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2012 Mid-Atlantic Regional Meeting
March 15–16, 2012
Hyatt Regency New Brunswick
New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA

Dear MAR-AAR Colleagues,

We encourage you to submit proposals for the 2012 joint regional meeting of the Mid-Atlantic and New England–Maritimes Regions, to be held on March 15–16, 2012. As is 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). Based upon the very large turnout for the last meeting, the MAR–AAR Executive Committee has once again selected the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Brunswick, New Jersey, as our venue. The New Brunswick Hyatt is three blocks from the local Amtrak station, nineteen miles from Newark International Airport, and thirty miles from New York City.

The theme for the 2012 annual meeting is “Interpreting Multiculturalism and Pluralism.” As witnessed by the terrorism in Norway this past July, trends in globalization have brought dissimilar communities into contact with one another in ways never before imagined with both positive and negative consequences. This year’s theme seeks to explore how communal collisions across boundaries of gender, race, class, age, and sexuality have shaped religious praxis, thought, and topography, redefined communal borders, or otherwise altered religion around the globe. While multiculturalism and pluralism are closely linked, they are not synonymous. However, definitions of these terms are numerous and contested. The projects presented in New Brunswick this year should reflect such contestations, leaving room for more than one definition of either as they are interpreted through a variety of hermeneutical lenses and in a multitude of situations. Broad suggestions include dominant/nondominant relationships, the legal status of religious minorities, systemic suppression of otherness, the limits of toleration, doctrinal/theological justifications for determination/assimilation/segregation/integration, and syncretism among and between religious groups. Papers on theologies and theories of religious pluralism, convergent and nonconvergent theologies of global salvation paths, and interpretive methods and their consequent products are welcomed.

Submission deadline is Friday, November 11, 2011.

Please note that the following administrative changes have been implemented to the Annual Meeting:

- Due to extreme costs for technology, we will not be able to offer A/V equipment for any sessions other than “Religion and the Arts” and “Religion, Pop Culture, and Media”
- All presenters must be registered for the conference by February 20, 2012, or else their names will be removed from the program. This is a policy designed to protect the authenticity of the conference printed program as a factual record of actual presentations.

Note: The MAR–SBL call for papers is [online here](#) . Though MAR–SBL is meeting jointly with MAR–AAR and NEMAAR, evaluation of SBL proposals for the 2012 meeting is conducted separately by MAR–SBL.

Plenary Speakers and Workshop:

Tom Banchoff, author of *Democracy and the New Religious Pluralism* (Belknap Press, 2007) and *Ruralism, Globalization*

Jeannine Hill Fletcher, *Muslims in the American West* (Oxford, 2005) and the religious “Ruralism as We Work

We have also invited a member of our region, Anna Moreland, to present a workshop on cutting-edge th

We invite scholarly proposals in any of the subject areas listed below. For any Section without a specific focus in its call for papers, check the [Mid-Atlantic region's webpage](#) in the near future for more details on proposal specifications for those Sections. We also invite proposals for panels given by members of the AAR.

Conference Sections and Conveners:

Christian History and Theology

Patricia Appelbaum, Springfield College, [This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it](#). Shannon McAlister, Catholic University of America, [This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it](#).

This Section seeks proposals that address the conference theme, especially as it relates to the following topics: 1) The history of Christian theology; 2) The history of Christianity in the modern period, broadly construed; 3) Global Christianity; 4) Practice, including liturgy, spirituality, and social action; and 5) Pluralism and multiculturalism within Christianity, as well as across its boundaries. Proposals on other topics are also welcome.

Contemporary Theology (Nineteenth Century to the Present)

Mike Canaris, Fordham University, [This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it](#).

This Section invites proposals for scholars reflecting on systematic theology in the contemporary context, loosely defined as the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries. Especially welcome are any papers with an emphasis on theologies of religion, soteriology, ecclesiology, hermeneutics, and critical theory, interreligious exchange or other cross-disciplinary conversations. Focusing on this year's theme "Interpreting Multiculturalism and Pluralism" will without question bolster one's candidacy in the submission process, but outstanding pieces subsumed under the Section's general aegis are always considered.

East Asian Religion

Hyun Choo, State University of New York, Stony Brook, This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it .

Global Religion and Pluralism

Brooks Barber, Catholic University of America, This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it . Amy Milligan, Pennsylvania State University, This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it . Lavanya Vemsani, Shawnee State University, This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it .

This new Section is an attempt to imbed our conference theme as a continuing focus for the region. The Chairs specialize in the religions of south Asia, Judaism, and Islam. Papers on pluralism and multiculturalism are welcome in these areas, as well as in broader contexts of pluralism and multiculturalism around the world. Please send paper proposals to all three co-Chairs.

Medieval Studies

Marc Beard, Gettysburg College, This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it .

Pedagogy

Catherine Martin, College of Saint Elizabeth, This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it .

