue and exploration). Hence, the twenty-first century — through ever more prominent new methodologies, and through significant demographic changes — is inviting us to devise effective new ways for interdisciplinarity and interculturality, inasmuch as religions (the objects of our study) are no longer merely or even mainly expressive of the issues of the Eurocentric world. Therefore, the scholarly study of religion in the globalized world of the twenty-first century needs to challenge the historical preference granted a handful of disciplines and a handful of First World methodologies.

If elected, I hope to contribute to our Academy’s becoming more of what it can be — a twenty-first century society of scholars who are active contributors in both the intellectual and public spheres. The AAR will not respond to the present century by “tweaking” our conventions with “trendier” offerings. What we, who are the AAR, need is to call ourselves into this century, with its challenges, its promises, and its innovative and committed scholarship.

Needless to add that the practicalities for the implementation of the above will depend on our mutual support as AAR members — support sought and earned through dialogical, inclusive means. I commit myself to just such dialogical, inclusive leadership.

Statement on the AAR

Candidates for Vice President

Orlando Espín

Orlando Espín is professor of religious studies and theology at the University of San Diego, where he founded and directs the interdisciplinarian Center for the Study of Latin American Catholicism. Espín earned his doctorate at the Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, defending a dissertation on the grounds for dialogue between Catholicism and the Yoruba (Lukumí) religion in Cuba. He has specialized in the study of popular religions among United States Latinos/as, as well as in Latin American theology. Espín has also focused on the intersection(s) of interculturality, globalization, and religious dialogue. Author or editor of eight books and creator of an award-winning dictionary, Espín has published over three hundred book chapters and articles in professional journals. He has received several national and international awards, and holds an honorary doctorate. He has twice been elected president of the Academy of Catholic Hispanic Theologians of the United States (ACTHUS), was the first Latino/a elected to the board of directors of the Catholic Theological Society of America, founded and was first chief editor of the Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology, and has served in various roles in the Hispanic Theological Initiative and in the Hispanic Summer Program of Theology and Religion. Espín has been active in the American Academy of Religion, having served on the steering committee of the Latino/a Culture and Religion Group, and as a member of the Committee on the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession.

Otto Maduro

Otto Maduro earned his PhD from the Catholic University of Louvain (Belgium) in 1977. He is currently professor of World Christianity at Drew University Theological School (since 1992). Maduro has chaired Drew’s Church and Society Division and the PhD program in Religion and Society. He has printed nearly two hundred articles in twelve languages in journals in more than twenty countries. Maduro’s books in English include Religion and Social Conflicts (Orbis 1982), and the edited volumes The Future of Liberation Theology (Orbis 1989), Expanding the View (Orbis 1990) and Judaism, Christianity, and Liberation (Orbis 1991). Additional books in languages other than English include Mapas para la Fiera, which was published in Spanish in the United States in 1998 and in seven editions in South America. Maduro’s essay Marxismo y Religión was Best Essay of the Year, 1977–1978, in Venezuela. Maduro is associate editor of Cristianismo y Sociedad, Concilium, SIC, Lisasonn Internationales, Maiemica, the Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology, and the Journal of World Christianity; formerly also of Social Compass, JAAR, and the Journal of Contemporary Religion. He has also been the director of the Hispanic Summer Program since 2006 (www.hispanicsummerprogram.org). Maduro has won Drew University’s Will Herberg Distinguished Professor Award (1997) and Drew University Scholar/Teacher of the Year Award (2007).
**Statement on the AAR**

**Being a Graduate Student** is a juggling act. We simultaneously must attend seminars, stay on top of our research, learn new languages, teach, and maintain commitments and relationships in our nonacademic lives. One of graduate school’s biggest challenges is learning how to navigate the profession. At some point during the first years of our program, we begin to wonder: “How do I submit a conference proposal? What journals should I be reading? What professional organizations do I need to be in conversation with? How do I publish an article?”

In my quest to find these answers, I discovered that many of my peers were in the same confused position, often not knowing who to turn to for answers. “How do I publish an article?” “How do I submit a conference proposal?” “What journals should I be reading?” “What professional organizations do I need to be in conversation with?”

My goal as student liaison is to facilitate relationships between students, but also students and faculty. Supporting these interactions is the reason why professional organizations exist. These interactions are important because they allow students to share information about conferences, teaching, and research opportunities. As Student Director, I would be committed to providing professional development opportunities for graduate students in the study of religion. My enthusiasm and commitment to graduate student mentoring, as well as my administrative skills, will be helpful assets in this position. I also bring with me my experience in the graduate student community, having served as an officer in the Graduate Student Association (GSA). I would like to bring this knowledge and experience to the AAR’s graduate students.

I would like to expand on these programs and events to reach out to students who are not yet ABD. Talking with colleagues across universities, I repeatedly hear them ask how one goes about selecting a dissertation topic. This predicament motivated me to become the head of TUDOR’s Graduate Student Association. In the past three years, I have implemented a new orientation program for incoming graduate students, aimed at facilitating the transition to graduate school. The goal of this program is to help students navigate the challenges of graduate school, such as balancing coursework, research, and teaching responsibilities.

I would like to see the expansion of this program to include workshops and seminars on a variety of topics, such as grant writing, mentorship, and networking. I would also like to see the creation of a social media network for graduate students in the study of religion, where they can connect with other students and share information about upcoming events and opportunities.

I have a strong commitment to the AAR and its mission to promote the study of religion. As Student Director, I would be honored to serve as a representative to the AAR and to support the goals of the organization.

**Statement on the AAR**

A **N AAR MEMBER since 2003, I have attended all but one of those Annual Meetings (2007, for the birth of my daughter the day after the conference ended!) and have been active in the Religion and Ecology Group and also presented a paper at the Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Group at the 2008 Annual Meeting. I received a MA in religion from Yale Divinity School and am currently a doctoral candidate in the department of religious studies at Yale University. My interests include environmental ethics, especially the ascription of value to fresh water and identify elements for a global fresh water ethic. She is Scholar-in-Residence at the Episcopal Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City, where she lives with her spouse and their vigorous two-year-old daughter.

In recent years, the AAR Graduate Student Committee (GSC) has dedicated itself to incorporating programs that bring together our community of graduate students, focusing on the issues that aim to provide professional support (i.e., last year’s session on “Careers beyond the Academy”). The GSC also sponsors social gatherings, which serve as a more informal way of networking. In many cases, valuable academic connections are made over a beer or a cup of coffee — useful information is shared and professional collaborations are formed.

Along with extant programs of the Graduate Student Committee and in conjunction with other committees, I would hope to contribute to a conversation about the importance of graduate courses on Theories and/or Methods in the Study of Religion. Such a conversation might focus on resources on these topics from the Syllabus Project. It might also take conceptual cues from forthcoming issues of the JAAR as well as growing edges and challenges remain in our theorizing and our teaching about the study of religion. Finally, it might also be worth exploring whether and to what degree the offering — perhaps even (at-will) departmental requirement? — of such courses might be recommended by the AAR as a “best practice” for graduate education in the study of religion.

In short, I would be honored to serve as Student Director and would be committed to the development of existing programs while also seeking to respond to stated student needs with the creative and institutional resources available from the Board of Directors.
IN 2009, we mark the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the organization that became the American Academy of Religion. Beginning in 1909 as the Association of Biblical Instructors in American Colleges and Secondary Schools and continuing from 1922 as the National Association of Biblical Instructors, the AAR took its current name in 1963.

Over the last century, the study of religion has grown in nearly every way possible. The number of scholars interested in religion has expanded dramatically. In the same century, the number of theological schools and religious studies departments in North America has also grown. The field itself has become far more rich and complex. And the membership in our Academy has increased markedly, from a few hundred to over 11,000.

In order to celebrate this century of scholarship, the AAR will launch a series of special events and programs. These will begin at the 2009 Annual Meeting in Montréal and continue through the 2010 Annual Meeting in Atlanta. Here is some of what is in store:

In addition to preparing his presidential plenary address, 2009 AAR President Mark Juergensmeyer has put together a unique set of plenary panels for the Montréal meeting. For the Centennial kickoff, these panels will replace our usual single plenary speaker system. Mark has gathered a truly remarkable group of speakers for the Centennial in Montréal. One panel, featuring Azymandis Arza (Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University), Shirinata Guwami (Radha Raman Temple), Kochi Moti (Doshisha University), Kim Knout (University of Leeds), and Sylvia Marcos (Universidad Autonoma del Estado de Morelos and Claremont Graduate University) will take “Global Perspectives on Religious Studies.” Another panel, entitled “Rethinking Secularism,” will bring Charles Taylor (McGill University), José Casanova (Georgetown University), Habib Mahmood (University of California, Berkeley), and Craig Calhoun (New York University) together to address this timely topic. And a third panel, entitled “Islam and Modernity,” will feature Tariq Ramadan (University of Oxford), Nilüfer Göle (L’École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales), and Robin Wright (Washington Post), with Reza Aslan (University of California, Riverside) presiding. The sole single plenary speaker for the Montréal meeting (finally) is Tariq Ramadan, whose address will be entitled “Contemporary Islam: The Meaning and the Need of a Radical Reform.”

We will do other special programming in Montréal, notably at a Centennial Reception that will honor past presidents, past executive directors, and distinguished guests. Following Mark Juergensmeyer’s Presidential Plenary, we encourage conference participants to attend the reception in the Palais des Congrès (PDC-710) to reflect on the history of the AAR and envision the future of the Academy. Please join us to celebrate this special evening!

The American Lectures in the History of Religion, a longstanding AAR enterprise, has made special plans for the “AAR/ALHR Centennial Scholars and Artists Panels” that will convene at both the Montréal and Atlanta Annual Meetings. The Montréal event is entitled “Our Home and Native Land: Colonial Encounters and the History of Religion, Spirituality, and the Secular” and will feature George Elliott Clarke (University of Toronto), Alanis Obomsawin (National Film Board of Canada), Nelson Maldonado-Torres (University of California, Berkeley), and Ines M. Talamantes (University of California, Santa Barbara). The AAR/ALHR event in Atlanta in 2010 will be entitled “Bondage and Liberation: Questioning Debits to Slavery and Endowment to Debt.”

The Journal of the American Academy of Religion is also helping to observe the AAR’s Centennial. The editorial board of JAR has put forth a formal call for papers that examines the ways in which the study of religion has changed over the last several decades. This special issue of JAR will be entitled “The AAR at 100: A Centennial Reflection.”

Over the last year, the AAR Executive Staff has worked closely with our Board of Directors and a local Atlanta marketing firm to “rebrand” the AAR for the Centennial year. Last November, the Board approved a new logo; and beginning this fall, we will rework all of our publications into a common format and look. The Executive Staff has also made arrangements for a special sponsorship program that will allow publishers and other friends of the Academy to recognize our Centennial. These “gold sponsor” organizations will receive special attention in the Montréal Program Book. Edwin Mellin Press and the American Theological Library Association have already become sponsors and we expect several other groups to do so as well.

In an effort to support AAR student members and as a means to forward our international connections efforts, this fall we will announce the start of our Centennial International Travel Awards for Dissertation Research. Our plans are to hold a competitive program in which we will award two $5,000 research grants to students who plan to do dissertation research abroad. The inaugural awards will be funded with unrestricted contributions to the Academy Fund received during the previous fiscal year. The Centennial Fund, a special fund for contributions secured during the Centennial Celebration, will provide AAR members and friends an opportunity to help secure the future of the International Travel Awards. 2010 AAR President Ann Taves will continue the Centennial celebrations at the 2010 Annual Meeting in Atlanta. In addition to her Presidential Plenary, under Ann’s guidance the Atlanta program will return to single plenary speakers who will address the broad theme of “Religion and Science,” with particular attention to the ways that new research on the brain/mind and new scholarship on primateology can inform thinking about religion.

Plenary speakers for the Atlanta Annual Meeting include Frans de Waal (a noted primatologist from Emory University), Anne Harrington (who teaches the history of science at Harvard University), and Jonathan Z. Smith (who will speak at our Lifetime of Learning Plenary).

We hope that the AAR membership gathered at the Annual Meetings in 2009 and 2010 will take advantage of the many special programs we have planned to help the American Academy of Religion celebrate its Centennial!
“Our Home and Native Land”: Colonial Encounters and the History of Religion, Spirituality, and the Secular

2009 PANELISTS

Alanis Obomsawin
Alanis Obomsawin, a member of the Abenaki Nation, is one of Canada’s most distinguished documentary filmmakers. Her body of work speaks profoundly to the continued legacies of colonial power for the religious and political contexts of First Nations peoples in North America. For almost forty years, Obomsawin has directed documentaries at the National Film Board of Canada, including "Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance." In 1983, she was a member of the Order of Canada, in recognition of her dedication to the well-being of her people and the preservation of the First Nations' heritage through her filmmaking and activism. In 2009, she was honored with the Outstanding Achievement Award from the Toronto Hot Docs Documentary Film Festival, which cited her as a “master storyteller” with a profound ability to clarify the complicated histories of First Nations living within colonialism.

Inés Talamantez
Inés Talamantez, a longtime AAR member, is a professor in the department of religious studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she displays a wide range of pedagogical and research interests ranging from gender and religion and ritual studies to religion and ecology. Talamantez’s defining contributions have been to the burgeoning field of Native American religions and indigenous studies. Through both impassioned and inspired teaching and creative and lyrical scholarship, her work offers new ways to imagine the colonial encounter. Her research on Mescalero Apache cosmology and ceremonialism, with a specific focus on the initiation rituals of Apache girls, has forwarded critical scholarship in religion in many ways from challenging assumptions about the measure of time to rethinking the relationships among human embodiment and natural environments.

George Elliott Clarke
George Elliott Clarke is one of Canada’s leading poets, playwrights, and literary critics. He has long taken religion as a critical and creative entry point for his scholarly and artistic explorations of many dimensions of African-Canadian history and experience. His essays in Odyssey Home: Mapping African-Canadian Literature (University of Toronto Press, 2002), especially “Meet All Blackness Be American?: Locating Canada in Border’s Tightrope Time,” “Nationalizing Gilroy’s ‘The Black Atlantic,'” and “Treason of the Black Intellectuals,” adeptly navigate the complex relationships among nation, community, language, and race, and confront directly the question of what it is for intellectuals to be “at home” in postcolonial contexts. His Execution Poems (Gasparas Press, 2001) won the Governor General’s Award for Poetry. In 2009, Clarke was given the Martin Luther King Jr. Achievement Award and was named a Pierre Elliott Trudeau Fellow. In addition to being a poet, playwright, liberist, and literary critic, Clarke is the E. J. Pratt Professor of Canadian Literature at the University of Toronto.

Nelson Maldonado-Torres
Nelson Maldonado-Torres is associate professor in the department of ethnic studies at the University of Berkeley, and the author of Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity (Duke University Press, 2008). He has thought critically and compassionately about how a variety of colonial and postcolonial encounters have shaped our understanding of religion. Religion, in his view, has informed and manufactured civilizational boundaries as well as shaped constructions of the modern versus the nonmodern with all its withering negative stereotypes. Maldonado-Torres also examines how the process of “othering” has informed our notions of religion and spirituality. Not only does he look at the way human beings were treated as colonial and racial subjects in the Americas, but he also examines how the “black” person, the Jew, and the Muslim are treated in religious and philosophical discourses. His ongoing work is on the construction of the idea of religion, namely the genealogy of religion in imperial and colonial contexts.

The AAR Centennial Fund

In 1996 the American Academy of Religion formally launched the Academy Fund, the core of AAR’s fundraising program. Encouraged by an earlier capital campaign and quiet giving opportunities, the Academy Fund has continued to attract donors and has seen increasing financial support over the past thirteen years.

As the AAR turns 100 we introduce the Centennial Fund, a special edition of the Academy Fund. The Centennial Fund will be supported by donations which are received during the AAR’s Centennial Celebration, from August 1, 2009 – December 31, 2010. Members can choose to have their gift support the General Centennial Fund or designate their gift toward the International Dissertation Research Grant.

The General Centennial Fund will provide operational and program support to the AAR, including individual and collaborative research grants and exciting new technological enhancements and networking opportunities that will benefit members. Keep an eye on the eBulletin and RSN for more news about this.

The International Dissertation Research Grant is a new program that will provide a much needed resource to our junior scholars by providing funding to perform dissertation research outside their home country. In the future, we hope to endow this project.

We have asked our staff and our board to carefully consider their donations to either of these funds and we encourage every member to make a charitable contribution to support the Centennial Fund. We suggest any new donor consider a minimum initial gift of $100 to commemorate our 100 years. In an effort to enable more members to support the Centennial Fund we have introduced recurring giving, which allows the donor to make payments on a credit card, on a schedule of your choice. Members can also make a pledge to support the Centennial Fund. To ensure your pledge is credited toward the Centennial Fund, pledges must be completed by December 31, 2010. Each gift makes a difference.

As the AAR begins to celebrate the second century and as the Centennial Fund kicks off, we thank you for your generosity and ask for your continued support.

The New Look of the AAR

A CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION gives cause to examine the history of what the AAR has accomplished and to give thought to future goals. With this in mind, AAR has worked with Spitfire Media in Atlanta over the past year on new branding. The AAR Board of Directors accepted the recommendation of Executive Office staff and adopted a new logo for the organization. The new logo embraces a fresh, clean look and is evocative of the new horizons of scholarship the Academy will explore. AAR is in the process of changing over all of its branding to this new design and aesthetic. The goal is to showcase a cohesive and professional look for the organization and to get us started on the next one hundred years.

The Past Look of the AAR


October 2009 RSN • 7

D O COLONIAL powers depend on the force of religion to subjugate peoples and occupy land? Do colonized peoples, by contrast, resist their colonizers by means of a spiritual encounter with the land they inhabit? Both concepts — religion and spirituality — are large in the academy alongside the concept of the secular. With these terms in mind, we ask how does the study of religion focus or obscure the landings of colonialism and the hybrid traditions that live in its wake, especially in the Americas?

Seeking both to recognize and interrogate the history of our discipline, the History of Religions Jurisdiction, under the auspices of the American Lectures in the History of Religions, has convened the Centennial Scholars Panel. Four distinguished scholars and artists will discuss how their work explores one of the ways that colonialism has shaped categories of religion, spirituality, and the secular, especially within the Americas. With increasing awareness of the legacies of colonialism for the study of religion, scholars have gained perspective on the discipline’s contributions both to naturalizing colonialism and to confronting colonial and postcolonial uses of religion for identity creation and domination. The title, taken from the Canadian anthem, points to the unavoidable ambiguity of being “at home” in postcolonial worlds. Gathering together such creative and interdisciplinary conversation partners, the panel offers an extraordinary chance to rethink what it is to be at home in the study of religion.

Alanis Obomsawin, a member of the Abenaki Nation, is one of Canada’s most distinguished documentary filmmakers. Her body of work speaks profoundly to the continued legacies of colonial power for the religious and political contexts of First Nations peoples in North America. For almost forty years, Obomsawin has directed documentaries at the National Film Board of Canada, including "Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance." In 1983, she was a member of the Order of Canada, in recognition of her dedication to the well-being of her people and the preservation of the First Nations’ heritage through her filmmaking and activism. In 2009, she was honored with the Outstanding Achievement Award from the Toronto Hot Docs Documentary Film Festival, which cited her as a “master storyteller” with a profound ability to clarify the complicated histories of First Nations living within colonialism.

George Elliott Clarke is one of Canada’s leading poets, playwrights, and literary critics. He has long taken religion as a critical and creative entry point for his scholarly and artistic explorations of many dimensions of African-Canadian history and experience. His essays in Odyssey Home: Mapping African-Canadian Literature (University of Toronto Press, 2002), especially “Meet All Blackness Be American?: Locating Canada in Border’s Tightrope Time,” “Nationalizing Gilroy’s ‘The Black Atlantic,'” and “Treason of the Black Intellectuals,” adeptly navigate the complex relationships among nation, community, language, and race, and confront directly the question of what it is for intellectuals to be “at home” in postcolonial contexts. His Execution Poems (Gasparas Press, 2001) won the Governor General’s Award for Poetry. In 2009, Clarke was given the Martin Luther King Jr. Achievement Award and was named a Pierre Elliott Trudeau Fellow. In addition to being a poet, playwright, liberist, and literary critic, Clarke is the E. J. Pratt Professor of Canadian Literature at the University of Toronto.

Nelson Maldonado-Torres is associate professor in the department of ethnic studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he displays a wide range of pedagogical and research interests ranging from gender and religion and ritual studies to religion and ecology. Talamantez’s defining contributions have been to the burgeoning field of Native American religions and indigenous studies. Through both impassioned and inspired teaching and creative and lyrical scholarship, her work offers new ways to imagine the colonial encounter. Her research on Mescalero Apache cosmology and ceremonialism, with a specific focus on the initiation rituals of Apache girls, has forwarded critical scholarship in religion in many ways from challenging assumptions about the measure of time to rethinking the relationships among human embodiment and natural environments.

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Montréal the metropolis has everything a big city can offer. But Montréal is also one of a kind, a multicultural city that blends its French accent with that of over eighty other ethnic communities and charms visitors with its Euro-American ambiance. Montréal is innovative and invigorating, offering a whirlwind of cultural creations, both traditional and modern. Its downtown bustles with life at the foot of its mountain, while history is rooted in the old quarters near the river. With its year-round party atmosphere, Montréal beats to the rhythm of its festivals: jazz, comedy, cinema, fireworks, and more! Stroll through its colorful streets and typical neighborhoods representative of a mosaic of nations. . . .

DINING

Indisputably, French cuisine plays a starring, if not dominant, role on the Montréal dining scene. Yet other cultures — notably Chinese, Eastern European, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, and Thai — provide sufficient diversity for culinary feasting at area restaurants representing some seventy-five ethnic groups. Other restaurants offer fare ranging from appetizers of sweet breads in gingerbread crust to entrees of chicken legs stuffed with pistachio paste. Bring-your-own-wine restaurants on Prince-Arthur Street and the Square Saint-Louis are popular year-round. Days tend to start with café au lait sipped at a leisurely pace while evening meals often end with platters of Québec-produced cheese. While diners can order à la carte, the table d’hôte — two- to four-course offerings — are typically more economical. For pricier splurging, the menu dégustation — a five- to seven-course meal — is the annual rendezvous of cinephiles to discover exceptional new feature films judged by cinema critics from around the world. Artists and film programmers. The festival will run November 5–15.

In 1958, Montréal started development projects for a new subway system and underground city, enlarged the harbor, and opened the St. Lawrence Seaway. New buildings replaced the old, including Montréal’s two tallest skyscrapers: the forty-six-story Place Victoria. The Summer Olympics arrived in 1976 and the forty-nine-story Royal Bank of Canada Building and the forty-six-story Place Victoria. The United States. Much like Québec City, the city of Montréal had fortifications, but they were destroyed between 1804 and 1817. For over a century and a half, Montréal was the industrial and financial center of Canada. The variety of buildings included factories, warehouses, mills, and refineries that today provide a legacy of historic and architectural interest, especially in the downtown area and in Old Montréal. Many historical buildings in Old Montréal are still in their original form, notably the impressive nineteenth century headquarters of all major Canadian banks on Saint Jacques Street.

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The architecture of Montréal is characterized by the juxtaposition of the old and the new and a wide variety of styles, the legacy of two successive colonizations by the French and the British, and the close presence to its south of the architecture of the United States. Much like Quebec City, the city of Montréal had fortifications, but they were destroyed between 1804 and 1817. For over a century and a half, Montréal was the industrial and financial center of Canada. The variety of buildings included factories, warehouses, mills, and refineries that today provide a legacy of historic and architectural interest, especially in the downtown area and in Old Montréal. Many historical buildings in Old Montréal are still in their original form, notably the impressive nineteenth century headquarters of all major Canadian banks on Saint Jacques Street.

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The exhibition weaves the cataclysmic events of the Holocaust into a tapestry of Jewish history. It relates the history of the Holocaust to Montréal, a history forever entwined with that of Montréal. With a permanent exhibition, as well as temporary exhibitions focusing on its history, medicine, and religious art, the Musée des Hospitallers de l’Hôtel-Dieu de Montréal does not merely speak of the past, but also offers an enlightened view of the present.

Nativity Scenes

St. Joseph’s Oratory of Mount-Royal
3800 Chemin Queen-Mary
514-735-8211
www.saint-joseph.org/en_1119_index.asp

The exibit of nativity scenes from the Oratory Museum has become a tradition during the Christmas season. Artists and craftspeople from around the world have given a new meaning to faith, hope, and joy. The exhibit unites religious and social traditions as it presents the Nativity of Jesus in a wide variety of settings, each one more inventive than the last. More than 250 crèches from 111 countries are represented in the annual offering.

Montréal Holocaust Memorial Centre
5151, Côte Ste-Catherine Road
514-345-2605

The exhibition weaves the cataclysmic events of the Holocaust into a tapestry of Jewish history and heritage, exploring the richness and diversity of Jewish life before, during, and after the Shoah. What makes the exhibition unique is its connection to Montréal. Approximately 5,000–8,000 survivors live in the Montréal area, making the city home to the third largest survivor population in the world. Over 418 original artifacts (bequeathed to the museum by Montréal survivors), 372 photographs, and twenty films give visitors a “locally focused” lens through which to reflect on the Holocaust.

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Getting Around in Montréal

Navigating the Annual Meeting may seem a little more challenging this year in Montréal, since the headquarters hotels are about a kilometre away from the Palais des Congrès, where Registration, the Exhibit Hall, Job Center, and the majority of sessions will be located.

Shuttles

To facilitate easy movement between locations, the AAR will be running three complimentary shuttle buses in a loop stopping at the La Centre Sheraton, the Fairmont Queen Elizabeth, and the Palais des Congrès. Buses will depart every fifteen minutes on the following schedule:

Friday, November 6 8:00 AM–10:00 PM Saturday, November 7 6:30 AM–12:00 AM Sunday, November 8 6:30 AM–12:00 AM Monday, November 9 6:30 AM–8:00 PM Tuesday, November 10 6:45 AM–1:00 PM

Métro

In addition, Annual Meeting attendees may want to use Montréal’s Métro system. Fares are CAN$2.75 each way, but a three-day tourist pass with unlimited rides is only CAN$17.00. The Palais des Congrès is located adjacent to the Place-d’Armes station, making it accessible from locations throughout the city. From La Centre Sheraton it is a short walk to the Bonaventure station, and from the Fairmont Queen Elizabeth, it is a short walk to the Square-Victoria station.

More information about the Métro, including maps, fares, and hours of operation, can be found at www.stm.info/English/metro/index.htm.

Underground City

Finally, Montréal’s underground city provides an easy way to get between destinations without having to brave the cold November weather. The Underground Pedestrian Network

The name “Underground City” refers to the vast network of pedestrian walkways below the city. There are thirty-three kilometers of connecting passageways beneath downtown, with the métro (subway), commuter trains, and buses also converging here. The passageways also serve a more leisurely purpose as they provide access to forty entertainment venues and attractions.

Crescent Street

Known as one of the world’s friendliest and liveliest cities, Montréal is recognized for its cosmopolitan side and its openness. In the middle of it all is famous Crescent Street, the heart of downtown Montréal for tourists and locals alike. A wonderful sense of hospitality characterizes this tiny strip. Its typical architecture tends to create warm and authentic atmosphere. Famous for its specialty shops, art galleries, and designer boutiques, the likes of Parasuco, Hugo Boss, and Matt Bailey, Crescent shopping is the ideal mix of style and class.

Marché Bonsecours

350 Saint-Paul Street East

Recognized as one of the ten most beautiful heritage buildings in Canada, the Marché Bonsecours is a proud showcase for Québécois artists, designers, and artisans. It houses fifteen boutiques, including the Conseil des métiers d’art du Québec (Québec’s Craft Council), which offer original creations at artisan prices. Watch glass-blowing artists at work in the Gogo Glass boutique and enjoy Québécois products in the three restaurants and cafés-terraces.

Annual Meeting Performances and Exhibitions

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

Sweetgrass Singers (A8–402)

Sunday, 8:30–9:30 PM

The Sweetgrass Singers are a group of Kaniñehkwa (Mohawk) women from the community of Kahawake. The singers are a nonprofit singing society that supports Mohawk language and cultural initiatives. The women are a group of mothers who are raising their children with the language, culture, and traditions of the Kaniñehkwa people. They are part of the six-nations Haudenosaunee confederacy and are known throughout the confederacy for their songs. The women have traveled throughout Eastern Canada and the United States sharing their stories, songs, and dances with both First Nations and nonindigenous people. The Sweetgrass Singers always encourage audiences to participate in the songs and dances that celebrate Kaniñehkwa culture and look forward to the opportunity to share their stories, songs, and dances with members of the AAR.

Bharatanatyam by Hari Krishnan and inDANCE (A8–403)

Sunday, 8:30–9:30 PM

Bharatanatyam is a dance form traditionally performed by courtesans and temple-women known as devadasis or bhoginivasis in South India. When their lifestyles were criminalized by the state in 1947, their practices were reinvented, “classicalized,” and reinterpreted by upper-caste elites. Hari Krishnan, Artist-in-Residence at Wesleyan University and Artistic Director of inDANCE, has studied dance with women from over ten different devadasi lineages, and this session will offer excerpts from their very rare repertoire. It presents a counterpoint to the universalized and reinvented forms of “classical Indian dance” seen elsewhere. Commentary on the pieces will be provided by Davesh Soneji of McGill University, and will be accompanied by live music.

The Red Box (A9–403)

Monday, 8:00–10:30 PM

Set against a backdrop of modern times with Victor, who has never before told his story. Barbara, with a hidden agenda of her own, gets Victor to confront his complicated past as a member of the French Resistance. As the play travels through his memory, Victor relives falling in love for the first time with a non-Jewish boy, coming to terms with his sexuality, and estranging his own family’s dysfunction, all while the Nazi party is rising to power. He then lays out the series of mistakes he made from his heart, until he finds himself as a prisoner in a concentration camp. Victor is persecuted for being both gay and Jewish. It is Victor’s detailed path of survival and the people he meets along the way that cause him to question relationships, spirituality, and the unfathomable horror he was forced into.

THE AAR IS SHOWCasing THE FOLLOWING

PERFORMANCES AND EXHIBITIONS DURING THIS YEAR’S ANNUAL MEETING.

SWEETGRASS SINGERS (A8–402)

SUNDAY, 8:30–9:30 PM


BHARATANATYAM BY HARI KRISHNAN AND inDANCE (A8–403)

SUNDAY, 8:30–9:30 PM

BHARATANATYAM IS A DANCE FORM TRADITIONALLY PERFORMED BY COURTESEANS AND TEMPLE-WOMEN KNOWN AS DEVADASIS OR BHOGINIVASIS IN SOUTH INDIA. WHEN THEIR LIFESTYLES WERE CRIMINALIZED BY THE STATE IN 1947, THEIR PRACTICES WERE REINVENTED, “CLASSICALIZED,” AND REINTERPRETED BY UPPER-CASTE ELITES. HARI KRISHNAN, ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE AT WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF inDANCE, HAS STUDIED DANCE WITH WOMEN FROM OVER TEN DIFFERENT DEVADASI LINEAGES, AND THIS SESSION WILL OFFER EXCERPTS FROM THEIR VERY RARE REPertoire. IT PRESENTS A COUNTERPOINT TO THE UNIVERSALIZED AND REINVENTED FORMS OF “CLASSICAL INDIAN DANCE” SEEN ELSEWHERE. COMMENTARY ON THE PIECES WILL BE PROVIDED BY DAVESEH SONeJI OF McGiLL University, AND WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY LIVE MUSIC.

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The Red Box is a play whose love story begins in modern-times with Victor, who has never before told his story. Barbara, with a hidden agenda of her own, gets Victor to confront his complicated past as a member of the French Resistance. As the play travels through his memory, Victor relives falling in love for the first time with a non-Jewish boy, coming to terms with his sexuality, and estranging his own family’s dysfunction, all while the Nazi party is rising to power. He then lays out the series of mistakes he made from his heart, until he finds himself as a prisoner in a concentration camp. Victor is persecuted for being both gay and Jewish. It is Victor’s detailed path of survival and the people he meets along the way that cause him to question relationships, spirituality, and the unfathomable horror he was forced into.
AAR Sustainability Task Force to Host Annual Meeting
Half-day Workshop

ATTHE ANNUAL Meeting in Montréal, the AAR’s Sustainability Task Force will host a half-day workshop addressing the roles and methods of religion and theology teachers wanting to infuse sustainability topics into the curriculum. The workshop, “Religious Studies in an Age of Global Warming: Transforming Ourselves, Our Students, and Our Universities” will be from 1:30 PM to 5:30 PM on Friday, November 6, and will be led by Roger S. Gottlieb, Worcester Polytechnic Institute and task force member, and Stephanie Kaza, University of Vermont. Task Force members Barbara A. B. Patterson (chair), Emory University; Isabel Mukonyora, Western Kentucky University; Laurel D. Kearns, Drew University and Drew Theological School; and Sarah McFarland Taylor (former chair), Northwestern University, will serve as breakout group facilitators at the workshop. Gottlieb teaches in the Department of Humanities and Arts at Worcester Polytechnic Institute and is one of the world’s leading voices of religious environmentalism. His works in this area include This Sacred Earth: Religion, Nature, Environment (the first comprehensive textbook in the field); A Greener Faith: Religious Environmentalism and Our Planet’s Future (the first book-length analysis of religious environmentalism); The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology; Joining Hands: Politics and Religion Together for Social Change; and A Spirituality of Resistance: Finding a Peaceful Heart and Protecting the Earth.

Kaza is Director of the Environmental Program at the University of Vermont, where she teaches environmental humanities. She is best known for her work in Buddhist environmental thought and Buddhist-Christian dialogue. Her books include Dharma Rain: Sources of Buddhist Environmentalism; Hooked: Buddhist Writings on Greed, Desire, and the Urge to Consume; and Mindfully Green. At the University of Vermont, Kaza works closely with the Office of Sustainability on campus greening and socially responsible investing. Teaching the environmental crisis poses unique challenges and opportunities for higher education. The scope and extent of the threat demands that faculty inform themselves about a host of practical, theological, moral, historical, and political concerns that probably were not part of their original scholarly field. At the same time, the encompassing nature of the threat touches all of our lives. Faculty, like students, experience fear, grief, and despair as we witness the vanishing species, changed weather, and polluted waters of our planet. Yet the very universality and severity of the environmental crisis also provide a unique opportunity to make our teaching intensely relevant to the world outside the classroom, and to experience the deep satisfaction of offering teaching that is personally, morally, and politically important. This workshop will explore these challenges and opportunities, giving participants the chance to examine their own responses to the environmental crisis, to engage with faculty concerning teaching resources, sample syllabi, course modules, and instructional themes, and ways to connect with other academic departments and the wider campus sustainability movement. Material will be provided to support the development of “Religion and Environmental” courses, and integration of environmental themes into courses such as “Introduction to Religious Studies,” “Social Ethics,” “Religion and Politics,” or studies of particular religions. The workshop will take up relevant theological issues (e.g., ecological interpretations of scripture), moral problems (e.g., stewardship versus biocentric ethical models), the role of religious environmentalism in relation to other social movements (e.g., feminism, racial justice), and engaged teaching techniques designed to (re)connect students to these crucial moral issues and their meaning for life on earth.

“This workshop crosses a multitude of sub-field boundaries and appeals broadly to scholars across the curriculum who wish to address the most critical issues facing the Academy — and the world — today,” said Sarah McFarland Taylor, former chair of the Task Force. “If you attend one workshop in Montréal this year, make it this one!”

You may register for the workshop when you register for the Annual Meeting, or by using the form on this page and faxing it to 301-694-5124. The registration fee for the workshop is $50 until October 20, 2009. After that, registration is $75 onsite only. You are encouraged to register early as the workshop is limited to the first seventy-five participants.

Don’t Let Time Get Away from You!
Register for the AAR Annual Meeting Job Center by October 12. 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 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, and to register, see www.aarweb.org/jump/jobcenter.

Religious Studies News
Three Religion Majors Meet in a Café: What Do They Have in Common?

Friday, November 6, 2009
Montréal, QC

The Teagle/AAR Working Group, which produced the White Paper “The Religion Major and Liberal Education,” identified five common characteristics that suggest the religious studies major is by its very nature intercultural and comparative, multidisciplinary, critical, integrative, and creative and constructive. In this interactive workshop, participants will have an opportunity to discover and discuss this constellation of characteristics. Participants will then explore the presence of these characteristics in the design of majors in different institutional contexts (small public, large public, private, and theological). The workshop will conclude with presentations and discussions about how we address these in ways attentive both to our responsibilities as educators and to the students and the reasons they are in our programs.

“The light of the findings of the AAR/Teagle Working Group and from our own conversations with department chairs over the past few years, sustained discussion about the shape of the major in religious studies and its relation to liberal education in the twenty-first century is more important than ever,” said Fred Glennon, chair of the Academic Relations Committee.

The interactive workshop will feature several speakers, panels, and breakout sessions. Eugene V. Gallagher will open the workshop with a discussion titled “The Convergent Characteristics of the Religious Studies Major: Findings of the Teagle Working Group.” Gallagher, the Rosemary Park Professor of Religious Studies at Connecticut College and founding director of the Mankoff Center for Teaching and Learning, was a member of that working group.

A panel will follow addressing how the five characteristics play out in different institutional contexts. A breakout session led by members of the Academic Relations Committee immediately follows, which will allow participants to discuss these issues in depth.

Following lunch, which is provided, will be a session on student dynamics, their motives for study, and how students can be targeted with the characteristics in mind. Another breakout session will allow for participation from attendees.

The workshop will conclude with a plenary address from Gallagher.

“Our hope is that this workshop will not only continue the conversation begun by the AAR/Teagle Working Group but also extend it to illuminate some best practices for curriculum and program development,” Glennon said.

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. 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 chairs workshops have been:

2008 Annual Meeting Leadership Workshop — Taking Religion(s) Seriously: What Students Need to Know
2007 Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop — Best Practices: Diversifying Your Faculty — Faculty Conversations
2006 Annual Meeting Leadership Workshop — The Religion Major and Liberal Education
2005 Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop — Faculty — Honest Conversations
2004 Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop — The Ten Transforming Indicators of Excellence
2003 Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop — Personnel Issues: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly
2003 Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop — Scholarship, Service, and Stress: The Tensions of Being a Chair
2002 Annual Meeting Leadership Workshop — The Entrepreneurial Chair: Building and Sustaining Your Department in an Era of Shrinking Resources and Increasing Demands
2001 Annual Meeting Leadership Workshop — Assessing and Advancing Teaching in the Religious Studies Department
2000 Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop — The Evaluation of Religious Studies: Outcomes and the University
2000 Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop — Assessing and Advancing the Religious Studies Department


Registration is limited to the first 75 participants. Send your registration form and payment of $100.00 before October 20, 2009 ($125.00 after and onsite).

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Card Identification Number: 4 digits on front of American Express; 3 digits on back of other cards

* Card Identification Number: 4 digits on front of American Express; 3 digits on back of other cards
Religious Studies News

Teaching Strategies Workshop

Space, Place, and Religious Meaning in the Classroom

Date: Friday, November 6, 2009
12:00–6:00 PM
Where: Montréal, QC, Canada

The Teaching Strategies Workshop is arranged by the AAR Space, Place, and Religious Meaning Consultation and the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion.

Leonard Norman Primiano, Cabrini College, Presiding

As religious studies teachers, we tend to be skilled at integrating textual material, social historical analysis, ethnography, sociological study, and other approaches into our courses, but we often neglect to include a sensitivity to and sensibility of religious constructions of space and place, despite the fact that these components are central to religious experience.

This half-day workshop is intended to aid faculty in the development of classroom techniques that incorporate the study of religious space and place into our courses. Participants in the workshop will: 1) Deepen their intellectual sensitivity to space and place as components of religion; and 2) Learn specific techniques to employ religious space and place in the classroom.

PRELIMINARY AGENDA:

12:00–1:00 PM
Jeanne Kilde, University of Minnesota
Introduction and Address on Theoretical Understandings and Methods in the Study of Space and Place and Religious Meaning
This session will be to provide an overview of approaches to the study of space and place for nonexperts. It will focus on how the various approaches can be deployed in the classroom to help students ground their study of religious space and place.

1:15–2:15 PM
Lunch (provided). Lunch groups will be encouraged to reflect on how the theoretical material present in the first session might be applied to special places they already use in their classrooms and lectures, or locations they have been to or plan to visit that they would like to incorporate in their courses. Participants will begin to think critically about the types of spaces/places they might integrate into their courses.

2:15–4:00 PM
Panel discussion with audience on the use of space and place by professors of religious studies whose work focuses on a variety of religious traditions and geographical locations. Panelists include:
- Joanne Punzo Waghorne, Syracuse University
- David Simonowitz, University of California, Los Angeles
- David R. Bains, Samford University
- Susan L. Graham, St. Peter’s College
- Barbara Ambros, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- Leonard Norman Primiano, Cabrini College
Each of these scholars focus their research on the study of space/place and will share their classroom strategies pertaining to the study of a range of religious traditions.

4:00–4:15 PM
Coffee/Tea Break

4:15–5:15 PM
Small group break-out sessions. Group members will focus on the syllabi they have brought with them, discussing ways to incorporate strategies posed during the panel discussion.

5:15–6:00 PM
Full group discussion, questions, and answers.

Registration is limited to the first 45 participants. No fee is required. Lunch will be provided.

No religion says “blessed are the greedy,” says VST’s Distinguished Theologian in Residence, Sallie McFague, on religion’s role in justice and sustainability.

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AAR Career Services

Visit the AAR’s 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

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**ANNUAL MEETING NEWS**

**Cell Phones in Canada**

Some cell phones or calling plans may not allow your phone to work in Canada. Please check with your carrier. Even if your phone will work, another consideration you may have is the cell phone bills that you may face when you return home. International roaming charges can cost USD$0.29–0.69 per minute, depending on your carrier. And if you have a ‘smartphone’ like an iphone or BlackBerry that is constantly checking for new e-mail, you will be charged for every minute that your phone is on. Please check with your cell phone carrier about international plans that may help you avoid these costly surprises. Below are some links to help:

- AT&T
  - [www.wireless.att.com/learn/international/roaming/affordable-world-packages.jsp](http://www.wireless.att.com/learn/international/roaming/affordable-world-packages.jsp)
- Sprint/Nextel
- T-Mobile
  - [www.tmobile.com/International/LongDistanceOverview.aspx](http://www.tmobile.com/International/LongDistanceOverview.aspx)
- Verizon

Early Bird registration and housing for the 2010 Annual Meeting in Atlanta will open on November 6, 2009. Both registration and housing will be open on this date at [www.aarweb.org](http://www.aarweb.org). Computers will be available in the Cyber Café and the AAR Booth in the Exhibit Hall of the Palais des Congrès for AAR members to preregister during the 2009 Annual Meeting in Montréal. Early Bird registration will run through the dates of the 2009 Annual Meeting and will close on March 31, 2010. Registration for tours and workshops will be available beginning April 1, 2010. Members who have preregistered for the meeting will be sent an e-mail giving them the opportunity to add these to their registration.

October 2009 RSN • 13

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**Religion and Media Workshop**

**Texts, Scripts, Codes: How Religions and Media Make the World We Live In**

Katharine Rhodes Henderson, Auburn Theological Seminary, Presiding

Friday, November 6, 2009

9:30 AM–5:00 PM

Montréal, QC, Canada

TO REGISTER

You can register online when you register for the Annual Meeting at [www.aarweb.org/meeting/annual_meeting/current_meeting](http://www.aarweb.org/meeting/annual_meeting/current_meeting). Or complete the information below, arrange payment, and send via fax (1–330–963–0319) or surface mail (Religion and Media Workshop, c/o Experient, 2451 Enterprise Parkway, Twinsburg, OH 44087, USA).

**BADGE AND ADDRESS INFORMATION**

Name/Title

Institution

Phone Fax

Surface Address

Email

Registration is limited to the first 75 participants. Send your registration form and payment of USD $55.00 before November 6, 2009 (after November 6, register onsite with an increased registration fee of USD $70).

**PAYMENT INFORMATION**

- **Check:** (Payable to “AAR Annual Meeting,” include “Religion and Media Workshop” on the memo line)
- **Visa**
- **Mastercard**
- **American Express**
- **Discover**

Credit Card Number Expiration Date

- **CIP**

Cardholder Signature

Name on Card (Please Print)

* Card Identification Number: 4 digits on front of American Express; 3 digits on back of other cards
A7–108 North American Religions Section Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM Theme: The History of Religion in Quebec This panel provides a comprehensive and critical look at the history of religion in Quebec, from the earliest encounters with native peoples to the present day. Each panelist, who are eminent senior scholars of Quebec religious history, will examine a particular aspect and period of this history.

A7–129 North American Hinduism Consultation Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM Theme: Hinduism in Montreal and Canada: Communities in Community This panel presents four papers and a respondent discussing the variety of expressions of Hinduism found in Montreal and in other regions of Canada. The papers emphasize the subidentities among South Asians within the Hindu diaspora in a manner that reflects the subnational status of Quebec within the broad context of Canada. As a whole, the papers suggest some differences in the Canadian Hindu context in relation to other diaspora groups.

A7–131 Religion Education in Public Schools: International Perspectives Consultation Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM Theme: Quebec's New "Ethics and Religious Culture" Program As of September 2008, a new course entitled “Ethics and Religious Culture” (ERC) became mandatory for all Quebec primary and secondary schools (except for grade nine). The program represents a radical departure from previous programs. This panel examines the new program from diverse perspectives. The panel was constituted in the spirit of an “epis- temic community,” where the individual members share common values and purposes, but where salient issues are examined and knowledge constructed through very different lenses.

A7–208 Theology and Religious Reflection Section Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM Theme: Theological Contributions in the Work of Gregory Baum The work of Canadian theologian Gregory Baum has spanned more than fifty years, revealing his astonishing openness to being attentive to the theological questions that ani- mated his inquiry. This panel presentation will consider some of the key themes within Baum’s theology, exploring his faithfulness to the Christian mission of solidarity and why that mission speaks to twenty-first century challenges. A central goal of the panel is to reflect on the continued relevance of Baum’s theology, and to situate it in the context of Quebec.

A7–304 Comparative Studies in Religion Section Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM Theme: Multiculturalism and Religion in Quebec: Negotiating Religious Pluralism In this panel, papers engage in comparative explorations of how Canadians and Quebecers in particular have developed a full range of strategies for negotiating religious pluralism in an increasingly multicultural context.

A7–317 New Religious Movements Group Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM Theme: Quebec's New Religious: Inside, Outside, or Parallel to the Catholic Church This panel will describe and analyze some of Quebec’s indigenous new religious movements that have been shaped by the rapidly changing relationship between the province’s ultramon- tane Catholic Church and an increasingly sec- ular society. A typology of integrate/monarch- mental/parallel/traditional formulated by Quebec sociologists will be utilized to analyze four apocalyptic new religious movements in terms of their orientations towards the Church, Vatican II, and secularization resulting from the “Quiet Revolution.”

A8–103 Arts, Literature, and Religion Section Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM Theme: Jewish Poets of Montreal This panel examines the bearing of religion upon the lives and writings of four of the most prominent modern Jewish poets of 20th- century Jewish poets from Montreal—A. M. Klein, Irving Layton, Leonard Cohen, and Chava Rosenfarb, a Holocaust survivor who writes in Yiddish.

A8–104 Arts, Literature, and Religion Section and Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM Theme: Ways of Looking at Jesus of Montreal: From the Streets of St-Denis to Mont-Royal The aim of this panel is two-fold. The first is to offer examinations of a film that has been popular in religion and film circles. Panelists here will offer several takes on the film from various perspectives: sort of a Wallace Stevens’s “Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird” mixed with a John Berger “Ways of Seeing” approach. But instead of simply piling on more commentary to the film, our further aim is to stimulate a metacritical dialogue on reli- gious film and its reach. That is, and through the various approaches to a specific film, we make clear that there are myriad ways to view a singular film religiously.

A8–250 Special Topics Forum Sunday, 3:00–4:30 PM Sponsored by the Public Understanding of Religion Initiative Theme: The Commission on Reasonable Accommodation in Quebec: Reflections with Cochairs Charles Taylor and Gerard Bouchard In February 2007, Premier Jean Charest called upon Charles Taylor and Gerard Bouchard to head up a commission on the question of Reasonable Accommodation. The commission was in response to a series of highly publicized events in which non-Christian immigrant minority groups have been atuned to “unreasonable” demands upon the people of Quebec to accommodate their religious requirements. The commission was unique in that it included twenty-one regional citizens’ forums in which individuals were given ninety seconds to voice their opinion, concerns, and desires for the future of interreligious relations in Quebec. The final report, delivered in May 2008, has had mixed reviews from politicians, religious, and nonreligious interest groups. This forum provides the opportunity for the cochairs to offer their reflections on the process, the issues raised, and the future of interreligious relations in Quebec and beyond.

A8–307 History of Christianity Section Sunday, 5:00–6:30 PM Theme: Monastic Reflections in Contemporary Quebec Although monasticism is seen to be out of place in contemporary Quebec, it has impor- tance both socially and intellectually. Indeed, it continues to develop socially, taking on new forms and in new physical locations, but also intellectually, helping to address some of the most pressing questions of modern society. This panel is dedicated to papers addressing the changing “place” of monasticism in the province.

A8–312 Study of Judaism Section Sunday, 5:00–6:30 PM Theme: Yiddish-Montreal: From the Political Left to the Religious Right Although seemingly distinct, the political left and religious right were both significant and interdependent in Yiddish Montreal of the twentieth century. Not only did they share common immigration and social appeals, they often shared strategies, where rabbis used tactics of the labor movement to ameliorate their situation. As well, the major communal structure of Jewish Montreal in the prewar years was the Jewish Community Council (Vaad Ha’ir) wherein not only were all political- positions represented, but the Council funded all Jewish schools, including the socialist and communist as well as the traditional yeshivas. Although each presentation focuses on very different periods and milieu, they all bring to the fore two crucial issues in under- standing the evolution of Yiddish-speaking Montreal: religion and politics.

A9–103 Buddhism Section Monday, 9:00–11:30 AM Theme: Buddhism in Quebec The growth of Buddhism in Quebec resembles that of the growth of Buddhism across Canada and North America. Quebec now has dozens of Buddhist temples and meditation centers, of which about half cater to a Western-born membership. Still, because Quebec is a francophone region, Buddhism in Quebec has some unique accents. Researchers in this sexual and urban setting have been examining these features and will present on unique aspects of Buddhism in Quebec.

A9–117 Contemporary Islam Group Monday, 9:00–11:30 AM Theme: Attraction and Repulsion: Muslim Identity in Contemporary Quebec This panel explores fear of and fascination with the “other” by examining interreligious and secular-religious encounters of Muslims and non-Muslims in Quebec, where anxieties arising from conquest, language, and accelerat- ed immigration to and intermingling of the “other” have led to striking instances of “attraction” and “repulsion.”

A9–126 Religion and Popular Culture Group Monday, 9:00–11:30 AM Theme: Folklore in Quebec: Intangible, Essential, Cultural, and Religious Knowledge The linguistic and religious particularity of Quebec and the complex politics that emerged from centuries of interaction between the metropolitan states (France and England) have created an environment extremely sensible to the specifics of its different communities. While recent history has given us examples of a society trying to define its own identity, scholars are going back to the roots of Quebec’s culture, hoping to get a better understanding of the contributions made by the people. Spreading through time, cultures, languages, and religious belief, the papers of this panel explain how, in a given milieu, the motives and figures of the oral tradition and religious influences can help us learn about what Quebec was and is becoming.

A9–329 Religion and Migration Consultation Monday, 4:00–6:30 PM Theme: Religion, Ethnicity, and Identity in the Greater Montreal Area This panel will present the results of the four years of research of the GRIMER (Groupe de Recherche sur le Montréal Ethno-Religieux), an interdisciplinary research group affiliated with the religious studies and geography departments of the Université du Québec à Montréal. Funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the group’s general goal is to analyze the role of religion and its various expressions amongst different subidentities among South Asians within the Canadian Hindu context in relation to other religious and nonreligious interest groups. While there is a clear thematic coherence to the papers on the panel, they are also diverse in that they consider issues of religious pluralism, secularism, gen- der, race, memory, and historic preservation in both rural and urban settings.

A10–106 North American Religions Section Tuesday, 9:00–11:30 AM Theme: Managing Religious Diversity and Articulating Identity in Quebec The papers on this panel explore the recent efflorescence of debate over the proper management of religious diversity in Quebec. In response to several high-profile legal cases involving the notion of reasonable accommoda- tion of minority religious practices, many Quebec communities, politicians, government agencies, and private citizens have sought to weigh in on this issue. While there is a clear thematic coherence to the papers on the panel, they are also diverse in that they consider issues of religious pluralism, secularism, gender, race, memory, and historic preservation in both rural and urban settings.

A10–125 Childhood Studies and Religion Consultation Tuesday, 9:00–11:30 AM Theme: Adolescent, Young Adults, and Religion: Canadian and Quebec Studies in a Global Context Beliefs and religious practices are just part of what could be called youth religion or reli- giousity. Many studies show that spiritualities, reli- giousness, and religious orthodoxies often adopt the diversified ways or styles of youth subcul- tures. In this regard, one could ask if it is really relevant to conclude that adolescents and young adults have truly distanced themselves from religion, or are adolescents and young adults forging new relations to their religious heritage that is notably founded on a dynamic of choice that typifies the globalized world they negotiate. In this panel, the presenters will consider new research on adolescent and young adult religion in Quebec and the rest of Canada that suggest new theoretical ways to reflect on the religion or religiousity of youth in the global context.
**Sessions with a Focus on Canada**

A7–226 Wesleyan Studies Group  
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM  
Theme: Methodism and Wesleyan Traditions in Canada

A8–108 Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities Group  
Sunday, 9:00–11:30 AM  
Theme: Minority Biblical Interpretation in Canada

A8–210 Study of Islam Section and Women and Religion Section  
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM  
Theme: Shariah Courts in Canada: Islam, Gender, and Public Policy in Family Law Arbitration

A8–212 Anthropology of Religion Group  
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM  
Theme: The Anthropology of Religious Pluralism in Canada

A8–222 Native Traditions in the Americas Group  
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM  
Theme: Issues for Canada’s First Nations Peoples

A8–269 Law, Religion, and Culture Group  
Sunday, 3:00–4:30 PM  
Theme: First Nations, Islam, and Secularity: Religion and Law in the Canadian Context

A9–108 Religion and Politics Section  
Monday, 9:00–11:30 AM  
Theme: Religion, Politics, and Law in Canada

A9–228 Buddhism in the West Consultation  
Monday, 1:00–3:30 PM  
Theme: Buddhism in the West: A Canadian Focus

A9–328 Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements Consultation  
Monday, 4:00–6:30 PM  
Theme: Origins and Identity of Canadian Pentecostalism

A10–100 Wildcard Session  
Tuesday, 9:00–11:30 AM  
Theme: The Revitalization of Aboriginal Spirituality in Canada

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**Sessions with a Focus on Globalization**

A7–132 Sikh Studies Consultation  
Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM  
Theme: Identity and Diaspora

A7–135 Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogy Consultation  
Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM  
Theme: Learning in Place: Globalization, Poverty, and Race

A7–209 African Religions Group  
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM  
Theme: The Convergence of Multiple “African Diasporas” in North America

A7–211 Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Group  
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM  
Theme: Negotiating Diasporic Spaces: Practices of Religion, Aesthetics, and Pedagogy

A7–302 Special Topics Forum  
Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM  
Theme: Diaspora of Religion and Religions of Diaspora

A7–323 Sacred Space in Asia Group  
Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM  
Theme: Pilgrimage and Globalization: Affirming and Contesting Boundaries through Movement and Performance

A8–308 North American Religions Section  
Sunday, 5:00–6:30 PM  
Theme: Re(de)fining Religious Identities East to West

A8–313 Teaching Religion Section  
Sunday, 5:00–6:30 PM  
Theme: Globalization and Pedagogy: Practical and Theoretical Approaches

A8–317 Black Theology Group  
Saturday, 1:00–2:30 PM  
Theme: Re Sundering Race in the Theology of the Diaspora

A8–320 Special Topics Forum  
Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM  
Theme: Global and Local Perspectives and Permutations of West African Healing Traditions: Amisari Indigenous Healers in East to West

A8–328 World Christianity Group  
Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM  
Theme: Global and Local Perspectives and Patterns in World Christianity

A8–333 Sino-Asian Studies Section  
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM  
Theme: Chinese Diaspora Religion: A New Era

A8–358 Religion and the Social Sciences Section  
Sunday, 3:00–4:30 PM  
Theme: Colonialism and Empire

A9–318 Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Group  
Monday, 1:00–3:30 PM  
Theme: Approaches to the Study of African Diaspora Religions

A9–223 Religion and Ecology Group  
Monday, 1:00–3:30 PM  
Theme: Exploring Ecological Discourse in Global Contexts: Tension and Tropes Rooted in Local Soils

A9–314 African Religions Group and Religions, Medicines, and Healing Group  
Sunday, 5:00–6:30 PM  
Theme: Permutations of West African Healing Traditions: Amisari Indigenous Healers in Nigeria, Santeria Practitioners in the United States, and Umbanda Practitioners of Paris

A9–317 Black Theology Group  
Sunday, 5:00–6:30 PM  
Theme: Black Theology across Borders

A9–112 Teaching Religion Section  
Monday, 9:00–11:30 AM  
Theme: Challenges and Opportunities of Teaching “Faith and Globalization”

A9–133 Religion and Migration Consultation and Space, Place, and Religious Meaning Consultation  
Monday, 9:00–11:30 AM  
Theme: Sacralizing Space in Exile and Diaspora

A9–200 Plenary Panel  
Monday, 1:00–3:30 PM  
Theme: Global Perspectives on Religious Studies

A9–202 Wildcard Session  
Monday, 1:00–3:30 PM  
Theme: Approaches to the Study of African Diaspora Religions

A9–223 Religion and Ecology Group  
Monday, 1:00–3:30 PM  
Theme: Exploring Ecological Discourse in Global Contexts: Tension and Tropes Rooted in Local Soils

A9–318 Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Group  
Monday, 4:00–6:30 PM  
Theme: Exploring Ecological Discourse in Global Contexts: Tension and Tropes Rooted in Local Soils

A9–333 Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Group  
Monday, 4:00–6:30 PM  
Theme: Exploring Ecological Discourse in Global Contexts: Tension and Tropes Rooted in Local Soils

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**ANNUAL MEETING NEWS**

**Preparing leaders and scholars to teach the next generation of church leaders.**

**October 2009 RSN • 15**
A7–100 Student Town Hall Meeting: “Yes We Can!” The Future of Students in the AAR
Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM
Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee
A7–101 Queer Careers
Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM
Sponsored by the Status of LGBTQ Persons in the Profession Task Force
A7–102 A Celebration of the Tenth Anniversary of the AAR Excellence in Teaching Award: A Participatory Workshop with the Excellence in Teaching Award Recipients
Saturday, 9:00 AM–12:45 PM
Sponsored by the Teaching and Learning Committee and Walsh Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion
A7–200 (In)formation: Religious Studies and Theological Studies
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
Sponsored by the Academic Relations Committee and Theological Education Steering Committee
A7–201 Publishing Your Book: Thoughts from Oxford University Press and From the Editors of the AAR Book Series and JAAR
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
Sponsored by the Publications Committee
A7–202 To Sustain and Renew: AAR, NativeEnergy, and Building Supportive Partnerships between Academia and First Nations/First Peoples
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
Sponsored by the Sustainability Task Force and NativeEnergy
A7–301 “Our Home and Native Land”: Colonial Encounters and the History of Religion, Spirituality, and the Secular
Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM
Sponsored by the American Lectures in the History of Religion, Committee
A7–302 Diasporas of Religion and Religions of Diaspora
Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM
Sponsored by the International Connections Committee
A7–336 Beyond the Boundaries: Public Lecture Series I
Saturday, 6:00–8:00 PM
Pharoon Lounge
139 rue Saint-Paul Ouest
www.pharoonmontreal.com/pharoon
Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee
A8–101 The Big Lie: The Mismatch of Job Expectations and Placement Reality
Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM
Sponsored by the Academic Relations Committee and Job Placement Task Force
A8–139 Nurturing the Next Generation of Scholars Workshop
Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM
Sponsored by the AAR and the Fund for Theological Education
A8–136 Women’s Caucus, SWP, REM, and LGB-TIQ Women’s Mentoring Lunch
Sunday, 11:45 AM–1:24:5 PM
Sponsored by the Status of Women in the Profession Committee, Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession Committee, Status of LGBTQ Persons in the Profession Task Force, and the Women’s Caucus
A8–200 Transnationalism and Pedagogy: Teaching and Learning Beyond
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM
Sponsored by the International Connections Committee and Teaching and Learning Committee
A8–201 Conversation with Zarqa Nawaz, 2009 AAR Religion and the Arts Award Winner
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM
Sponsored by the Religion and the Arts Award Jury
A8–202 How to Propose a New Program Unit
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM
Sponsored by the Program Committee
A8–203 The Marty Forum: James H. Cone
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM
Sponsored by the Public Understanding of Religion Committee
A8–250 The Commission on Reasonable Accommodation in Quebec: Reflections with Co-chairs Charles Taylor and Gerard Bouchard
Sunday, 3:00–4:30 PM
Sponsored by the Public Understanding of Religion Committee
A8–279 “Cracks in the Tower”: Barriers to a Career in Religion
Sunday, 3:00–4:30 PM
Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee and Job Placement Task Force
A8–300 Conversation with Kwok Pui Lan, 2009 Excellence in Teaching Award Winner
Sunday, 5:00–6:30 PM
Sponsored by the Teaching and Learning Committee
A8–301 Quereting Communities of Color
Sunday, 5:00–6:30 PM
Sponsored by the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession Committee
A8–331 Beyond the Boundaries: Public Lecture Series II
Sunday, 6:00–8:00 PM
Le Pêlerin-Magellan
330 Rue Ontario E
Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee
A9–100 Global Economies of the Sacred
Monday, 9:00–11:30 AM
Sponsored by the International Connections Committee
A9–101 Got Life Yet?: A Structural Analysis
Monday, 9:00–11:30 AM
Sponsored by the Status of Women in the Profession Committee
A9–102 AAR Guidelines for Teaching about Religion in K–12 Schools
Monday, 9:00–11:30 AM
Sponsored by the Religion in the Schools Task Force
A9–137 Wabash Luncheon for Graduate Students
Monday, 11:45 AM–12:45 PM
Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee and the Walsh Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion
A9–201 Religion Scholars and National Governments: Should They Be Partners?
Monday, 1:00–3:30 PM
Sponsored by the Public Understanding of Religion Committee
A9–300 The Turn to Spirituality: Enlightenment after the Enlightenment?
Monday, 4:00–6:30 PM
Sponsored by the Theological Education Steering Committee
A9–335 Beyond the Boundaries: Public Lecture Series III
Monday, 6:00–8:00 PM
La Grande Galerie
5615 A Ch de la Côte-des-Neiges
Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee

Malls R Us (A6–403)
Friday, 9:00–11:00 PM
This film shows how malls are the new sacred spaces in which people experience a secular version of transcendence and communal identity, an environment in which we “lose ourselves” in amusement and splendor. But the film also asks whether the “religion” practiced in malls brings liberation, or simply creates more consumers for global capitalism.

Friday, 9:00–11:00 PM

Jésus de Montréal (A7–406)
Saturday, 9:00–11:00 PM
In this film, journalist and filmmaker Zarqa Nawaz visits mosques throughout Canada and talks to scholars, colleagues, friends, and neighbors about equal access for women. Discussions about the historical role of women in the Islamic faith, the current state of mosques in Canada, and personal stories of anger, fear, acceptance, and defiance punctuate the film.

Pray the Devil Back to Hell (A8–404)
Sunday, 8:30–10:30 PM
This film offers an amusing account of Liberian women’s nonviolent, interreligious resistance to Charles Taylor and the warlords who sought to overthrow him. In the face of brutal civil wars, these women reached across an entrenched Muslim-Christian divide to start a grassroots movement for peace.

Eve and the Fire Horse (A8–405)
Sunday, 8:30–10:30 PM
This film traces the life of nineteen-year-old Eve and her Chinese Canadian immigrant family. Eve attempts to make sense of her encounter with religion through her father’s traditional ways, her mother’s embrace of Catholicism. Amidst this spiritual chaos, Eve maintains ties to her Chinese religious roots and comes to her own religious synthesis.

Bonjour Shalom (A9–400)
Monday, 8:00–10:00 PM
This award-winning film explores the relationship between Hassadic Jews in Montreal’s Outremont district and their predominantly French-Quebecois neighbors. The film allows us to enter the intimacy of the Hassadic world where we discover not only what is unique to their way of life, but what they share in common with other residents.

Religious (A9–401)
Monday, 8:00–10:00 PM
Bill Maher’s film Religulous is a carefully orchestrated tour through some of the most controversial arenas of modern Christian, Jewish, and Muslim practices today. Despite its limited portrayal of religion, however, the film does raise pertinent questions about what makes religious beliefs legitimate, and what exactly constitutes a “rational critique” of religion today.
**Visa Requirements**

IT IS NECESSARY for those entering Canada to clear customs and immigration. Visitors from the United States and the European Union must present a passport in order to enter Canada. Please be prepared. Non-United States and European Union citizens should inquire about possible visa requirements. Visitors from Mexico will now require a visa. Please see www.cic.gc.ca for details. Official letters of invitation to the Annual Meeting to support visa applications are available. E-mail annualmeeting@aarweb.org with your name, address, and the full contact information of the Canadian consulate of your country.

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**Wildcard Sessions**

**A8–102 Priestly and Lay Dimensions of Zoroastrianism**

**Sunday, 9:00–11:30 AM**

It has been nearly twenty years since an academic panel on Zoroastrianism was offered at an AAR Annual Meeting. This Wildcard Panel consists of five internationally renowned scholars of the religion, representing a wide scope of research interests. The presider of the panel is also a highly respected scholar, whose work on Parsi identity and history is seminal. This diversity of interest is reflected in the papers presented. The topics of the papers range from a discussion of the historical use of Zoroastrianism as a means of either circum-scribing or opening up the religion to the laity; the role of the Internet in defining the religion today; priestly and lay attitudes to the priesthood will be explored alongside the continuity of lay ritual; and the impact of the religion on the development of Sinhalese culture.

**A8–204 International Christian Perspectives on Christian Zionism**

**Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM**
The phenomenon of Christian Zionism (in its contemporary forms, faith-based Christian political support for the state of Israel) provides opportunities for reflecting on the intersections of religion with history, popular culture, domestic political movements, foreign policy analysis, and interreligious engagement, among other topics. Specifically, the subject is becoming a locus of rich intra-Christian conversation, including matters of biblical interpretation, fundamentalism, and evangelicalism. Although Christian Zionism is largely an Anglo-American phenomenon, the diverse international perspectives included in this panel discussion will reflect on the global expressions of the movement and its significance. The exchange will be directed toward seeking methodological consensus on this broadly interdisciplinary subject.

**A8–251 Paul Ricoeur and Theology: The Hermeneutics of Texts and the Phenomenology of Experiences**

**Sunday, 3:00–4:30 PM**

This session will address the work of the late French philosopher Paul Ricoeur and his enduring influence in contemporary theological discourse. By giving equal weight to texts and actions, his method creates a chartable philosophy that resonates deeply with concerns expressed by scholars of lived religious experience (sociologists and philosophers of religion and practical and contextual theologians). In recent years, several studies of Ricoeur’s work in the fields of theology and religion have emerged — submissions from contributors that make use of Ricoeur’s work in the context of theological and religious studies. This panel of established and emerging Ricoeur scholars will provide new opportunities for critical engagement with Ricoeur and promote creative applications of his work in contemporary academia. The session will address future topics for consideration and we encourage scholars interested in planning for a future Ricoeur and theology program unit to attend.

**A8–252 Whither the “Death of God”: A Continuing Currency?**

**Sunday, 5:00–6:30 PM**

This session features a conversation between prominent radical theologian Thomas J. J. Altizer and well-known cultural critic Slavoj Žižek on the continuing and changing currency of the “death of God” idea within theology, religious studies, philosophy, the arts, and the trajectory of global culture in general. How has the notion of the death of God evolved as the secularization thesis has declined? Has the phrase become passé or is it alive, current, and still significant? Must we understand this phrase in new senses in the present globalizing world? What are the most important resources for exploring this concept and its meaning? Around the core exchange of the two panellists, some thirty or more scholars, junior and senior, who have been closely engaged with the death-of-God idea have been invited to participate actively from the audience, with the intent to catalyze a lively, multifaceted conversation on these issues.

**A8–303 Building a Successful Academic Center: Religion, Politics, and Public Engagement**

**Sunday, 5:00–6:30 PM**

One potential venue for building knowledge and understanding about the intersection of religion and public life are academic centers housed in universities, but independent from any particular department or discipline. A few university centers have gained significant reputations as prominent public venues for critical scholarship and cutting-edge knowledge resources. Participants in this wildcard session will critically reflect on this phenomenon and think through the challenges and potentials that these centers can offer to the study of religion and the role of academia in building public knowledge about religion. Questions addressed include: In what ways does the knowledge and reflection fostered by academic centers differ from that of department-based scholarship? How can academic centers cross disciplinary boundaries and foster cutting-edge research and scholarship? What are the challenges and limits of starting and running a successful center — both in terms of the home institution and the external partners and audience?

**A8–304 Studying Religion and International Development: Affinities, Intersections, and Potentials**

**Sunday, 5:00–6:30 PM**

A small yet growing body of literature on religious aspects of economic development is now forthcoming from international development scholars and institutions such as the World Bank. This largely follows upon the critical review of how conventional approaches to development have often failed to deliver theoretically and practically. The study of “religion” fits perfectly with this insistence on revision of supposedly universal understandings of personal and collective welfare. Curiously, there is relatively little focus on this topic among religious studies scholars. This panel session will explore some of the insights and creative potential for the study of “religion and development.” Scholars whose teaching and research focus on this topic will outline its dimensions and propose trajectories for further inquiry.

**A9–202 Approaches to the Study of African Diaspora Religions**

**Monday, 1:00–3:30 PM**

This panel attempts to show through a variety of African diaspora religions (Brazilian Candomblé, Haitian Vodou, and the Cuban religion of Palo Monte) the significant role these traditions play in shaping the cultures of the Americas. In addition to reshaping material and popular culture through fashion, music, and dance, these traditions also provide alternative ways in which women’s spirituality can be explored. Through field research, as well as looking at the construction of female spirituality in contemporary literary work, this proposal argues that African diaspora religions create a liberating space for the exploration of female spirituality.

**A10–100 The Revitalization of Aboriginal Spirituality in Canada**

**Tuesday, 9:00–11:30 AM**

This roundtable provides an opportunity for a group of religious studies scholars who work in the area of aboriginal religious traditions to continue a conversation started at the Aboriginal Policy Research Conference and the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion Annual Congress. Participants present results of their recent research and discuss contemporary issues related to the revitalization of Aboriginal spirituality in Canada. Implications for government policy will be addressed. The panel organizers encourage members of the AAR Native Traditions in the Americas Group to join the discussion and provide insight into related issues in the United States context.
**The Student Lounge**

The Student Lounge is a place for students to relax in the midst of the hectic Annual Meeting. We hope that you will take advantage of the free coffee and the chance to talk with fellow students. The lounge will be open Saturday, 8:00 AM to 6:30 PM and Tuesday, 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM. The Graduate Student Committee has also organized a series of round-table discussions on topics related to professionalization and student life. We invite you to join us as we discuss the following topics.

The student round-table discussions are sponsored by the American Theological Library Association.

**Saturday, 9:00–10:00 AM**
Building Intellectual Community: The Graduate Student Imperative
Led by Christopher M. Rinn, Baylor University

**Saturday, 10:00–11:00 AM**
Why Are They Writing? Tips for New Adjuncts and Those Looking to Adjunct
Led by Rob Hasmeyer, Drew University

**Saturday, 2:00–3:00 PM**
A Career on Campus: Considering Academic Librarianship
Led by Christopher J. Anderson, Drew University

**Saturday, 3:00–4:00 PM**
Approaches to Effective Online Teaching
Led by David Walsh, Arizona State University

**Sunday, 9:00–10:00 AM**
Balancing School and Family: Making the Decision
Led by Ann Duncan, University of Virginia, and Shayna Steinfeld, McGill University

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**Sunday, 10:00–11:00 AM**
Writing Blocks
Led by Holly White, Syracuse University

**Sunday, 2:00–3:00 PM**
Personal Life and Grad School: Counterparts or Complimentary?
Led by Xavier Graeven-Tirone, Université de Montréal and Laval University

**Sunday, 3:00–4:00 PM**
Canadian Students in the Academy
Led by Jason Gains, University of Ottawa

**Monday, 9:00–10:00 AM**
Best Teaching Tips: Thirty Ideas in Thirty Minutes
Led by Dennis Feltes, Duquesne University

**Monday, 10:00–11:00 AM**
Practicing Faith in Graduate School
Led by Christopher D. Hudak, Lehman Valley College

**Monday, 2:00–3:00 PM**
Balancing School and Family: Maintaining the Balance
Led by Cameron Duncan, University of Virginia, and Shayna Steinfeld, McGill University

**Monday, 3:00–4:00 PM**
The First Year on the Job
Led by Cameron Jungersen, Campbell Divinity School

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**Special Topics Forum**

“Cracks in the Tower”: Barriers to Careers in Religion
Sunday, 3:00–4:30 p.m. (A8–279)
Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee and the Job Placement Task Force

This special topics forum addresses many of the barriers that make navigating the academy a difficult process (for example, issues of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, language, physical mobility, etc.). Panelists will share strategies for negotiating many of these barriers and for maintaining human flourishing in the academy. Panelists will also address the current job market and the many challenges that graduate students may face in the job application and interviewing process.

Moderators: Davina C. Lopez, Eckerd College Panelists:
Josie Hendrickson, Whitman College
Kate Orr, Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice, and Healing
Lisa Stemmark, San Jose State University
Grace Ji-Sun Kim, Moravian Theological Seminary

**Student Town Hall Meeting: “Yes We Can!”**
The Future of Students in the AAR
Saturday, 9:00–11:00 AM (A7–100)
Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee

Students comprise one third of the membership of the AAR. We bring renewed vitality and fresh perspectives to the study of religion. And yet, we know how to have a good time. Can we shape the future of the Academy? Yes we can! Join us for our Student Town Hall, a forum where you can offer your suggestions, hear about new initiatives led by the Graduate Student Committee, and get a preview of this year’s student-focused programming. Topics about which we are most concerned include: how to be more inclusive in the AAR, ways you can be a force for positive change in your department, and of course, how you can secure research funding and navigate the career search. Our future is full of promise. Yes we can! Reception provided.

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**Beyond the Boundaries:** Public Lecture Series

The AAR is committed to fostering the public understanding of religion. Inspired by this goal, the Graduate Student Committee has established this series of public talks to be held in a variety of Montréal cafés. Student members will present their cutting-edge research in these innovative evening sessions designed to move our discussions of religion out of the traditional academic setting of the Annual Meeting and into the community. This year’s talks center around three themes: the relationship of indigenous peoples and the church in Canada; the rich Jewish identity and culture in Montréal; and religion and multiculturalism in Canada. Plan to join us for these stimulating discussions on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday evenings between 6:00 and 8:00 PM. Consult the AAR website and “Especially for Students” materials for venue details and speaker information.

**My Reservations: Theopoetic Reflections on Indigenous Canada**
Saturday, 6:00–8:00 p.m. (A7–336)
Pharvarn Lounge, 139 rue Saint-Paul Ouest
Reverend Carmen Lansdowne’s poetry is a personal reflection of her interdisciplinary inquiries into indigenous epistemologies and Christian missiology. As a member of the Heiltsuk First Nation on the central West Coast of British Columbia, Lansdowne holds a particular perspective on the relationship between the church and aboriginal peoples in Canada. Can we shape the future of the Academy? Yes we can! Join us for our Student Town Hall, a forum where you can offer your suggestions, hear about new initiatives led by the Graduate Student Committee, and get a preview of this year’s student-focused programming. Topics about which we are most concerned include: how to be more inclusive in the AAR, ways you can be a force for positive change in your department, and of course, how you can secure research funding and navigate the career search. Our future is full of promise. Yes we can! Reception provided.

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**Sponsor an Australian or Oceanian Scholar in 2010**

THe 2010 Annual Meeting international focus is Australian and Oceanian contributions to the study of religion. The International Connections Committee is soliciting partnerships with departments and institutions for cosponsoring specific scholars of religion from Australia and Oceania, to lecture at the cosponsoring institution as well as participate in the Annual Meeting. Cosponsorship will allow your department to hear from these fine scholars while they are already in the United States. To cosponsor or for more information, please contact Jessica Davenport at jdavenport@aarweb.org.
N 1971, the Canadian federal government defined Canada as a bilingual and multicultural society. English and French are the official languages, but there are no longer any privileged cultures in Canada. That is, the cultures brought by recent immigrants deserve equal respect. However, the Quebec provincial government did not accept the multicultural policy adopted by the federal government. Instead, Quebec makes a clear distinction between the host culture, which deserves protection, and the arriving cultures of the more recent immigrants whose human rights are assured by the Quebec charter of 1975. Quebec has called its own policy intercultural.

Although a key objective of both approaches to cultural pluralism is that immigrant cultures be respected and deserve public support, calling the Quebec policy “intercultural” has symbolic importance for French Quebecers as it displays clear government support for the primacy of the Francophone host culture. As such, since the 1971 introduction of the Canadian multiculturalism policy and later Multiculturalism Act, successive Quebec governments have defined the relation of the host culture and the incoming cultures in various ways. One proposal advocated a policy of interculturalism that promoted “the convergence of cultures”; it recommended an ongoing interaction between the host culture and the other cultures, thus fostering their convergence, each coming closer to the other, yet each preserving its identity. Another government proposal advocated “a common public culture,” i.e., a set of cultural values, including the French language, that would allow citizens of the various cultures to cooperate in the building of society. More recently, interculturalism is understood to emphasize the “common citizenship” enjoyed by all Quebecers, whatever their cultural origin.

This distinct approach to cultural diversity is due in large part to the fact that Quebec is a small French-speaking society shaped by its particular historical experience. It is situated as a tiny minority on the vast English-speaking North American continent and hence always remains in need of protecting itself against assimilation and the loss of its distinct identity. In part, this need to protect Quebec culture was born of the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s. As Donald Boisvert explained in a May 2009 RSN article, the period was marked by a massive rejection of the Catholic Church, which many recognized as a dominant social, cultural, and political force that had defined French Quebec culture for generations. This significant shift in the moral authority from the Catholic Church to the government of Quebec has meant that, for many Quebecers today, Catholicism is not a religious faith, but a cultural inheritance — one that is celebrated but that will never again achieve the political power it once enjoyed in the province.

The minority status of Quebec society, its rejection of Catholicism, and its need to defend its cultural identity offer some insight as to why French Quebecers perhaps react more nervously than English Canadians to some of the cultural and religious symbols brought by recent immigrants. Nonetheless, Quebec has not shied away from public discussion of how to negotiate this cultural diversity, particularly when it comes to questions about religion. Most notable has been the recent response to a lively debate in the press about accommodating religious practices in public, in which the government appointed the now-famous Bouchard-Taylor Commission to propose guidelines for resolving conflicts over the place of religious signs and practices in public life. As part of the “Focus on Religion in Quebec” series at the 2009 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, delegates will be given the opportunity to pose questions to the cochairs of the commission as Gerard Bouchard and Charles Taylor offer their reflections on the public debate and their subsequent recommendations in a moderated special forum to be held Sunday, November 8 at 3:00 pm.

Quebec has also taken the lead in negotiating religious diversity with the introduction of the new “Ethics and Religious Culture” curriculum. This mandatory program is offered in all Quebec primary and secondary schools with the goal of opening pathways of communication between students of different cultural backgrounds, building an education grounded in openness to diversity, and establishing a community of research with students. Annual Meeting attendees can learn more about this intriguing Quebec initiative in a special panel where members of the curriculum development committee and educators offer their reflections on the benefits and challenges associated with this educational approach to religious diversity.

The special “Focus on Religion in Quebec” series also includes panels that explore the history of religion in Quebec, religion in Quebec culture, and several panels that examine specific issues of concern to many religious communities in Quebec (Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, First Nations, New Religious Movements, etc.). Look for the fleur-de-lis in the Annual Meeting Program Book when planning your meeting schedule. More information about the special panels and other events sponsored by the Montréal Venue Committee can be found at http://religioninQuebec.ca.

Le Québec vous attend!
AAR Honors Journalists for In-Depth Reporting

Laurie Goodstein of the New York Times, Tracy Simmons of the Waterbury (Conn.) Republican-American, and David Gibson, writing for the Star-Ledger of New Jersey and the Wall Street Journal, won the 2009 American Academy of Religion Awards for Best In-Depth Reporting on Religion.

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

The annual awards recognize "well-researched newswriting that enhances the public understanding of religion," said John R. Fitzmier, Executive Director of the AAR.

Goodstein submitted articles on the authority of the Serenity Prayer; the battle in California over same-sex marriage; and a three-part series on Roman Catholic priests recruited from overseas to serve parishes in the United States. The judges highlighted Goodstein's "unflinchingly honest quotes," and praised her series on foreign Catholic clergy as a "sophisticated take on how the priest shortage plays out in everyday religious life." "Too much religion writing is drily sociological. These three pieces really get to the heart of living and preaching the Gospel," added one judge.

Simmons submitted articles on Christian sexual ethics; the 2008 Lambeth Conference and the split over homosexuality in the Episcopal Church; religious environ-ment; and the Green Bible. "In taking on hot-button issues — a Catholic nun whose liberal take on sexual ethics in the church won a national award, the Episcopal Church's Lambeth debates, and a green Bible — this writer shows a desire to include scholarly voices and give readers perspective," said the judges, impressed with Simmons's entries.

Gibson submitted opinion articles on defining secularism; Pope Benedict XVI's vestments; and the abortion debate during the 2008 presidential campaign. "This was a 'wow!' entry from a journalist with a strong, sure voice and inviting writing style. The writer deserves a pair of Benedict's red shoes for the deftness and depth of a piece on how the pope's vestments, sometimes more than his words, offer clues to his papal agenda," said one judge. "The article on abortion displayed a sensitive approach to this volatile issue, shedding a lot more light than heat," remarked another.

In the more than 100,000 circulation or on the Web contest, Barbara Bradley Hagerty, writing for National Public Radio's website, placed second, and Michael Paulson of the Boston Globe placed third. The judges praised Hagerty as a "great storyteller who knows how to get people to talk and then tells their stories so that you can't put them down," and Paulson for his strong, impressive reporting using "facts, figures, and personal stories" and "literary and historical insights" to inform readers.

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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 25, 2010, to Marty Award, AAR 825 Houston Mill Road, Suite 300 Atlanta, GA 30329.

Cone Wins Marty Award

James H. Cone, a premier theologian who has educated scholars and the public about the importance of the theological reflections of oppressed black people, will receive the 2009 Martin E. Marty Award at the Annual Meeting in November.

The Martin E. Marty Award recognizes extraordinary contributions to the public understanding of religion. The award — which has recognized Wendy Doniger, Robert Bellah, Andrew Greeley, John Esposito, and Diana Eck — 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.

Cone, the creator of black liberation theology in the United States, has participated in numerous international conferences focused on comparative liberation theologies in Africa and South Africa, Asia, and Latin America. He has appeared as a major commentator in the Blacksides series on “This Far by Faith,” focusing on the role of religion in African-American communities past and present. Cone and his work have been featured by Bill Moyers’s Journal on PBS. In 1992, Ebony magazine awarded Cone the “American Black Achievement Award” in the category of religion. With its focus on religion and social transformation and its critique of racism, Cone’s black liberation theology has been controversial, often accused of reverse racism by conservatives. Cone has patiently responded to the controversy in numerous newspaper interviews, most recently during Barack Obama’s public disagreement with his pastor, the Reverend Jeremiah Wright.

Cone is the Charles A. Briggs Distinguished Professor of Systematic Theology at Union Theological Seminary. He is the author of eleven books (with translations in eight languages) and more than 150 articles. He is best known for his groundbreaking works Black Theology and Black Power (1969), A Black Theology of Liberation (1970), God of the Oppressed (1975), and Martin and Malcolm: A Dream or a Nightmare? (1991). Cone is currently working on The Cross and the Lynching Tree.

The annual Marty Forum at the Annual Meeting will be a lively intellectual conversation because Cone will be interviewed by Cornel West, the Class of 1943 University Professor in the Center for African American Studies at Princeton University. West will interview Cone from 1:00–2:30 PM on Sunday, November 8, 2009.

The 2009 AAR Newswriting Contest winners are:

News Outlets with Circulations over 100,000 or on the Web:

• First Place: Laurie Goodstein, New York Times
• Second Place: Barbara Bradley Hagerty, National Public Radio
• Third Place: Michael Paulson, Boston Globe

News Outlets with Circulations under 100,000:

• First Place: Tracy Simmons, Waterbury (Conn.) Republican-American
• Second Place: Brad A. Greenberg, Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles
• Third Place: Brett Buckner, Anniston (Ala.) Star

Opinion Writing:

• First Place: David Gibson, writing for the Star-Ledger and Wall Street Journal
• Second Place: Douglas Todd, Vancouver Sun
• Third Place: Tom Krattenmaker, writing for USA Today

Read some of the award-winning articles at www.aarweb.org/programs/Awards/Journalism_Awards
Kwok to Receive Excellence in Teaching Award

Tina Pippin, Agnes Scott College

ARQA NAWAZ is the driving force behind Fundamentalist Films and the creator of Little Mosque on the Prairie, which debuted to large audiences and tremendous acclaim in 2007. Nawaz, born in Liverpool and raised in Toronto, had a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Toronto in her hands when she realized that staying out of medical school would be her greatest contribution to Canada’s health care system. Unfazed, she coolly switched career plans and received a Bachelor of Applied Arts in Journalism from Ryerson in 1992. Nawaz worked as a freelance writer/broadcaster with CBC radio, and in various capacities with CBC Newsworld, CTV’s Canada AM, and CBC’s The National. She was an associate producer with a number of CBC radio programs, including Morningside, and her radio documentary The Changing Rituals of Death won first prize in the Radio Long Documentary category and the Chairman’s Award in Radio Production at the Ontario Telefest Awards. Bored with journalism, Nawaz took a summer film workshop at the Ontario College for Art and made BBQ Muslims, a short film that premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 1996. Her next short film, Death Threat, also premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 1998. Other short film credits include Fred’s Burge and Random Creek. In 2005, Nawaz’s documentary entitled Me and the Mosque, a coproduction with the National Film Board and the CBC, was broadcast on CBC’s Rough Cuts.

Religion and the Arts Winner

The AAR invites nominations for the Religion and the Arts Award

The AAR invites nominations for the Religion and the Arts Award. The award recognizes outstanding contributions to the field of religion and the arts, with a focus on innovative and creative work that engages religious ideas and practices in diverse and dynamic ways. Nominations are accepted from AAR members, and no specific qualifications are required. Nominees may include artists, scholars, educators, and other professionals who have made significant contributions to the field. Nomination forms and guidelines are available on the AAR website.

The Teaching and Learning Committee welcomes nominations for the Excellence in Teaching Award

Colleges are to send letters of nomination to Jessica Davenport, Associate Director of Professional Programs at the AAR, jdavenport@aarweb.org. See the AAR website for guidelines for this award at www.aarweb.org/Programs/Awards/Teaching_Awards.

The AAR invites nominations for the Religion and the Arts Award

The Teaching and Learning Committee welcomes nominations for the Excellence in Teaching Award.
AAR Honors Five Authors in Its Annual Book 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 website, 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 (Cowinners)


In order to create public awareness about Sikh Religion in the world, the Sikh Missionary Center has published, “SIKH RELIGION” (Revised 2005) and also “Pearls of Sikhism,” (May 2008), which have been sent to various libraries. The books give the History and Fundamentals of Sikhism.

A complimentary copy will be sent to AAR Members if you provide your address. Please send your address for a free copy to: Email: sikhmissionary@yahoo.com

Our Multiple Language website is at: http://www.sikhmissionary.net

SIKH RELIGION

God is One but One

Sikh Missionary Center
P.O. Box 62521
Phoenix, Arizona 85082 USA
I WAS SURPRISED and delighted to be invited to serve on the Committee on Teaching and Learning and to become coeditor of Spotlight on Teaching alongside Ellen Posman. While I find the prospect of taking on the leadership of the outstanding work of Tazim Kassam rather daunting, I am also very grateful for her example and for the opportunity to collaborate with Ellen, Tina Peppas, and other committee members to facilitate critical conversations about effective pedagogy and the teaching vocation at the AAR.

My own teaching vocation began long before my studies in theology and religion. I started out as an errant school bus driver and teacher’s aide in English, mathematics, and computer science in Pine Ridge, South Dakota. After obtaining a MTs degree at Boston College and a PhD in comparative theology at Boston College, I taught religious studies for two years at Saint Joseph College, a women’s liberal arts college in central Connecticut. Thereafter, I assumed my current post in the interdisciplinary Christianity and Culture Program at Saint Michael’s College, University of Vermont. Like Ellen Posman, I view myself as a generalist. Though my research focuses on questions of religious pedagogy and community formation in Hindu and Christian traditions, my teaching has run the gamut: systematic theology, world religions surveys; introductions to the Hebrew Bible, New Testament, and Catholic traditions; science and religion; social justice; and now, at the senior undergraduate and graduate levels, comparative theology and interreligious dialogue.

Perhaps because I started in mathematics and English, or perhaps because both my own interests and my institutional settings have encouraged me to pursue interdisciplinary work, I have always placed greatest importance upon helping students in my classes develop better skills in critical thinking, argument, and effective research and writing, whatever the subject of enquiry. More broadly, however, I believe that the classroom encounter ideally implicates students and teachers in a kind of learned disorientation in the face of complex realities that make real claims and invite real commitments. Jack Mezirow (In Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning, Jossey-Bass, 1991; and Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Theory in Progress, Jossey-Bass, 2009) has argued that transformative critical reflection starts with a “disorienting dilemma” and encourages the formation of new integrative perspectives. Others speak of students’ cognitive and moral transitions from relatively simple “dualist” patterns to more complex “evolving communitas” (William G. Perry Jr. “Cognitive and Ethical Growth: The Making of Meaning,” in A. W. Chickering, ed. at. The Modern American College: Responding to the New Realities of Diverse Students and a Changing Society, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981: 76–116.). Both proposals have suggested to me that one of my primary goals as an educator is to cultivate a self-consciously problem-based learning environment that engages the sources we read and the ideas we consider. Challenging positions alone is not adequate, in my view, since this can actually confirm a dualistic frame. It is the interpretative framework itself that should be analyzed, in order to empower students to articulate and to embrace new perspectives — or even to affirm old ones — on a transformed intellectual basis.

How is this accomplished? This is one of the primary questions I hope to bring to my new role as coeditor of Spotlight on Teaching, so as to learn from my fellow coeditor, from guest editors, and from the many diverse contributors who have consistently made this publication such a valuable resource. I, of course, bring my own grab-bag of teaching innovations, successes, and failures. In my career thus far, for example, I have remained committed to integrating collaborative and experiential learning methods into the religious studies classroom. In the past three years, this interest has assumed more sustained, concrete, and activist forms through my work with both international immersion and local, community-based service-learning courses. While somewhat skeptical about at least the most dramatic claims made by advocates of service-learning — whose rhetoric sometimes verges on the messianic — I have become convinced that sustained, engaged experiences across boundaries of cultural and religious difference represent a very effective tool for problematizing interpretative frameworks and pressing questions of commitment on the part of teacher and student alike.

It is very telling, I think, that the three future topics Tazim Kassam suggested in her recent interview with Religious Studies News (May 2009) all deal, like service learning, with the problematisation of familiar boundaries: definitional boundaries of the category “world religion,” boundaries between teaching and acting as an insider (when teaching Judaism) versus an outsider (when teaching anything else) and with traditional teaching strategies ranging from the use of reading quizzes, field trips, and guest speakers to small-group work and fast feedback forms. And, in what could have been either a brilliant or brainless move, I took twenty-two students to South India for a two-week immersion course. I am also a pedagogy junkie, leaping at every opportunity to attend a workshop or institute dedicated to learning new pedagogies or improving teaching techniques. In the process, I have become especially interested in discussions surrounding teaching in a diverse classroom. In addition, I am fascinated by conversations surrounding how to meet the learning goals of both students and professors without compromising integrity, especially in our field of religious studies, where students often enter the classroom with very different ideas about what they hope to learn. I am excited to utilize this position to seek out those of you who are engaged in innovative teaching, who are struggling with pedagogical issues, or who have had success with a particular teaching strategy in order to learn more myself, to expand topics of conversation, and to relay possibilities to the AAR community at large.

I believe we are at an exciting, though sometimes terrifying, juncture in the world of teaching at institutions of higher education, and the fact that this publication itself will no longer be available in print form is a symbol of all that. I would be lying if I didn’t admit that I sometimes tense up at phrases such as course-embedded assessment, distance learning, utilizing technology in the classroom, assigning multimedia projects, immersion formats, kinesthetic learning, experimental learning, service learning, faculty-student collaborative research, short-term study abroad courses, etc. And while I understand that it is necessary to discuss the pros and cons of whether some new formats, strategies, and pedagogies are worth-while, I also hope that Spotlight on Teaching can highlight successful attempts at breaking new ground in order to encourage experimentation. Indeed, I hope it can provide detailed, practical guidelines for such experimentation that can be incorporated into all types of religious studies courses and in all types of institutional settings.

I am especially delighted to be partnered with Reid Locklin in this endeavor. Our collaboration will allow us to come to this role still at an early period in my career, but what I lack in experience I hope to make up for in my passion for teaching.

In terms of my research interests, as well as my teaching repertoire, I am truly a generalist. My specialization is both comparative religion, with a primary emphasis on Buddhism, and secondarily on Judaism. As a result, I end up teaching themed comparative courses, survey courses on Asian Religions, Judaism, and Hebrew Bible, as well as a whole host of upper-level special topics and seminars. I find that my research interests often not only inform but also stem from courses I teach, a topic I hope to explore more during my tenure as Spotlight on Teaching coeditor.

After obtaining my MTs degree from Harvard University and a PhD from the University of California, Santa Barbara, I settled into my current position at Baldwin-Wallace College, a liberal arts college in Berea, Ohio, dedicated to excellence in teaching. I have been here seven years now, and have spent my time engaging in what I would happily call “experiments in pedagogy.” I have tried on a lot of teaching strategies with a wide range of success rates: I have struggled with the traditional issues of being an insider (when teaching Judaism) versus an outsider (when teaching anything else) and with traditional teaching strategies ranging from the use of reading quizzes, field trips, and guest speakers to small-group work and fast feedback forms. And, in what could have been either a brilliant or brainless move, I took twenty-two students to South India for a two-week immersion course. I am also a pedagogy junkie, leaping at every opportunity to attend a workshop or institute dedicated to learning new pedagogies or improving teaching techniques. In the process, I have become especially interested in discussions surrounding teaching in a diverse classroom.
Court Rules that Religion Scholar Tariq Ramadan Due Additional Judicial Process

This summer a federal appeals court ruled that Ramadan’s exclusion from entry into the United States as a violation of the First Amendment rights of members of the American Academy of Religion, American Association of University Professors, and PEN America’s Center on Freedom of Expression. In the case — to engage in dialogue with Ramadan in the United States, Ramadan has been denied entry into the United States since 2004, when he was scheduled to become a professor at the University of Notre Dame and to deliver a plenary address at the AAR Annual Meeting. As a consequence of the visa denial, he addressed the Annual Meeting via live video instead of in person. Ramadan will, however, deliver a plenary address in person to the 2009 AAR Annual Meeting, which takes place in Canada. Ramadan has acknowledged making the donations to the charity that said he understood those donations to be for humanitarian aid to Palestinian refugees, that the charity was recognized as legitimate by the Swiss government, and that he applied for his visa in accordance with the United States government of the donor nation.

Ramadan was recently appointed His Highness Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani Chair in Contemporary Islamic Studies at the University of Oxford.

Boston University to Open New Religion and Graphica Collection

Boston University has begun collecting for a new Religion and Graphica Collection. This collection, to be housed in the School of Theology Library, is exclusively dedicated to comics surveying religion — either its advocacy, its criticism, its satire, or its consideration — the first of its kind in the United States, despite enthusiasts and scholars’ long-time encouragement. The Religion and Graphica Collection will feature an array of works including the seminal MAUS, Persepolis, Palestine, Prometeo, and Sandman graphic novels as well as scholarly works on comics and religion. Purchasing for the collection has already begun and the collection should be available for viewing beginning in Fall 2009.

University of the South Launches Center for Religion and Environment

The University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, has announced the creation of the Center for Religion and Environment. Robin Gottfried, the Center’s founding director and professor of environmental studies, notes that there is a need to change minds and hearts, to integrate “faith, practice, and the understanding of environmental issues for our students.” The Center offers several majors and seeks to serve the surrounding community, the wider Episcopal Church, and other faith communities in addressing environmental challenges.

In Memoriam: Peter Homans (1930–2009)

Peter Homans, Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Religious Studies at the University of Chicago and long-standing member of the AAR, died on May 30, 2009, at a nursing home in Evanston, Illinois, at the age of seventy-eight. The cause was complications from a stroke. Homans was the author of three books, Theorizing Freud, In the Context, and, most notably, The Ability to Mourn: Disillusionment and the Social Origins of Psychopathology. All three showed his lifelong interest in the historical displacement or erosion of traditional religious authority and the birth of modern psychology and sociology. Homans was especially concerned with loss and mourning as sources of individual and cultural transformation. His last book was an edited collection, Symbolic Loss: The Ambiguity of Mourning and Memory at Century’s End.

Homans was born in New York City and graduated in the humanities from Princeton. He briefly attended medical school at Johns Hopkins University before completing a PhD at the University of Chicago Divinity School in 1964. He also held a degree from the Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary. From 1966 to 1994, he was a professor of social science and the history of religion at the University of Chicago, where he was also a member of the Committee on Human Development and the Committee on the History of Culture. A deeply caring and considerate teacher, he engaged several generations of students with his wide-reaching and cross-disciplinary approach. His research ranged from psychiatry to religious studies, from poetry and art to social science and medicine; and he was quietly encouraging and sympathetic to individuals and approaches that departed from the ordinary.

Homans is survived by his adoring wife Celia, three daughters, Jennifer, Patricia, and Elizabeth, and six grandchildren.

In Memoriam: Franklin Hamlin Littell (1917–2009)

Franklin H. Littell, scholar, theologian, educator, moral ethicist, and long-standing member of the AAR, died at his home in Merion Station, Pennsylvania, on Saturday, May 23, 2009. He was ninety-two years of age.

Littell devoted his entire career to promoting and defending religious, academic, and political freedom around the globe. After spending nearly ten years in postwar Germany as Chief Protestant Religious Adviser in the High Command assigned especially to the task of de-Nazification during the occupation, he was deeply affected by the atrocities that had been committed during WWII, and thus dedicated his life to researching the Holocaust and bringing its tragic lessons in human rights to widespread public attention. His graduate seminar on the German church struggle and the Holocaust at Emory University in 1959 was the first Holocaust course taught in America. His pioneering book, The Crucifixion of the Jews, was the first Christian response to the Holocaust. He authored more than two dozen scholarly books and at least 1,000 major articles.

Littell was emeritus distinguished professor of Holocaust and Genocide Studies at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey and emeritus professor and former department chair of religion at Temple University. For twenty-five years he was visiting professor in the Institute of Contemporary Jewry at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He was the first Christian to be appointed to the International Governing Board of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

Littell is survived by his wife of thirty years, his four children and three stepchildren, eleven grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

2009 Carnegie Scholars to Focus on Islam

The Carnegie Corporation of New York named twenty-four new Carnegie Scholars for 2009. The new Scholars are selected for their compelling ideas and commitment to enriching the quality of the public dialogue on Islam. The 2009 awards are the fifth class to focus on Islam, bringing to 117 the number of Carnegie Scholars devoted to the topic. Current AAR members, Valerie Hoffman and Intisar Rabb, were among the awarders.

Association of Theological Schools and Luce Foundation Name Six Faculty Members as 2009–2010 Henry Luce III Fellows in Theology

Selected on the basis of the strength of their proposals to conduct creative and innovative theological research, the six Fellows will engage in year-long research in various areas of theological inquiry. The 2009–2010 Fellows constitute the sixteenth class of scholars to be appointed since the inception of the program in 1993, bringing the total number of Luce Fellows to one hundred and eleven. The program is supported by a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation, honoring the late Henry Luce III.

J. Matthew Ashley, University of Notre Dame

Randall Charles Bailey, Interdenominational Theological Center

S. Mark Heim, Andover Newton Theological School

Mia M. Mochizuki, Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley and Graduate Theological Union

Barbara R. Rossing, Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago

Grant Wacker, Duke University

2009–2010 Lilly Theological Research Grant Recipients

Congratulations to the following 2009–2010 Lilly Theological Research Grant winners:

For Faculty Fellowships:

Joseph Patrick Chinnici, Franciscan School of Theology

Emmanuel Lartey, Emory University

Ian Christopher Levy, Lexington Theological Seminary

Eugene J. Pentz, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

Todd David Whitmore, University of Notre Dame

Seung Ai Yang, Chicago Theological Seminary

Mitzie Jane Smith, Ashland Theological Seminary

For Theological Scholar Grants:

James K. Bruckner, North Park Theological Seminary

Lois M. Farag, Luther Seminary

Cynthia Holder Rich, Western Theological Seminary

Tat-siong Benny Liew, Pacific School of Religion

Michelle Sunghin Lim, New York Theological Seminary

Robert Joseph Priest, Trinity International University

For Research Expense Grants:

Thomas Carto, Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley

Monica A. Coleman, Claremont School of Theology

Pamela D. Couture, Saint Paul School of Theology

Robert C. Fennell, Atlantic School of Theology

Michael J. Kruger, Reformed Theological Seminary

Gerald L. Stevens, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Wolfgang Vondy, Regent University

For Collaborative Research Grants (project leader is listed first):

Duane R. Bidwell, Phillips Theological Seminary, and Donald L. Batsky, Ohio State University

Wyndy Corbin Reuschling, Ashland Theological Seminary, Jeanine K. Brown, Bethel Theological Seminary, and Carla M. Dahl, Bethel University Graduate School

See BRIEFS, page 33
The Academic Study of Religion in the Face of Budget Cuts

A MIDST the economic downturn, many departments and schools of religion or theology are facing the prospect of severe budget cutbacks. This spring, for example, the religious studies department at Florida International University and the University of Florida faced the prospect of closing the department and eliminating all of their religion faculty positions. The University of Florida, which has bachelor's, master's, and PhD programs and fifteen faculty members, faced a cutback to four full-time positions. At one point, Florida International University (FIU) faced the elimination of its bachelor's and master's programs in religion and half its thirteen full-time faculty.

In response, the AAR sent each of these university administrations a letter strongly urging continued support for their religion programs.

Independently, FIU received support from another source as well—a $100,000 contribution from His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The university has since embarked on a “Religious Studies Endowment Campaign,” which aims to raise $5 million and as RSN wavers other departments also lost a large percentage of their faculty to retirements and attrition. We do know, however, that in the future we will have to collaborate more closely with other humanities and social science departments, perhaps in sharing positions and/or staff resources.

RNS: If a religion department does find itself disproportionately affected by budget cuts, what resources are available for making the case for better funding?

Juergensmeyer: Once your head is on the budgetary chopping block, you need to go immediately into crisis mode. First, take the inside strategy and quietly make your claims and present counterarguments to ones they may give. If this doesn’t work, then you need to go immediately into crisis mode.

Don’t go quietly to the sacrificial altar. Do what the University of Florida and Florida International University did when they were threatened—a marshal internal support, evoke outcries from community leaders, exert political pressure from leading politicians, excite media attention including interviews and op-ed pieces, present letters from kindred departments around the country, and gain national support — including letters and statements from your AAR leaders, who are ready to help you.

Narayanan: If you think your department is vulnerable, perhaps you could encourage your Graduate Studies to have a “first aid” kit ready. Get in touch with the chairs of departments in peer institutions. Consult your faculty and have a list of the contact information for a number of institutions and people who head various organizations. I am thinking of presidents of the AAR, Association for Asian Studies, Middle Eastern Studies Association, Society of Biblical Literature, American Oriental Society, et al. Have a list of people within the university who can support you. You need them in a hurry when the administration is moving swiftly. These people can be invaluable in writing letters on behalf of your department or supply you with crucial numbers.

(continued on next page)
To help people who are writing letters, you should have a packet of materials ready — information which you can send electronically. They may not have the time to go through the websites and find out about your colleagues; your “Cliff notes” should have the highlights of your department, the major grants/fellowships the faculty have received, their publications, the courses the department teaches, what your alumni do — that kind of thing.

In getting letters, you have to decide whether it is useful to deluge the administration with letters or get a few which may carry more weight. Do you want professional organizations to write (may not be of any use if your university does not care about them) or local people? The letter the AAR did for us carried the full force of the academy and was very impressive. Other colleges may pay more attention to donors or well-known alumni.

I would also suggest contacting peer institutions and marshalling basic numbers — full-time faculty, number of undergraduate/graduate students taught (or equivalent student credit hours), number of majors, etc. We have to get these numbers when our departments have external review anyway, and chances are that at least one of the peer institutions went through this review process in the last year and has the data handy.

**RSN:** What are the arguments that you think administration officials find most persuasive?

**Juergensmeyer:** Remind administrators of all that they get out of religious studies departments. They are cost effective, especially in smaller institutions where they provide comparative cultural studies, ethics, and the study of ancient societies all in one department. They give luster to a university’s reputation as a cultured repository of the traditions of humanities and liberal arts. And they’re visible — unlike a lot of arcane departments in smaller institutions where they provide comparative cultural studies, ethics, and the study of ancient societies all in one department. They give luster to a university’s reputation as a cultured repository of the traditions of humanities and liberal arts.

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**Narayanan:** Above all, the administration of your university may want to see how your “numbers” stack up against peer institutions. I know this is not what we were trained to do in graduate school; nevertheless, this is crucial. Administrators need to know that while the number of your majors may not be as much as in, say, psychology, it is comparable to your peer institutions. Many administrators in your university are there to work with you — these numbers help them.

Be sure that the administration has the right statistics for your department. Frequently the grants you get may go uncounted. In large universities, there are different ways of counting external grants, and unless a grant is recorded and disbursed through the office of grants/division of sponsored research or its equivalent, it is invisible to the administration.

In some universities only “expenditures” are tracked — the method favored in disciplines like chemistry. In the humanities, however, many fellowships are given directly to the student, so they are not noted. Keep a list of all the monies received by the department through grants, fellowships, and private donations.

If faculty lines in your department are being cut purely on budgetary grounds, it does not help to tell the administration, “not us, cut them.” The administrator may want suggestions on what to cut if your lines are going to be saved. Work with colleagues to think of various alternatives about where cuts can be made and propose them. Obviously I am not talking about suggesting cutting other units, but sometimes, mergers or “clusters” may be preferable to the firing of faculty. In having clusters, for instance, the administration may save on chairs’ salaries, supplements, etc.

Certainly this is not the best option, but it may save your faculty positions if worse things are being contemplated.

**Schmidt:** Oddly enough, teaching large numbers of undergraduates, perhaps more than some other humanities departments, may not be seen as sufficiently meritorious. Our college administration would have been more favorably impressed by a large number of majors; the collectively small number of majors over the past five years was cited again and again as one reason for merging us with philosophy. Administrators need to be educated that numbers (especially of majors) are not everything. Nevertheless, our department implemented a new undergraduate honors program and new 200-level courses in areas of focus and strength within our major, hoping that these efforts will eventually translate into more religious studies majors. Administrators may hold events to recognize its faculty members. Departments endure through this review process in the last year and has the data handy.

**Juergensmeyer:** Departments endure when they are seen to be central to the university’s mission, indispensable in operations, and valuable for its future. In addition to developing ties to the administration and to campus governance committees, the religious studies department should develop the distinction of its faculty — for instance, it might hold events to recognize its faculty members when they publish articles and books and receive grants and other distinctions.

Departments should also look outside the university for sources of support from the community, and seek financial funding for lectures, courses, scholarships, and endowed professorships. It’s hard to axe a department that is bringing in money! Harder still to eliminate a department that demonstrates how essential it is to the university’s success.

**Schmidt:** In a quantitative, business-style environment, only numbers matter. We can compete neither with the sciences in external funding nor with more traditional departments as regards number of majors. Difficult economic times require departments to be willing to make some changes. These sacrifices include a smaller faculty for the immediate future and possibly shared resources. Better funding will occur through private giving, external faculty grants, and the sharing of internal resources across the college and the campus.

Ultimately, though, over the coming decade religious studies departments need to do what we do best. Education, education, education about the significance and value of the field of religious studies, not only of students and colleagues, but of administrators at the highest level, needs to be a permanent goal.
INTRODUCTION

The United States Department of Education requires states to develop content standards and academic assessments for each discipline taught in public schools from kindergarten through twelfth grade (K–12). State departments of education are guided in this task by national educational associations that have crafted their own standards and guidelines representing the collective perspective of scholars and educators in each relevant educational field. For example, the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) comprises elementary, secondary, and college-level teachers, and other educational personnel who work in the broad areas that encompass the social studies: history, geography, economics, the political sciences, psychology, anthropology, and law. Similarly, the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE) is made up of teachers and supervisors of English programs in elementary, middle, and secondary schools, faculty in college and university English departments, teacher educators, local and state agency English specialists, and professionals in related fields. There are similar organizations formed for the sciences, arts, physical education, English as a second language, and technology, among others. The primary aims of these associations are to promote responsible education about their fields and to provide leadership, support, and service to their educators.

Though religious studies is not a required subject in public K–12 schools, religion is embedded in curriculum standards across disciplines and it is especially prominent in social studies and English at the state and national association levels. Given the rising interest in the study of religion due to national and global affairs, there is also a growing number of elective courses offered in schools that focuses on religious themes or topics explicitly, such as “The Bible as Literature” and “Introduction to World Religions.” Given that: 1) The study of religion is already present in public schools; 2) There are no content and skill guidelines for educators about religion itself that are constructed by religious studies scholars; and 3) Educators and school boards are often confused about how to teach about religion in constitutionally sound and intellectually responsible ways, there is a strong consensus among those involved in K–12 education that a set of guidelines for teaching about religion similar to those constructed for other subjects is needed. (There have been several “consensus documents” compiled by religious practitioners, legal scholars, and educators related to teaching about religion in public schools that have been created over the years by nonprofit organizations, such as the First Amendment Center and ad hoc groups, such as the one formed to construct the Toledo Guiding Principles. Though these and similar initiatives provide fair, respectful, and constitutionally sound ways to teach about religion, none of them provide substantial guidance on what to teach about religion, nor do they so from the authoritative perspective of religious studies scholars themselves. These guidelines are intended to fill that significant void).

The American Academy of Religion

Given the fact that there is not a similar national educational association like the NCSS or NCTE that focuses on religious studies per se, the American Academy of Religion is the professional organization best suited to construct guidelines for teaching about religion in K–12 schools. It is the world’s largest association of scholars who research or teach topics related to religion. There are over 11,000 members comprised largely of faculty at colleges, universities, and theological schools in North America with a growing number from institutions of higher education in Asia, Africa, and Europe. The AAR has been involved in addressing issues related to teaching about religion in public schools since the 1970s. These efforts have included producing publications in the 1970s and early 1980s addressing the legal, curricular, moral, and pedagogical dimensions of teaching about religion in public K–12 schools; helping to establish a number of programs and resource centers at various universities throughout the United States (only two are currently functioning, the Program in Religious Studies and Education at Harvard University and the Religion and Public Education Resource Center at the University of California, Chico); and identifying opportunities for religious studies faculty at colleges to help educate K–12 teachers about religion. Given the absence of authoritative standards penned by religious studies scholars for teaching about religion in K–12 schools, in 2007 the AAR decided to develop a set of standards and guidelines as a resource for educators, parents, and school boards who are faced with an increasingly complex array of challenges regarding how to teach about religion responsibly in public school contexts. The AAR Religion in the Schools Task Force is guiding this initiative.

Overview of Guidelines

Part One addresses why it is important to teach about religion and Part Two outlines ways to teach about religion in constitutionally sound, intellectually responsible, and educationally innovative ways. Part Three is an overview of approaches to teaching about religion and includes grade-specific examples informed by both the Standards for Social Studies (produced by the National Council for the Social Studies) and Standards for the English Language Arts (produced by the National Council for Teachers of English). Given that religion is already present throughout both of these documents and these standards are highly influential in the creation of state and local curricula frameworks, it is appropriate to reference them in constructing guidelines for religious studies. Finally, Part Four makes recommendations for teacher educators regarding the training required for teachers to have sufficient content knowledge to teach about religion responsibly.

PART ONE
Why teach about religion?

Three fundamental premises inform this project. First, there exists a widespread illiteracy about religion in the United States. Second, there are several consequences that stem from this illiteracy, including the ways that it fuels prejudice and antagonism, thereby hindering efforts aimed at promoting respect for pluralism, peaceful coexistence, and cooperative endeavors in local, national, and global arenas. Third, it is possible to diminish religious illiteracy by teaching about religion from an academic, nondevotional perspective in primary and secondary schools.

Religious illiteracy is defined in this document as a lack of understanding about:

• The basic tenets of the world’s religious traditions and other religious expressions not categorized by tradition;
• The diversity of expressions and beliefs within traditions and representations; and

October 2009 RSN • 27

(continued on next page)
students to the vast array of faith-based expressions that exist within and between traditions with the aim of deepening understanding about religious diversity and the role that religion plays in social, cultural, and economic life across time. Both approaches are legitimate ways to think about religion that can serve complementary but distinct purposes. It is important to note, however, that the non-devotional religious studies approach is the constitutionally appropriate one to employ for teaching about religion in public schools. These Guidelines represent a religious studies perspective.

Premise Number One: There exists a widespread illiteracy about religion in the United States. The following are examples of some of the ways that religious illiteracy manifests itself among a diverse array of United States citizens:

• Religious leaders and believers of a given religious tradition or expression are assumed to be the best sources of information about that tradition or expression and are often looked to formally or informally as “experts.” [This is problematic for two reasons. First, religious leaders and believers are appropriately trained in and have allegiances to a particular set of beliefs about their tradition. Many are not trained in other representations, and those that are often learn about other interpretations as heretical or unorthodox in relationship to their own theological worldview. It is inapt to assume, for example, that a local Protestant clergy person or member of a congregation could accurately and sympathetically represent the many expressions of Christianity as equally valid and worthy of study. Though some religious leaders and believers may also be trained in religious studies, their training as religious leaders or believers will usually not equip them to accurately and deeply depict the diversity within their traditions. Second, religious leaders and believers approach and practice religion from a devotional perspective that is appropriate for that tradition and its communities but inappropriate as a lens to represent religion in the public schools.]

• Religion is deeply and nearly exclusively equated with devotional practice in ways that render the non-devotional study of religion a difficult concept for many to grasp and apply. Religious traditions and expressions are often represented as internally uniform and static as opposed to diverse and evolving.

• In some contexts, religion is interpreted as a “private” affair distinct from the secular “public” sphere of political, economic, and cultural life. These common manifestations of religious illiteracy are widespread and can be interpreted as evidence of a lack of intellectual capability or awareness on the part of those who harbor these and similar assumptions. Given that the sources of information about religion come from training in or about one’s own religious tradition (or none) and the media, it should be no surprise that these and other forms of religious illiteracy are prevalent. Appropriately, individuals who are raised in or convert to a certain faith tradition or expression will learn about that tradition or expression within their faith communities or through devotionally based instruction that is aimed at promoting a particular religious worldview and values that are consonant with it. Individuals who are not religious also absorb devotionalized or caricatured values from family and/or community members. In relationship to religion, these values are often alegious or antireligious. The other main source of information about religion is the media, where coverage about religion is often inaccurate. None of these sources expose individuals to a comprehensive appreciation of religious diversity. For example, 1) The diversity within a given tradition or expression is knowledgably and even-handedly represented; and 2) Religion as a social/cultural phenomenon is explored and analyzed. Such an understanding requires a nondevotional, academic approach to the study of religion and, although some are some have been left out, it is the kind of instruction representing this approach in primary and secondary education, relatively few citizens have the opportunity to engage in this type of inquiry.

Premise Number Two: One of the most troubling and urgent consequences of religious illiteracy is that it often fuels prejudice and antagonism thereby hindering efforts aimed at promoting respect for pluralism, peaceful coexistence, and cooperative endeavors in local, national, and global arenas. There are many other consequences stemming from illiteracy about religions that concern scholars of religion, including a diminished intellectual understanding of the rich role that religion plays in human history and cultural life. These consequences highlight the civic consequences of religious illiteracy here for it is the one most universally relevant for educators across the K–12 spectrum. Religious illiteracy is certainly not the sole or even primary cause of the contemporary religious violence that dominates local and global news stories. It is, however, often a contributing factor in fostering a climate where certain forms of bigotry and misrepresentation can emerge unchallenged and thus serve as one form of justification for violence and marginalization. Many scholars have been concerned about this issue. The United Nations, for example, in 2006 sponsored the “Alliance of Civilizations,” a program formed at the initiative of the Secretary-General to counter terrorism through understanding, and numerous initiatives in Europe (for example, the European Commission launched a three-year project in 2006 entitled Religion in Education: A Contribution to Dialogue or a Conflict in Transforming Societies of European Countries). One example of the negative consequences of religious illiteracy is that it has contributed to Christian and Islamic forms of anti-Semitism. Another example in countries where Muslims are in the minority is the widespread association of Islam with terrorism and the resultant justification of individual hate crimes against those perceived to be Muslim. A third example is the antagonisms that are fueled between different expressions of the same tradition (e.g., between Protestant and Roman Catholic Christians and between Sunni and Shi’i Muslims). A fourth and final example is when some...
The academic work of the seminar proved to be provocative for the Fellows and the instructional team alike. By nearly any measure — the first gathering of Cohort One was a success.

John J. Thathamani, Vanderbilt University

AAR/Luce Summer Seminar Project Director and Assistant Professor of Theology, Vanderbilt Divinity School

The academic work of the seminar proved to be provocative for the Fellows and the instructional team alike. By nearly any measure — the intensity and vibrancy of conversation, the development of a new network of colleagues and friends, pages of notes generated, ideas for new courses and future research projects, and the opportunity to read drafts of forthcoming work from scholars at the leading edge of their respective fields — the first gathering of Cohort One was a success. Our conversation about religious diversity wasT
ving the presence of such robust diversity is rare and poses special intellectual demands and complications. We noted, for example, that while some participants found it tolerable and even exciting to talk about hybridity and multiple religious belonging, some Jewish colleagues did not warm to these themes as they are currently struggling with questions about preserving Jewish community in an age of intermarriage. Multilateral conversations generated questions and issues that do not present themselves in the more customary bilateral or trilateral (Abrahamic) conversations.

Perhaps the most striking feature of our collective experience was the variety of new research questions generated by the Luce Summer Seminars on Theologies of Religious Pluralism and Comparative Theology. Although the seminars were never intended to stand alone, but rather forums in which scholars might be introduced to introductions to theologies of religious pluralism and comparative theology, the gathering of Fellows with research expertise in a variety of areas outside of TRP and comparative theology generated a host of novel questions.

Key Theoretical Questions

Clooney described comparative theology as a process in which the comparative theologian who is firmly rooted in a home tradition ventures into a deep and detailed encounter with some specific strand of another tradition in all its rich particularity and then returns home to think and write theology anew after being transformed by such an encounter. Several Fellows raised vital questions about persons whose initial subject positions are vastly different. What about persons who might want to do comparative theology but are already in a situation of multiple religious belonging and so are not rooted in one primary home tradition? What about scholars who have been rejected by or hold marginal status within their home tradition because of their feminist commitments or sexual orientation? What happens to the comparative theologian when they encounter a faith as if it is conceived as faith/unfaith seeking understanding? Or put differently, what does comparative theology look like for persons who have a far more ambivalent relationship to their own home traditions? Several scholars, most especially Tsering Seng Yei, articulated the hope that comparative theology might transcend the partisan debates of times past between religious studies and theology. He observed that a variety of scholars now work happily on both sides of this divide and no longer feel compelled to engage in old turf wars. He and other Fellows see comparative theology as a promising field for the integration of a wide variety of methods and disciplines. Indeed, Liew hopes for a comparative theology that is willing to contextualize itself in light of a much longer history of comparative ventures by non-Western traditions. How have other traditions, while grounded in their own commitments, ventured projects that were either analogous or homologous to comparative theology? What might comparative theology learn from studying how other traditions outside the modern

The academic work of the seminar proved to be provocative for the Fellows and the instructional team alike. By nearly any measure — the intensity and vibrancy of conversation, the development of a new network of colleagues and friends, pages of notes generated, ideas for new courses and future research projects, and the opportunity to read drafts of forthcoming work from scholars at the leading edge of their respective fields — the first gathering of Cohort One was a success. Our conversation about religious diversity was invigorating because research inaugurated by the Fellows at the conclusion of the week, several Fellows and instructors alike, these questions and many more will be the subject of forthcoming collaborative endeavors.

Challenges and Areas for Improvement

Naturally, no venture in which eight instructors gather with twenty-five faculty scholars can go without a hitch! No self-respecting gathering of educators can be genuine without a little heat. Fellows with deep experience in the practice and theology of pedagogy pressed the instructional team to think harder about formulating collaborative pedagogies more appropriate to the nature of the materials at hand. They noted that the work of comparative theology and theologies of religious pluralism is intrinsically practical but that because they are located within these fields remain fairly traditional.

Fellows also articulated a hope that there might there be more cross-fertilization across disciplines within theological studies. Some argued that comparative theologians and theologists of religious diversity will find their labs enriched when scholars in these fields — who are most often systematic or constructive theologians — incorporate work on religious diversity that is already taking place in practical theology. Even these focused calls for changes to our format and agenda were felt to be promising because they articulated so well the need for new research and practice on questions of pedagogy for theologies of religious pluralism and comparative theology. At the conclusion of the week, several Fellows voiced their sense that TRP and comparative theology will never be the same again because research inaugurated by the Fellows is sure to introduce rapid and radical transformation in these fields.

Applications for Cohort Two are now being accepted. The deadline for submission is January 15, 2010. Apply at www.aarweb.org/Programs/Summer_Seminars.
Summer Seminars on Theologies of Religious Pluralism and Comparative Theology: Cohort Two

The American Academy of Religion is pleased to announce the formation of Cohort Two of our Luce Summer Seminars

These Weeklong Seminars will provide training to theological education faculty who often prepare students for future religious leadership and ministry. The Theological Education Steering Committee invites applications from theological educators interested in pursuing questions about the meaning of religious diversity. The seminars will help address the question of religious diversity 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.

The seminars, composed of twenty-five participants and eight instructors, are designed for those relatively new to the theologies of religious pluralism and comparative theology, allowing them to learn from expert 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 during their participation in the seminars.

Cohort Two will meet June 13–20, 2010, at Union Theological Seminary, New York City; then on October 29, 2010, at the Annual Meeting, Atlanta, and, finally May 29–June 5, 2011, at the University of Chicago Divinity School, Chicago.

The application deadline for Cohort Two is January 15, 2010. All accepted applicants will be notified by late February or early March 2010.

Further information on the seminars can be found at www.aarweb.org/Programs/Summer_Seminars or by contacting the Project Director, John J. Thatamanil, Vanderbilt Divinity School, john.j.thatamanil@vanderbilt.edu.

(continued from page 28)

Though the heart of these decisions addressed what was not permissible in public education, there was an important affirmation in Abington v. Schempp regarding what was allowed in the intersection of religion and the schools:

It might well be said that one’s education is not complete without a study of comparative religion or the history of religion and its relationship to the advancement of civilization. It certainly may be said that the Bible is worthy of study for its literary and historic qualities. 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 effected consistently with the First Amendment. [School District of Abington Township, Pennsylvania et al. v. Schempp et al. 374 US 203 (1963)]

This important articulation has often been overlooked in the history of how the separation of church and state in the schools has been interpreted. Though there has been a slight shift over the past decade, most Americans since the 1960s believe that the separation of church and state that is affirmed in the rulings cited above means that religion in all forms was banned. As Justice Clark’s comments above clearly indicate, this is not at all the case. Indeed, some have argued that it may be a violation of the First Amendment when the study of religion is not included in public school curricula. Though it is clear that teaching about religion is acceptable, how to do so in a constitutionally sound and intellectually responsible manner is a more complex undertaking.

Guidelines for Teaching about Religion

In 1974, religious studies scholar James V. Panitch developed a set of guidelines for distinguishing between teaching religion in a way that promotes a particular faith and teaching about religion from a religious studies perspective (Bracher: 2). A version of these guidelines was adopted by the First Amendment Center and are featured prominently in several of their publications, including one entitled A Teacher’s Guide to Religion in the Public Schools.

• The school’s approach to religion is academic, not devotional.
• The school strives for student awareness of religions, but does not press for student acceptance of any religion.
• The school sponsors study about religion, not the practice of religion.
• The school may expose students to a diversity of religious views, but may not impose any particular view.
• The school educates about all religions, it does not promote any designated religion.
• The school informs students about various beliefs; it does not seek to conform students to any particular belief.

These guidelines appropriately assume the distinction between teaching about religion from a nondevotional, academic perspective versus teaching religion through a devotional lens. As such, they provide a useful thumbnail sketch to guide educators in the public school context. Indeed, they have been very helpful in alerting teachers and administrators to the fact that there is a distinction between a secular and devotional approach.

It is important to note here that teaching about religion from a nondevotional, religious studies approach is not without controversy. For example, teaching about religion gives credibility to religion itself as a valid field of inquiry and assumes the legitimacy of multiple religious perspectives. Some who believe that their convictions represent an exclusive truth may find these assumptions challenging. Many other citizens recognize the value of increasing literacy about religion and believe that the public schools are the appropriate venue for this type of learning to occur. The AAR Guidelines for Teaching about Religion in K–12 Public Schools represent this latter perspective and are based on the assumption that public schools are appropriately governed by secular laws and values that support the inclusion of the nondevotional study of religion from an academic perspective across the curriculum. The second half of the Guidelines will focus on how to achieve this inclusion by outlining different approaches to the study of religion (historical, literary, tradition-based or phenomenological, and cultural studies) and offer grade-specific examples of how to integrate theory with practice.

A draft of the second half of this document will be completed in the fall of 2009.

Bibliography


The Problem That “Lies” Within: How “Collegiality” Undermines the Academy

Stacey Floyd-Thomas, Vanderbilt University

Through our work as members of the Status of the Women in the Profession Committee, we have come to realize that the hiring of women and people of color within the religious studies departments and theological schools has elicited mixed reactions. On the one hand, these institutions publicly present and support the view that “race-ing” forward to engender diversity within the academy is a marked sign of progress away from what one once appeared to be an exclusive group. On the other hand, however, the addition of women and the smattering of underrepresented racial-ethnic groups have not altered, transformed, or ended institutional hegemony built on white male normativity.

While those of liberal sensibilities ballyhoo diversification in the academy, their conserva- 
tive counterparts denounce it as effec- 
tless and meritless. Yet, all signs indicate that 
diversification is by no means as widespread as has been touted within higher education in gener-

al, or within the realm of religious studies and 
teachers' educational work. In the heat of im-
portant decision-making regarding promotion 
and tenure, as well as other traditional areas of fac-
ulty responsibility such as curriculum revision 
and academic hiring, “collegiality” can be 
and is often misconstrued as the expectation that a faculty member should display an appropriate “enthusiasm” or “dedication,” should “evidence a con- 
structive attitude” that will “foster harmo-

ny” and not encourage “divisiveness,” or 
display an excessive deference to administrat- 
ive or faculty decisions that are based on “rea-

oned” discussion. Such expectations are flatly 
contrary to the very foundation of academic 
freedom and are often cited as a pretext for 
not only to tolerate but rather to subject 
to to the pragmatic demands of diversification are 
are measured by how disembodied and duplic-
ous women and people of color can become, 
by denouncing and denying their difference 
from their white male counterparts. Therefore, 
be different, or to think or do differently, is 
ity of women and people of color as 

as the ability of women and people of color as 

as intellectuals and scholars to function symboli-
cal and moral courage.” Indeed, feminist scholar Michelle Wallace has shown how women of color are “the least convincing in this role, the least trustworthy.”

Caught between a besieged past and an angr- 

environment. Promotion rates for women of color on faculty (faculty is currently on aver-

sion of women and people of color into the profession can never 

is overrun with women and that the mar-

them as the ability of women and people of color as 

in the religious studies departments and theo-

ological schools has elicited mixed reactions. On 
the academy ironically become the supposed 
status of women in the Profession. She contributes as a guest columnist 
the Profession Committee, on which she has 
served since 2004. As a womanist ethicist, 

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Shawn Copeland, “Collegiality as a Moral 
and Ethical Practice,” 317.

Stacey Floyd-Thomas is an associate professor of 
ethics and society at Vanderbilt University 
Diversity in the Social Sciences and Religious 
Education. She contributes a guest column in the 
invitation of the Status of Women in 
her work since 2004. As a womanist ethicist, 
Floyd-Thomas situates her research and teach-
ing interest at the intersection of ethics and 
organizations, critical pedagogy, critical race 
theory, and postcolonial studies, engaging broad questions of moral 
agency, cultural memory, ethical responsibility, 
and social justice. She has published four 
books, Mining the Motherlode: Methods in 
Black Church Studies: An 
Introduction (2007), and U.S. Liberation 
Theologies: An Introduction (2010). She 
was also the recipient of the 2007 American 
Academy of Religion Excellence in Teaching 
Award.

The Problem That “Lies” Within: How “Collegiality” Undermines the Academy

October 2009 RSN • 31
Today, these memories and our ongoing work with FTE Doctoral Fellows inspire continued passion for encouraging talented students from traditionally underrepresented groups (African-American, Asian-American, Native American, and Hispanic students) to consider teaching and scholarship in theological schools and seminar-ries as their life’s work. This remains true despite recent challenges to affirmative action policies, race-based scholarships, and the reexamination of diversity programs across higher education and beyond. It remains true because excellence in the academy depends on gifted voices that represent diverse perspectives in research, teaching, and public engagement. And it remains true because of FTE’s history of investment in identifying, recruiting, and supporting emerging scholars from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups who are able to make measurable and positive impact in the lives of students and on the quality of scholarship.

“Diversity for me is a code word for excellence. If we do not start representing the great diversity of people who are part of this society in our educational environment, we’re not educating people to meet future needs, as students or as scholars.”

EMILIE M. TOWNES
PAST PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF RELIGIONS; ASSOCIATE DEAN OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND ANDREW W. MILLION PROFESSOR OF AFRICAN AMERICAN RELIGION AND THEOLOGY, YALE DIVINITY SCHOOL; FTE FELLOW

History Matters

What exactly is FTE’s cause? The Fund was created in 1954 out of concern that the quality of students entering ministry had declined as gifted students increasingly chose other career paths. In close collaboration with the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and leading theological educators of that time, the Fund launched a special initiative known as the Rockefeller Brothers Trial Year Fellowship to attract talented candidates to ministry who might not otherwise have considered it as a vocation. During the 1960s and 1970s, FTE grew in size and scope. Its priorities embraced issues of diversity and inclusivity among students intending to enroll in theological schools and among those who teach and mentor them. The Fund developed new programs and fellowships to assist women and traditionally underrepresented groups considering ordained ministry, teaching, and scholarship as vocations. These threads of commitment run deep in the DNA of our mission today. While several fellowship programs have changed in structure, FTE remains an ecumenical advocate for excellence and diversity in pastoral ministry and theological scholarship. Our work continues to support the next generation of leaders among pastors and scholars, providing $1.5 million annually in fellowships and convening opportunities to gifted young people from all denominations and racial/ethnic backgrounds. The FTE has awarded nearly 6,000 fellowships to develop leaders for the church, academy, and world.

Doctoral Education: The Diversity Gap and the Twenty-first Century Challenge

Achiving diversity in doctoral education in the academy overall has been slow. This is especially true if one compares the presence of scholars from underrepresented groups to their proportion in the population. Today, 30 percent of United States citizens are persons of color. If current trends hold, half of all Americans will be persons of color in two generations. Yet a 2001 AAR research study found that racial/ethnic persons account for fewer than 10 percent of full-time religion faculty in higher education. About a third of theological schools do not have a person of color on their faculties. However, data from the Association of Theological Schools shows that full-time racial/ethnic faculty at theological schools and seminar ries have registered a slow but noticeable increase from 12.7 percent in 2001 to almost 17 percent today.

“FTE has been instrumental in gatherings that bring educators and students from the social sciences, the humanities, and the theological disciplines together with leaders of faith communities. PANA is indebted to FTE for its role in supporting and fostering the religious leadership and scholarship of Asian Pacific Americans.”

FUMITAKA MATSUOKA
ROBERT GORDON SPIRAL PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF THEOLOGY, PACIFIC SCHOOLS OF RELIGION, FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PANA

WINDS OF CHANGE — steady and gentle streams, as well as sudden, strong gusts — have swept and refreshed the landscape of theological education and religious scholarship over the past decade. An academy characterized by excellence and diversity in the teaching of religion, theology, and biblical studies is in view, but reaching a destination we have yet to fully reach.

I have had the privilege to witness those winds of change — as both a professor and administrator at several institutions of higher education, and since 1998 as director of Doctoral Fellowship Programs at The Fund for Theological Education (FTE). Now more than ten years later, I have wonderful memories of working with students selected as FTE Doctoral Fellows as they have finished their graduate courses, completed their dissertations, and started their teaching careers.

These rising scholars call and e-mail us about their upcoming dissertation defense dates and send invitations to attend their final oral defense — the capstone of their life’s work. Faculty appointments and published articles.

“PhD studies are extremely demanding. Rising scholars, particularly those from underrepresented groups, need a community of support. That’s what the Fund offers.”

ADA MARIA ISAÍ-DÍAZ
PROFESSOR OF ETHICS AND THEOLOGY, DRAW THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL; FTE FELLOW

Preparing the next generation of diverse scholars for the academy depends on increasing the number of racial/ethnic students pursuing the PhD. But while the proportion of college students from underrepresented groups has been increasing (from 22 percent in 1997 to 28 percent in 2006), far too few of them — lacking financial support, instruction on navigating the graduate school application process, and faculty role models — go on to seek graduate degrees. In many ways, the fundamental challenge remains a supply or ‘pipeline’ issue. The FTE’s formula for change — as a catalyst, convener, and advocate — seeks to keep this issue as a priority on the radar screen of graduate education. It requires a commensurate commitment on the part of national, regional, and local partners and the constellation of higher education institutions. Some of our dedicated partners include the American Academy of Religion, Society of Biblical Literature, Hispanic Theological Initiative, Institute for Leadership Development and the Study of Pacific and Asian North American Religion, and the Association of Theological Schools.

Over the past decade, we have learned which identification and retention strategies work for doctoral students, and also the value of collaboration and partnership in advancing the diversity cause. Sparked and sustained by visionary funding from Lilly Endowment Inc., FTE Doctoral Fellows have helped to change the landscape. But the challenge continues as our intervention seeks the scale and investment to match current and emerging needs.

FTE Doctoral Programs: A Decade of Success

To tackle concerns about the lack of diversity among faculty who teach religion and theology, the Fund unveiled in 1998 new competitive fellowships for outstanding racial/ethnic students. Between 1998 and 2008, FTE has awarded approximately $4 million in support to 214 doctoral (continued on next page)
A STUDENT’S DECISION to pursue graduate work in the academic study of religion is often a complex one, based on considerations ranging from intellectual and personal to professional and practical. In all cases, the decision represents an important life choice. Yet students in the academic study of religion often lack access to the very information they must need to make informed decisions. In a 2008 survey conducted by the AAR, over 80 percent of current graduate students in the field responded that they had little or no understanding of the job market for PhD graduates in their specific field of study when they started their studies, and 82 percent reported that they had little or no understanding of the job placement success for graduates in their field of study from the institution they were attending.

In light of the changing nature of the job market with regard to academic positions in the field and in order to afford students the opportunity to make informed decisions about whether and where to attend graduate school, the American Academy of Religion puts forth the following best practices for the posting of graduation and placement information by graduate programs in the academic study of religion.

Programs should post in a location accessible to prospective and current students (typically the program website) concrete data on progress towards the degree and graduation status for each year’s class of students. This data should be updated on at least an annual basis. For example:

Class of 2005: 20 students started, 13 still enrolled, 1 graduated (as of Fall 2009)
Class of 2004: 18 students started, 6 still enrolled, 5 graduated (as of Fall 2009)

Programs should post in a location accessible to prospective and current students (typically the program website) specific information — including year graduated, area of study, dissertation/thesis title, and current position, but not student name — regarding the placement status of each student who graduates from the program. This information should be updated on at least an annual basis. For example:


The above information is crucial not merely to students who are deciding whether or not to attend graduate school, but also to students currently enrolled in programs who must make informed decisions about future career paths. In addition, this information should be an integral part of discussions by faculty members as they conduct informed assessment of program strengths, weaknesses, and future directions.

The American Academy of Religion Board of Directors, at its April 2009 meeting, approved the following Statement of Best Practices for the Posting of Graduation and Placement Records by Graduate Programs in the Academic Study of Religion. The statement, composed and submitted by the Job Placement Task Force, provides some guidelines by which graduate programs in religion and theology should share their graduate and placement records to the larger public. The Statement of Best Practices is available on the AAR’s website at www.aarweb.org/About_AAR/board_and_Governance/Resolution/placement.asp. We encourage you to discuss these best practices with your institution’s administration.

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A Strong and Gentle Wind

We continue to be propelled by a strong and gentle wind in our sails: from generous funders who continue to support this cause; from faculty, departments, and institutions in the academy with whom we work; a growing network of energized alumni; and from fellowship recipients who directly benefit from our programs.

But we still have work to do. Diversity delayed is a deferral of true excellence. We must make faculty diversity a priority investment — as a hallmark of quality and as one of the most essential ways we prepare students for a world in need of gifted leaders who represent every source of transforming talent and intellect.

Programs should post in a location accessible to prospective and current students (typically the program website) the average time of completion — the period from first enrollment to graduation — for all students who have graduated from the program during a specified period of time. For example:

Average time from first enrollment to graduation for students who graduated 2002–2009: 6.5 years

Programs should post in a location accessible to prospective and current students (typically the program website) specific information — including year graduated, area of study, dissertation/thesis title, and current position, but not student name — regarding the placement status of each student who graduates from the program. This information should be updated on at least an annual basis. For example:


The above information is crucial not merely to students who are deciding whether or not to attend graduate school, but also to students currently enrolled in programs who must make informed decisions about future career paths. In addition, this information should be an integral part of discussions by faculty members as they conduct informed assessment of program strengths, weaknesses, and future directions.

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In the Public Interest

Religion and the Obama Campaign

Shaun Casey, Wesley Theological Seminary

Shaun Casey is professor of Christian ethics at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. He is a member of the AAR’s Committee on the Public Understanding of Religion.

The 2008 ELECTION of Barack Obama as president of the United States created an unusual volume of commentary on the role of religion in American presidential politics. All across the political spectrum bloggers, journalists, professors, politicians, clergy, and ordinary citizens examined and debated a host of rumors, events, and speeches dealing with some aspect of religion. From the devoir of every tribe to the cultured among the despisers of religion, everyone seemed to have an opinion on the junior senator from Illinois when it came to religion.

I had something of a front row seat to the spectacle. In July of last year, after serving as a senior adviser for religious affairs to the campaign for a year, I left the comfort of my usual academic summer routine and joined the Obama campaign as a staffer for the religious affairs team. The next four months were a whirlwind of travel, organizing, and speaking, to say nothing of bad food, cheap hotel rooms, and fascinating conversations. Just days before joining the campaign I completed my manuscript for The Making of a Catholic President: Kennedy vs. Nixon 1960 for Oxford University Press. So I hit the road predisposed to compare what I saw and did on the campaign with the epic struggle of John Kennedy’s fight to become the first Roman Catholic president in American history. I noticed at least three major parallels.

The first parallel I saw was weakness. Both Kennedy and Obama faced very difficult problems regarding religion. Kennedy’s Catholicism was a huge obstacle as the conventional political wisdom said that, in light of Herbert Hoover’s big win over the Catholic Democrat Al Smith, America would never elect a Catholic. As a Massachusetts Catholic, Kennedy had never faced the depths of anti-Catholic prejudice of the type we would encounter especially, but not exclusively, in the South.

Likewise, Obama’s problems were large. The fact that his middle name is Hussein fed fears in a significant minority of the electorate that he was in fact some sort of radical Muslim. In addition, his membership in the Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, under the leadership of Reverend Jeremiah Wright, led many pundits to charge that Obama was under the sway of allegedly radical black ideology. And there was also the simple fact that as a Democrat Obama was presumed by some to be a secularist and even anti-God simply by virtue of his party affiliation. Taken together, these weaknesses at the outset of the campaign presented Obama with many problems.

The second parallel between Kennedy and Obama is their response to these weaknesses. Despite his naïvete regarding anti-Catholicism in the American electorate, Kennedy came to realize the depth of his problem very quickly and applied a type of technical rationality to the problem. He assembled a team of experts to constantly diagram and define the scope of the problem and design a course of action. He directly addressed the issues surrounding his Catholicism through a combination of a listening tour of prominent anti-Catholic Protestant leaders, several speeches throughout the campaign, and constant consultation with prominent Protestant and Catholic leaders for advice.

Obama, too, applied a form of technical rationality to the religion problem he faced. He assembled the largest campaign religion staff of any Democratic presidential candidate in history. Significant assets were deployed to reach Catholic, African-American, Evangelical, and mainline Protestant voters. While it would be a gross exaggeration to attribute his win to this effort, it certainly did not do him any harm in the final outcome. Like Kennedy, Obama also addressed his problems with speeches aimed directly at these problems. Obama’s famous Philadelphia speech, like Kennedy’s famous Houston speech, was given in direct response to a crisis precipitated by a public provocation. In Kennedy’s case, he reluctantly gave the Houston speech in response to a public challenge thrown down by Norman Vincent Peale, allies of Billy Graham, and the National Association of Evangelicals.

Obama responded to the outcry over Reverend Jeremiah Wright’s appearance at the National Press Club. Both speeches were born out of fear and crisis. Both speeches were critical political successes in that they eloquently addressed voter angst and allayed the fears of many voters.

The third parallel between the two candidates relates to the media. Kennedy was quite frustrated in that he was constantly portrayed as the Catholic candidate for the presidency. His inability to settle what came to be called the “religious” question doomed the campaign throughout 1960. Yet, I argue in my book, this tension actually helped him in the closing days of the race. For Obama, the Reverend Jeremiah Wright’s role in the media was threatened to derail the campaign. While I cannot fully explore the complexities of the controversies generated by the Wright episode here, I do want to note the media bears some responsibility for its poor handling of the story. In the spring of 2008, when I was advising the campaign and not yet a staffer, the night before one of the major television networks “broke” the Wright story on its national morning news magazine show, the campaign called me and asked me to go on the show to tape a response to the story. I reluctantly agreed and found myself in a downtown Washington remote network studio very early the next morning getting ready to respond to a question-and-answer segment with the anchor. Despite significant preparation with key campaign staffers, I was appalled at what I experienced. The anchor played the video of the story and then launched into a series of hostile questions.

I left the comfort of my usual academic summer routine and joined the Obama campaign as a staffer for the religious affairs team... I hit the road predisposed to compare what I saw and did on the campaign with the epic struggle of John Kennedy’s fight to become the first Roman Catholic president in American history. I noticed at least three major parallels.

The video clip contained no original reporting from Trinity United Church of Christ. Instead, the investigative reporter bought a DVD of Wright’s sermons and edited several selections of the most provocative clips from multiple sermons. In classic contemporary movie editing fashion, there were quick clips of worship scenes featuring African-American women in traditional African dress dancing and clapping to music interspersed with the sermon clips. Having grown up in a small southern town, I knew the name of this genre. It is called “What White People Think Black People Do When They Think White People Are Not Watching.” I fended off the hostile questions from the pretty boy anchor who kept asking me how Obama, who spoke of uniting all Americans, could associate with such a divisive figure, but I was furious.

I did no harm to the campaign that morning, but as a scholar of religion I learned the hard way that the mainstream political media had no capacity and little interest in understanding either Jeremiah Wright or the theology of Trinity United Church of Christ. Instead, the major media outlet thought that it had the goods that were going to kill the Obama campaign and that was all they were interested in. In coming weeks, I worked my contacts in the media world and discovered a lack of interest or a lack of competency among political media in understanding black liberation theology. To be fair, there were a number of religion reporters and religious media outlets that did do a good job on this front, but they were not in the mainstream political media, and their coverage went relatively unnoticed.

As an aside, I should note the Obama campaign’s modest success in reaching moderate and young Evangelicals forced Senator John McCain to expend valuable assets in shoring up his upscale conservative Protestants, which constitutes a huge part of the Republican base, despite the fact that he was clearly uncomfortable with that segment of his party. The selection of Sarah Palin as his running mate stopped the hemorrhaging of voters in the Religious Right, but it proved to be a disastrous choice among the balance of the electorate. McCain maintained a miniscule religious outreach staff in comparison to both President Bush in previous elections and the Obama campaign. Everywhere I traveled across the country, I discovered we had the religious field to ourselves. The formidable Bush religious outreach machine was apparently dead.

In conclusion, let me say a few words about the president and religion scholars speculate on the influence of such diverse figures as James Cone, Reinhold Niebuhr, Robert Purnam, John Rawls, Jeremiah Wright, Jim Wallis, and others on the president’s thinking about religion. In most cases, there is only the flimsiest of evidence of any such influence. Truth be told, the president is not a religious intellectual. The greatest religious influences on his thinking are not public intellectuals, but rather his own experience in his community organizing days in Chicago, which fed his belief that faith-based communities can work together to address social problems. From the staffers who manage faith-related issues in the White House to the members of his Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Council, one does not find a coterie of well-trained religion scholars.

Nevertheless, religion scholars will find much to examine in Obama’s governing record in coming years as religion will continue to cut across most of the crucial political questions of our day. Undoubtedly, as the president’s reelection campaign in 2012 will consolidate the lessons learned from its successes and failures with religious outreach in 2008 and that, too, will draw scholarly scrutiny.
Saying Your Prayers, Constructing Your Religions: Medical Studies of Intercessory Prayer

Wendy Cadge, Brandeis University

O n March 31, 2006, the New York Times published a front-page article under the headline “Long-Awaited Medical Study Questions the Power of Prayer.” The article reported the results of a multiyear, multi-medical-center study designed to determine whether prayers offered by strangers influenced the recovery of patients undergoing heart surgery — they did not. Published in the prominent American Heart Journal, this report was the latest in a line of medical research studies published over the past forty years that asked this question. Recent reports pointed to aspects of their research that may not be effective in reducing complications and death.

In addition, intercessory prayer studies illustrate a particular intersection of religion and modern medical science demonstrating shifting sociocultural assumptions about religion, prayer, and the requirements of clinical trials in the years in which they were conducted.

Twentieth century medical researchers were among the first to investigate whether the prayers of one group of people might affect the health of others. Calling the efficacy of prayer a “perfectly appropriate and legitimate subject of scientific inquiry” that is universally ignored by the scientific world, nineteenth century English scientist Francis Galton focused on sovereigns, a group he assumed were prayed for more than others, to determine whether prayers were answered. He concluded that they were not, but that prayer might be a comfort to people regardless. Other English scientists, including John Tyndall, also called for studies into the effectiveness of prayer, suggesting an experiment in 1872 in which a hospital would be made the focus of national prayer for one day and mortality rates compared before and after the day of prayer. The experiment was never conducted, but the “prayer gauge” debate it provoked illustrated deep tensions around the boundaries of religion and science in Victorian England and served as a precursor to contemporary intercessory prayer studies.

Between 1965 and 2006, about seventy-five researchers working in small teams published eighteen research articles in the English language medical literature that report on intercessory prayer studies. The Cochrane Review, an organization that compiles medical studies about specific topics to offer clear recommendations, analyzed these studies first in the 1990s and several times since, initially suggesting further study and only recently calling for an end to such studies. These studies first became an issue in 1988 when Byrd published an article titled “Positive Therapeutic Effects of Intercessory Prayer in a Coronary Care Unit Population” in the British Medical Journal. The study included 393 patients admitted to the cardiac care unit at San Francisco General Hospital, half of whom were prayed for by born-again Christians who were active in local churches. Each intercessor was given the assigned patients’ names, diagnoses, and general conditions and was asked to pray for “rapid recovery” and for “prevention of complications and death.” After analyzing the data gathered, Byrd concluded that “intercessory prayer to the Judeo-Christian God has a beneficial therapeutically effect in patients admitted to the CCU [cardiac care unit].” Patients who were prayed for by born-again Christians they had never met, he argued, had better health outcomes than those who were not the subjects of prayer. A later study, “A Randomized Controlled Trial of the Effects of Remote Intercessory Prayer on Outcomes in Patients Admitted to a Coronary Care Unit,” led by William H. Harris and published in the Archives of Internal Medicine in 1999, claimed to confirm these positive findings.

Many other studies reported negative effects of intercessory prayer, findings like Benson and colleagues in 2006 that prayer did not improve the health of those prayed for. As time went on, researchers and people who wrote letters to the editors of the medical journals in response to these studies also began to wrestle with methodological, theological, and epistemological questions. They asked how prayer should be offered in such studies, what the right “dosage” is, how intercessors should be trained, and how to handle non-Christian intercessors. They raised questions about whether the people not being prayed for in these studies were a true control group in the scientific sense, because they were likely prayed for by family and friends. Letter writers asked about methods of data analysis and whether these studies, if they were science, should be reviewed by institutional review panels that grant permission to do research with living beings. Some also asked about the conceptions of religion and of prayer that underlie these studies, raising questions about theology, theodicy, and deep existential questions about why people become ill, why some recover and others do not, and the differences between religious and scientific approaches to such questions.

Intercessory prayer studies illustrate a particular intersection of religion and modern medical science demonstrating shifting sociocultural assumptions about religion, prayer, and the requirements of clinical trials in the years in which they were published. In addition, intercessory prayer studies are valuable for scholars of religion for what they demonstrate about “epistemic authority” or the boundaries we place around the subjects we study. Borrowing from a group of scholars led by Jonathan Z. Smith’s imperative that the constructed nature of the category of religion and practices traditionally connected to it, such as prayer, be reconceptualized, Byrd by looking at a case in which religion, prayer specifically, is defined and measured so discernibly and differently from how scholars of religion typically think about it, this study points to all of our need to carefully consider our epistemologies and to be as clear as possible about how our individual, institutional, and cultural contexts shape our assumptions, research questions, and writing.

For these reasons, I have found intercessory prayer studies to be particularly valuable as teaching tools in introductory and more advanced courses in religion and sociology. In religious studies courses, students tend to recall when they learn how these researchers defined and measured prayer, creating an opening for discussions of what prayer is, how it is constructed, how context shapes the answers to these questions, etc. Such questions can lead into broader discussion of how we define and study prayer, ritual, practice, and other common topics in religious studies courses.

One approach to teaching about intercessory prayer studies as connected to broader issues of epistemology and methodology is to begin by having students actually read one of the studies. I typically assign the article by Harris mentioned above. The article Byrd mentioned above also works well, as does an article by Leonard Leibovici titled “Effects of Remote, Retroactive Intercessory Prayer on Outcomes in Patients with Bloodstream Infection: Randomized Controlled Trial” (British Medical Journal, 2001). If you assign this article, read my article in the Journal of Religion first so you are aware of the twist in his approach. I typically assign one of the above-mentioned articles for a full class meeting and begin by asking the class:

- Were you surprised to read this article? Why or why not?
- What are these researchers trying to learn?
- What assumptions are they making in the process (about science, religion, prayer, etc.)?
- Are you convinced by their evidence? Why or why not?
- What do you think it would have been like to be an intercessor in this study?
- What are these researchers actually testing? Are they testing the existence of God?
- Should these studies be conducted?
- Should universities allow these studies to be conducted?

This generally generates vigorous empirical debate about what the researchers did and vigorous normative debate about whether such studies should be conducted.

In a second class meeting, I then assign my article to give students a social history of these studies as well as to raise broader theoretical and methodological questions about how we define and measure prayer, constructing an opening for more accessible conversation, I also sometimes assign William Safarian’s
Running with a MA in a PhD world
Juli Gittinger, University of Colorado, Boulder

I earned a Master’s degree in Religious Studies in April 2006. My reason for selecting this field was my desire to understand and research religious topics. But after earning my MA, I was faced with the question of whether I should pursue a PhD as well. I was aware that having a PhD in Religious Studies would open up more academic opportunities, but I wasn’t sure if I had what it took to succeed in such a program.

The advice given to me by professors is usually the same. Find someone in your field who is doing what you do (no one is doing exactly what I am doing — hooray for originality! — but at least there are some in the ballpark), then contact them to see if they are interested in your work (I found several who said they would be happy to be my advisor). Go to, and present at, conferences (I have, both regional and national), publish if you can, travel if possible. I know so many peers who have followed every one of these rules and more, and still have not been admitted anywhere.

I know enough about the admission process to know that it is not as simple as “I like this student, let’s take them!” There are financial factors, of course. There are faculty considerations — your potential advisor might already have a maximum number of students, or have no influence on the admissions committee. Some research topics might just be too fringe for some departments’ intended focus. So then there is work experience, perhaps, the PhD admission process can be a rite of passage.

This rosy optimism quickly fades when the first rejection letter arrives, pushing you into the realm of fear and anxiety with the recognition that an acceptance letter may never arrive at your door and be the gateway to your future. A salutary exercise in self-promotion, perhaps, the PhD admission process can be a rite of passage.

My goal in this discussion is to get at broader questions of methodology and epistemology in the hopes that students who are waiting tables and answering phones. I know so many peers who said they would be happy to be my advisor). Go to, and present at, conferences (I have, both regional and national), publish if you can, travel if possible. I know so many peers who have followed every one of these rules and more, and still have not been admitted anywhere.

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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.

Eastern International
University of Ottawa/Université d’Ottawa
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
May 7–8, 2010

The Regional Program Committee invites you to submit proposals for papers and panels to be presented at the 2010 Regional Meeting. The deadline for submissions is January 31, 2010.

Each proposal should consist of the following:

• One-page abstract (300 words max.) describing the nature of the paper or panel
• Current CV for the participant(s)
• Cover letter that includes full name, title, institution, phone number, fax number, e-mail, and mailing address.

Please send this information as a single e-mail attachment in MS Word format to aar_ei@uottawa.ca.

Proposals are welcome in all areas of religious studies. The Program Committee is particularly interested in papers, panels, and thematic sessions in the following areas:

• Religion, Art, and Literature
• Indigenous Religious Traditions
• Religion and Diaspora Communities
• Teaching Religious Studies: Methods and Technologies

The Committee is also interested in panels combining activism or performative dimensions with scholarly inquiry. The Committee wants to encourage interdisciplinary panels that maintain religion as a central theme. Scholars from any region may apply to participate. Only those proposals received by the deadline will be considered for inclusion in the program. Presentations are limited to twenty minutes, with ten minutes allowed for questions. If you require technological support for your presentation (such as an Internet connection or AV equipment), you must request it with your proposal. As a general rule, the Committee discourages the use of slides comprised of scholars from a single institution. Exceptions to this rule would include a presentation from a research team or a panel based on other types of collaborative research.

The Committee welcomes proposals, papers, and panels in both French and English.

Student Paper Competition
Graduate and undergraduate students residing in the region are invited to enter the student paper competition. Please note that to be eligible for submission, the student must attend a university in the Eastern International Region. The committee will give preference to work that is new at this conference. Two $200 awards are reserved for winning papers. The awards will be formally presented at the business meeting on Saturday, May 8, 2010.

To enter the competition, please attach a letter of intent along with your initial proposal by the January 31, 2010, deadline. A final draft of the paper must be submitted by April 1, 2010. To be eligible for this award, the student must read the entire paper at the meeting, which means the paper and presentation must conform to the twenty-minute time limit (nearly 2,500 words). We ask that submissions to this contest be submitted by e-mail to Scott Kline at skline@uwaterloo.ca.

Undergraduates
The region welcomes submissions from undergraduates in the field of religious studies. The Committee requests that, in addition to the abstract, CV, and cover letter, the undergraduate student also submit a letter from a faculty member who has supervised the student's work.

Note: All presenters at the Spring 2010 regional conference must have active membership in the AAR. All participants must preregister for the conference.

Mid-Atlantic
Hyatt Regency New Brunswick
New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA
March 11–12, 2010

We encourage you to submit proposals for the 2010 joint regional meeting of the Mid-Atlantic and New England/ Maritimes Regions. As customary for the Mid-Atlantic Region, once again we will be meeting with the Mid-Atlantic Region of the Society for Biblical Literature (MAR-SBL). This year we are especially interested in proposals that address the 2010 conference theme, “Perspectives on Social Change.” Full calls are available at www.aarweb.org/About_AAR/Regions/Mid-Atlantic.

Proposal Submission
Please send proposals by e-mail attachment to the section chair for the section to which you are applying no later than November 15, 2009. You may submit no more than one proposal to an AAR section at this regional meeting, although MAR-SBL members who are also members of MAR-SBL may also submit a second proposal for a SBL session.

Mid-Atlantic Regional Awards
As has become our custom, MAR-SBL will award the Kate Connolly-Weinert Prize of $200 to the most innovative proposal for a group session (or panel) dealing with peace issues or women’s studies; the deadline for submission is November 15, 2009. Applicants should send their proposals to MAR-SBL President Devorah Schoenfeld at drosboenfeld@smcm.edu. The Committee requests that, in addition to the abstract, CV, and cover letter, the undergraduate student also submit a letter from a faculty member who has supervised the student’s work. Those interested in the Streetman Prize should submit their entire paper by March 4, 2010, to Devorah Schoenfeld at drosboenfeld@smcm.edu and clearly indicate they are submitting the paper for prize consideration.

Preregistration
Online preregistration will be available in January through the AAR website. You will be notified by e-mail when our online preregistration is live. Please utilize the AAR website for registration as it saves paper and helps the region fulfill our national AAR mandate to promote environmentally sustainable gatherings.

Sustainability
As part of the American Academy of Religion’s commitment to host environmentally sustainable meetings, we are asking participants to consider bringing reusable beverage containers and name badge holders from previous conferences in order to cut down on waste at the conference.

For any ongoing updated conference information please consult our website at www.aarweb.org/About_AAR/Regions/Mid-Atlantic. Information will be posted as it is available during the upcoming academic year.

2010 Proposal Guidelines

Paper Proposals (250–500 words) should include full name, title, institution, phone number, fax number, e-mail, and mailing address. The proposal should state, as fully as possible, the proposal’s purpose and how the argument will proceed. Provide enough context to show that you are aware of the basic literature in the field and summarize the argument of your presentation. An abstract of the paper (150 words) should also be included.

Proposals for a Panel Session should also include abstracts (150 words) and contact information for each individual participant. A “panel” is a session with one announced theme and a list of participants who address that theme but do not present separate formal papers.

Proposal Submission
Please send proposals by e-mail attachment to the section chair for the section to which you are applying no later than November 15, 2009. You may submit no more than one proposal to an AAR section at this regional meeting, although MAR-SBL members who are also members of MAR-SBL may also submit a second proposal for a SBL session.

Midwest
Augustana College
Rock Island, Illinois, USA
March 26–27, 2010

The Midwest Region invites research presentation 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, Sex, and the Body.” Proposals might include research engaging topics such as ritual performance, gendered roles and identities, the embodiment of religion, ideologies of the body, and sexuality among religious peoples and groups.

We are very pleased to announce that our keynote speaker will be Wendy Doniger, University of Chicago Divinity School.

Proposals are due to Section Chairs by January 1, 2010. Please contact the relevant Section Chair listed below with your proposal, which should include the following:

• Cover sheet that includes your name, address, e-mail address, title of paper, and 100-word abstract.

A second sheet that includes the title of your paper and a 200- to 250-word proposal, typed, double-spaced. Do not include your name on this sheet.

Proposal submissions will only be accepted online. Please observe these restrictions:

You may submit up to two different proposals to a single section.

You may submit up to two different proposals to two different sections.

You may not submit the same proposal to two different sections.

Submit your response to the call for papers at www.aarweb.org/About_AAR/Regions/MidwestCall.asp.

(continued on next page)
New England–Maritimes

NEMAAR Regional Activities

NEMAAR will continue supporting regional AAR activities through a variety of initiatives emphasizing the support of activities throughout the year and throughout the geographical area. This year, NEMAAR will also cosponsor the annual regional conference of the AAR Mid-Atlantic Region in order to provide a more structured forum for those seeking opportunities to present papers, cochair sections, or gather with scholars in such a setting.

Cosponsorship of Mid-Atlantic AAR Regional Conference

The Mid-Atlantic and New England–Maritimes cosponsored conference will be held March 11–12, 2010, in New Brunswick, New Jersey. The theme of the conference will be “Perspectives in Social Change.” Mid-Atlantic leadership is seeking individuals from NEMAAR interested in cochairing or chairing sections, particularly in the following areas: religion in America, pedagogy; womanist theology, Islam, and Judaism. Other sections which may need assistance are religion in the arts, religion and philosophy, Christian history, continental theology, and religion and ethics. If you have a title to organize a panel in the field, or if you are ABD and have made presentations in the field, and you are interested in cochairing a section, please contact Deborah Schoofeldt, President of the Mid-Atlantic region, at dscbofeldt@umcn.edu, or Michael Hartwig, President of NEMAAR, at portamjh@comcast.net.

A New Initiative for 2009–2010

We would like to send out a regular e-mail to members (perhaps every two months) announcing workshops, conferences, speakers, and other activities of the Academy. This is an excellent way to make NEMAAR members aware of opportunities to participate and support regional work and scholars. If you have an event you would like to have included in this regular list of activities, please send it to Michael Hartwig, llurm@ilr.state.ny.us, or portamjh@comcast.net.

Call for Events

If you have an idea for an event, we welcome additional proposals from regional members, and offer funding and promotional support. Our goal is to sponsor events in different parts of the region, to benefit the greatest possible number of members. Such events will be organized by members and supported with regional financial and promotional assistance, provided that the event is open to any regional member. Faculty and graduate students with a faculty mentor are all eligible to apply. We have set a rolling deadline to make it possible to submit an application at any time. If you have an idea or inquiry and want feedback, please send it to Regional Elected Director Rebecca Sachs Norris, Merrimack College, rsnorris@merri. Edu. Proposals should be sent directly to individuals listed in the call at www.aarweb.org/regions/n_ea_ 

Mid-AtlanticRegionalcall.asp.

Cosponsoring Conferences

Instead of organizing a single annual regional meeting, which relatively few people attend, NEMAAR will function as a cosponsor of conferences proposed by members around the region. NEMAAR’s contribution will involve: (1) NEMAAR 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-mail notices to publicize the event. Proposals should be sent to Grove Harris, Harvard University, groveharris@post.harvard.edu, and should include a conference title, an abstract, a 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. Proposals have a 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) NEMAAR 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-mail notices to locate presenters and/or to publicize the event. Proposals should be sent to Grove Harris, Harvard University, groveharris@post.harvard.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. Proposals have a 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: (1) Grants of up to $400 to help support related costs; and (2) Access to regional e-mail notices to publicize the series. Proposals should be sent to Michael Hartwig, llurm@ilr.state.ny.us, 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. Proposals have a rolling deadline.

If you have an idea that is not listed here but that you feel is consistent with the above mentioned goals, please send an inquiry! For a list of currently scheduled events, see the New England–Maritimes region’s page at www.aarweb.org/about_aarregions/new_england_maritimes.asp.

Regional Program Committee cordially invites you to submit proposals for papers and panels to be presented at the 2010 Regional Meeting in Omaha, Nebraska. The deadline for submissions is October 30, 2009. Each proposal should consist of a one-page abstract describing the nature of the paper or panel and sent as an e-mail attachment in MS Word format to Ronald Simkins, Creighton University, rsimkins@creighton.edu. Please be sure to include a title and contact information. If you require technological support for your presentation (such as Internet connection, or audio and projection equipment), you must request it with your proposal. Proposals are welcome in all areas of religious and biblical studies, including:

- Religion and Popular Culture
- Religious Traditions: Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Native American Religions, etc.
- Religion in the Public Square
- 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 twenty minutes. If using slides, please include reliable contact information. If you require technological support for your presentation (such as Internet connection, or audio and projection equipment), you must request it with your proposal. Proposals are welcome in all areas of religious and biblical studies, including:

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Southeastern
Century City Marriott Hotel Atlanta, GA March 5–7, 2010
The following sections and program units invite members who wish to present a paper or coordinate a session to submit proposals (one to two pages) or completed manuscripts to the appropriate section chairs by the call deadline, October 1, 2009. Each member is limited to one proposal. Please use the proposal submission form available on the SEC-SOR website (www.secsor.appstate.edu). Proposals for joint sessions should be sent to all chairs.
For full information on the Call, themes, and submission guidelines, visit the region’s website at www.secsor.appstate.edu.
(SBL/ASOR) Archaeology and the Ancient World (4 sessions) Ralph K. Hawkins, Kentucky Christian University, rhawkins@kcu.edu
(AAR/SBL) Bible and Modern Culture (5 sessions) Brian Mooney, Johnson and Wales University, brian.mooney@jwu.edu, and Finbar S. Benjamin, Oakwood University, fbenjamin@ oakwood.edu
(AAR) Black Cultures and the Study of Religion (3 sessions) Ronald B. Neal, Claflin University, r Neal@claflin.edu
(AAR) Constructive Theologies (4 sessions) Mark Medley, Baptist Seminary of Kentucky, mark.medley@bksy.org, and Emily Askew, Lexington Theological Seminary, easkew@lextheo.edu
(AAR) Ethics, Religion, and Society (5 sessions) Darla Schamm, Hollins University, dschumm@hollins.edu, and Sally Hohl, Belmont University, sally.hohl@belmont.edu
(SBL) Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament (3–4 sessions) Bryan Bibb, Furman University, bryan.bibb@furman.edu, and David Garber, Mercer University, garber_dp@ mercer.edu
(AAR) History of Christianity (3 sessions) Michael Simmons, Auburn University, kship麦克伦@auburn.edu
(AAR) History of Judaism (3 sessions) Calya Schmidt, University of Tennessee, gschmidt@utk.edu
(AAR) Islam (5 sessions) Rachel Scott, Virginia Tech, rmesw16@vt.edu, and Dave Damrel, University of South Carolina, Upstate, aldamrel@uscupstate.edu
(AAR) Method and Theory of Religion (3 sessions) Randy Reed, Appalachian State University, reedrr@appstate.edu, and Laura Ammon, University of North Florida, laura.ammon @unf.edu
(SBL) New Testament (5 sessions) Karen Rowe, Duke Divinity School, browe@div.duke.edu
(AAR) Philosophy of Religion (2 sessions) Mark Wells, Montreat College, mwells@montreat.edu
(AAR) Religion and Ecology Consultation (2 sessions) Richard M. Carp, Appalachian State University, caprm@appstate.edu
(AAR) Religion, Culture, and the Arts (4 sessions) Adam M. Ware, Florida State University, amware@fsu.edu
(AAR) Religion in America (4–5 sessions) Lynn S. Neal, Wake Forest University, neal@wfu.edu
(AAR) Religions of Asia (4 sessions) Steven Ramsey, University of Alabama, steven Ramsey@ua.edu, and Pamela Wierfield, Elon University, pwnfield@elon.edu
(AAR) Teaching Religions (4 sessions) Margaret Aymer, Interdenominational Theological Seminary, reaaymer@ gmail.com
Undergraduate Research (2 sessions) Anne Blue Wilks, Davidson College, awilks@davidson.edu
(AAR) Women and Religion (4 sessions) Emily Holmes, Christian Brothers University, emily.holmes@cbu.edu, and Jill Peterfeso, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, jpetefeso@email.uncc.edu

Southwest
Marriott Hotel, DFW Airport Irving, Texas, USA March 12–13, 2010
The Southwest Commission on Religious Studies invites members of constituent organizations to submit paper proposals for the 2010 Regional Meeting. Proposals should be submitted to the person designated in each Section. Please indicate if the proposal is being submitted to more than one Section. Proposals may be submitted to more than one Section, but in order to accommodate as many people as possible, papers must not be presented more than once during the meeting. Unless otherwise indicated, the deadline for paper proposal submission is November 1, 2008.

Arts, Literature, and Religion
The Arts, Literature, and Religion Section invites paper proposals on any topic concerning the teaching of art and literature in religious studies courses. Panels will comprise papers addressing comparable topics. For a joint roundtable session with the Comparative and Asian Studies in Religion Section, papers are sought that address the peculiar needs and experiences of the comparative and Asian religious studies course. Proposals for regular panels or the roundtable should not exceed 500 words and should include title, brief description, and an indication of the main arguments of the presentation (Word attachment via e-mail preferable). Please let the Chair know if you have any AV needs. Send proposals to Katherine Downey, The Hockaday School, katherine.downey@hockaday.org.

History of Christianity
The History of Christianity Section has an open call for papers. All submissions in the field will be considered, but papers involving historical research in the following areas are of special interest: women and gender; American evangelicalism; global Christianity; and in honor of the centenary of Edinburgh 1910, missions, ecumenics, and transcultural encounters. Suggestions for a session devoted to a particular monograph are also welcome. Send proposals to Elizabeth Flowers, Texas Christian University, e.flowers@tcu.edu.

Philosophy of Religion and Theology
Proposals are invited in all areas in philosophy of religion or in theology. Proposals involving multiple presentations or panel discussions (no more than three participants) focused upon a single topic, figure, or publication will be especially welcomed. Either have each panelist provide an abstract, which is preferred, or supply credentials of panelists. Proposals that feature interdisciplinary or intertransnational participation, and that promise to stimulate productive discourse, will be favored. Abstracts should be no longer than 500 words in length, and the preferred means of submission is a Microsoft Word attachment. Send proposals to Rebecca Huskey, University of Oklahoma, rhuskey@ou.edu.

Ethics, Society, and Cultural Analysis
Proposals for papers and panel discussions are invited on any topic intersecting ethics, society, and cultural analysis, 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. Also of interest are reflections on globalization, interreligious ethical discourse, interdisciplinary methods in ethics, womanist ethics, feminist ethics, constructivist treatments of contemporary ethical issues such as health care and pedagogical styles in ethics. Send proposals to Melanie L. Harris, Texas Christian University, m.l.harris@ tcu.edu.

Comparative and Asian Studies in Religion
The Comparative and Asian Studies in Religion Section invites paper proposals on any topic concerning all aspects of Asian religious practice and thought, both historical and contemporary. However, papers in the areas of religion and science, projects in healing, and reincarnation are especially encouraged. There is a special interest in a joint roundtable session discussing Erinnadelable: Towards a Psychology for the Twenty-first Century by Edward Kelly, et al. For a joint roundtable session with the Arts, Literature, and Religion Section, papers are sought that address the peculiar needs and experiences of the comparative and Asian religious studies course.

Proposals for regular panels or the roundtable should not exceed 500 words and should include title, brief description, and an indication of the main arguments of the presentation (Word attachment via e-mail preferable). Some overhead projectors and slide projectors may be available; if using a Power Point presentation, please make your own arrangement for a data projector. Please let me know if you have any AV needs. Send proposals to Mark Dennis, Texas Christian University, m.dennis@tcu.edu.

Theta Alpha Kappa
Student members of Theta Alpha Kappa chapters in the Southwest Region are invited to submit papers for presentation at the regional meeting. Open to all topics. One session will be devoted to the best papers. Submissions must come from the Chapter Advisor and include: 1) The presenter’s name and contact information; 2) The entire paper (preferred) or an abstract of the paper (acceptable); 3) The name of the school; and 4) Venue for which the paper was prepared (i.e., honors project, senior thesis, etc.). In the event that there are more proposals than can fit in one session, local chapter advisors may be asked to select the one best submission from their schools. Submit proposals to Derek Dodson, Baylor University, derek_dodson@baylor.edu.
your paper to AARSL/BProposals@gmail.com. Indicate in the e-mail the session for which you are proposing a paper, your name, institution, and role (if applicable), e-mail address, any AV needs, and include the proposal within the body of the e-mail. Students should indicate their school and program (see specific requirements for undergraduate and masters level students below). The deadline for submission is December 15, 2009.

For the full Call, visit www.aarweb.org/AboutAAR/Regions/Upper_Midwestcall.asp.

Joint AAR/SBL Sessions:

Multicultural Perspectives on Theology, Religion, and Biblical Interpretation
Priscilla Epping, Graceland University, Lamoni, IA.

Teaching the Bible and Religion
Matthew Skinner, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN.

Undergraduate Research
Bruce Forbes, Morris College, Sioux Falls, SD.

AAR Sessions:

Native American Religions
Michelle Lomawaima, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA.

Ethics
Mary Gaebler, Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN.

Historical Perspectives on Religion
Jim Kroemer, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI.

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

Religion and Science
Greg Peterson, South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD.

Religion and Ecology
Nancy Victorin-Vangerud, Hamline University, St. Paul, MN.

Religion, Art and Culture
Phil Stoltzfus, St. Thomas University, St. Paul, MN.

Religion, Gender and Sexuality
C. Neal Keve, College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, MN.

Philosophy of Religion/Systematic Theology
Courtney Wilder, Midland Lutheran College, Fremont, NE.

World Religions
Mark Berksen, Hamline University, St. Paul, MN.

SBL Sessions:

Old Testament/Hebrew Bible
Maggie Oell, St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN.

New Testament
Juan Hernandez, Bethel Seminary, St. Paul, MN, and Daniel Scholz, Cardinal Stritch University, Wauwatosa, WI.

Christian Apocrypha
Tim Henderson, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI.

Religion in the Ancient World
Glen Menzies, North Central University, Minneapolis, MN.

Greek and Roman Religions
Philip Sellew, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN.

Early Judaism and Judaic Studies
Alex Jassen, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN.

Archaeology and Excavation Reports (Cosponsored by ASOR)
Mark Schuler, Concordia University, St. Paul, MN.

Multiple Submissions
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 Susan Hill, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA; susan.hill@uni.edu. Proposals for papers or topics not listed in the call are to be brought to her attention.

Information for Graduate Students
The region encourages MA students to present outstanding papers. Paper proposals from such students must be accompanied by the nomination of a faculty advisor and include a statement of nomination, name, and contact information of the faculty advisor. The region is pleased to announce the availability of travel scholarships 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 will be awarded on a competitive basis. Details may be requested at the time of making a paper proposal.

Upper Midwest Regional Officers
President: Amy Marga, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN.

Program Committee: Stephen Pardee, St. Mary’s University, Winona, MN.

Regional Elector Director: Susan Hill, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA.

Other topics needing research and investigation. The borderlands — social, cultural, spiritual, as well as geographical — that exist between multiple social identities can be examined. Stepping across theoretical and disciplinary boundaries is encouraged. Identifying limits and limitations, transgressing boundaries of all kinds, and exploring new frontiers — that is what La Fronttera is intended to evoke and provoke.

Proposals are due to Session Chairs by September 30, 2009. You must be a member of the national American Academy of Religion to present a paper at the Western Regional AAR meeting. For complete information on the Call, themes, and submission guidelines, visit the region’s website at www.aarweb.org/AboutAARRegions/WesternWebsiteCall.asp.

Queer Caucus Preconference Session on “Queering the Syllabus”
Derek von der Horst, Claremont Graduate University, derekeh2@yaboom.com.

Buddhist Studies Section
Kenneth Lee, Stetson University, klee@cwm.edu, and Brooke Scheidle, Arizona State University, brooke.scheidle@asu.edu.

Education and Workshops Section
Karen Crozier, Fresno Pacific University, karon.crozier@fpu.edu, and Karenmcph@hotmail.com, and Brett Lewis, Arizona State University, lewisj1@asu.edu.

Ethics Section
Brandon M. Crowe, Arizona State University, Brandon.Crowe@asu.edu.

Godess Studies Section
Helen Hye-Sook Hwang, University of California, Los Angeles, magisz@gmail.com, Annette Williams, San Francisco, CA, aymanner@hotmail.com, and Laura Truax, California Institute of Integral Studies, Laura.Truax@gmail.com.

History of Christianity Section
Marianne Delaporte, Notre Dame de Namur University, ndelaporte@ndnu.edu, and Dyron Daughtry, Pepperdine University, dyron.daughtry@pepperdine.edu.

Indigenous Religions Section
Musumbo Nkulu-N’Enga, California State University, Northridge, musumbo.nkulu-ncenga@csun.edu.

Islamic Studies Section
Sousad Ali, Arizona State University, Sousad.Al@asu.edu, and Sophia Pandya, California State University, Long Beach, spa@csulb.edu.

Jewish Studies Section
Emily Silverman, Graduate Theological Union, eisilver@berkeley.edu, and Sarah Robinson, University of California, Santa Barbara, zoomak@ucsb.edu.

Latinx/o and Latin American Religions Section
The Latinx/o and Latin American Religions Section is currently seeking a Session Chair. Please see the Religion in America Section for submitting paper proposals.

Nineteenth Century Section
Ann Wettman, Arizona State University, awettman@asu.edu, and Linda Repka, Claremont Graduate University, linda.repka@claremont.edu.

Religion in America Section
Ann Wettman, Arizona State University, awettman@asu.edu, and Linda Repka, Claremont Graduate University, linda.repka@claremont.edu.

Religions of Asia Section
Toby Johnson, University of California, Riverside, tobyjohnson@uclue.edu.

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Toby Johnson, University of California, Riverside, tobyjohnson@uclue.edu.

Women and Religion Section
Ann Wettman, Arizona State University, awettman@asu.edu, and Linda Repka, Claremont Graduate University, linda.repka@claremont.edu.

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Membership Corner

Providing information to help you navigate your membership!

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✓ Attend professional development workshops specially designed to assist you at every level of your career.
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✓ 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 (JAAR), Religious Studies News (RSN), and the monthly E-bulletins for the latest scholarship and news.

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Announcing the Ph.D. in Religion at Claremont School of Theology

Applications for admission are now being accepted for the Fall 2010 semester in four new fully accredited areas of religious and theological scholarship, in addition to Claremont’s long-standing Ph.D. in Practical Theology. The new program is among initial steps in the School’s transition from a denominational theological school into a multi-religious graduate university.

For more about the Claremont University Project please visit: www.cst.edu/UniversityProject

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The Religion, Ethics, & Society concentration focuses on the intersection of the religious, the ethical, and the political. Viewing religion as both a source and subject for ethical reflection, students examine public spaces and the people who interact there as they engage pressing social, economic, and political questions. Students will acquire dialogic competencies, deeper knowledge of religious traditions other than their own, resources for philosophical and theological reflection, a facility with a variety of methods for moral deliberation, and the critical tools for analysis and argumentation required to contribute to thoughtful, publicly defensible ethical assessment.

Lead Faculty
• Richard Amesbury
• Grace Via-Hei Kao
• Helene Slessarev-Jamir

Process Studies

The new Process Studies concentration explores the range of methods, themes and applications of process thought with special attention to Alfred North Whitehead’s “philosophy of organism.” This program focuses on process thought as a major approach to the study of ecology, culture and religion today. Students will develop competencies in process philosophy, religion and science, constructive theology, comparative religious studies, postmodern/poststructuralist studies, and Western and non-Western theologies and philosophies. Graduates of the program will learn to formulate a pluralistic and differentiated worldview appropriate to our contemporary societies and be capable of contributing to transformation.

Lead Faculty
• Lincoln E. Galloway
• Dennis R. MacDonald
• Gregor J. Riley


The New Testament & Christian Origins concentration provides advanced training in the historical-critical, literary-critical, social-scientific, and critical theological methods necessary for biblical interpretation, as well as rigorous training in the ancient biblical languages, including Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. The students concentrate in one of three areas: Literary-Critical and Theological Study of the Hebrew Bible; Ancient Near Eastern Studies; or Second Temple Studies. Training in the program presumes competence in the standard methodologies of the discipline (historical criticism, literary criticism, social-scientific criticism) with special attention to the history of religion and comparative literary criticism.

Lead Faculty
• Carleen Mandolfo
• Tammi J. Schneider
• Marvin A. Sweeney

Hebrew Bible

The Hebrew Bible concentration provides advanced training in the historical-critical, literary-critical, social-scientific, and critical theological methods necessary for biblical interpretation, as well as rigorous training in the ancient biblical languages, including Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. The students concentrate in one of three areas: Literary-Critical and Theological Study of the Hebrew Bible; Ancient Near Eastern Studies; or Second Temple Studies. Training in the program presumes competence in the broader field of religious and theological study and, in part, prepares students to relate Hebrew Bible studies to the broader contexts of religious, theological, social-scientific, and humanistic studies.

Lead Faculty
• Carleen Mandolfo
• Tammi J. Schneider
• Marvin A. Sweeney
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