This Section critically examines the scholarship of teaching and learning appropriate for the study of religion. We especially invite presentations that model the combination of innovative teaching practice with the scholarship of pedagogy. While this year's theme is "Interpreting Multiculturalism and Pluralism," you may submit a paper on any topic related to this Section's general focus.

Philosophy of Religion

Mikhail Sergeev, University of the Arts, This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it or This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it .

Psychology and Religion

Joseph Kramp, Drew University, This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it .

This Section welcomes papers on the broad range of issues that come under this heading, and especially papers addressing the conference theme of pluralism and multiculturalism. We would also like to encourage interdisciplinary papers that make forays into psychoanalysis, philosophy, and social theory.

Regional Religious History

Caroline Sawyer, State University of New York College, Old Westbury, This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it or This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it .

Religion and the Arts

Johanna Monighan-Schaefer, Dickinson College, This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it .

This Section explores religious experience and expression in a variety of artistic media, including, but not limited to, the visual arts, poetry, film, theatre, dance, and music. We encourage the discussion of contemporary art that reveals new religious insights. In addition, we seek innovative ways of talking about traditional pieces of artwork and their religious dimension. We are interested in the relation of spirituality to daily life, theology, politics, history, society, gender concerns, the environment, and this year's conference theme as these themes are explored in works of art.

Religion and Ethics

Nathaniel Van Yperen, Princeton Theological Seminary, This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it .

This Section invites papers that explore current ethical issues from the perspective of one or more religious traditions, or which examine some aspect of religious behavior from any of a variety of ethical perspectives. We encourage papers in environmental ethics and interreligious dialogue, and welcome papers related to the conference theme of pluralism and multiculturalism. Our goal is to present creative scholarly papers on issues where religion and ethics intersect, and to stimulate lively and productive discussions.

Religion, Gender, and Sexuality

Jea Sophia Oh, Drew University, jsophia@drew.edu This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it .

This Section explores the intersection between religion and perspectives on gender and sexuality. Papers on the theme of “gender justice and sexuality justice” are invited, but quality papers on all topics in religion, gender, and sexuality are welcome. We are particularly interested in proposals that are related to one of the following themes: 1) Issues of gender and sexuality in interreligious dialogue; 2) Feminist approaches in comparative theology; 3) Postcolonial and poststructural issues in gender studies; 4) Gender issues and multiple religious identities or religious hybridity; and 5) Sexuality, nonhuman nature, and religion from interdisciplinary perspectives and approaches, including “othering” and ecotheological perspectives. We encourage submissions by scholars of all sexual identities (including those who are heterosexually identified), multiple disciplines, religious traditions, and perspectives.

Religion in America

Lauve H. Steenhuisen, Georgetown University, lsteenhuisen@georgetown.edu This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it .

Is America a melting pot or a salad bowl when it comes to multiculturalism? Pluralism was a characteristic of the multidenominational colonies and even today, ethnic religious institutions often retain their culture of origin (e.g., Serbian Orthodox, Norwegian Lutheran). In America, minority faiths have challenged dominant faiths for rights to religious freedom in the Supreme Court (e.g., “Catholics can serve alcohol to minors in Communion but peyote is illegal?”; “Atheists have to say ‘under God’ in the Pledge of Allegiance?”) This Section thus welcomes papers exploring the tensions in America between and among communities, challenges to definitions of “multiculturalism” and “pluralism,” and papers that explore theologies of religious pluralism. Do “multiculturalism” and “pluralism” contribute to or diminish “American-ness”? What keeps such radical diversity from devolving into violence, as witnessed in Norway? Does

religious pluralism enhance the muscularity of democracy or challenge the unity of the state? Papers contributing cutting-edge theory and insight will be chosen for presentation.

Religion, Pop Culture, and Media

James Siburt, Alvernia University, [This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it](mailto:jsiburt@alvernia.edu) .

This Section is dedicated to the scholarly exploration of religious expression in a variety of popular culture phenomena. We encourage multidisciplinary scholarship and are committed to taking popular culture seriously as an arena of religious and theological reflection and practice. We strongly encourage creative multimedia presentations that provide alternatives to the conventional reading of conference papers. We are looking for the exploration of the intersections of religion and popular culture in various contemporary media. Presentations might examine the following areas: 1) Web and new media — YouTube, virtual worlds, multiplayer games, etc.; 2) Comic books, graphic novels, manga, etc.; 3) Cinema and television — auteur theory, drama, sitcom, science fiction, fantasy, etc.; 4) Games and toys — video, board games, role-playing, etc.; 6) Music — cover art, lyrics, videos, websites, etc.; and 5) The relationship between any of the above. We will also consider other related areas.

Scriptural Reasoning

Jacob Goodson, College of William and Mary, [This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it](mailto:jgoodson@wvilliams.edu) . Anna Moreland, Villanova University, [This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it](mailto:moreland@villanova.edu) .

This Section gathers Jewish, Christian, and Muslim thinkers for the study of scriptural texts that speak to themes of contemporary importance. Papers should examine brief scriptural passages (drawing on both textual scholarship and reception history) and suggest how they address contemporary readers' concerns. Participants will be asked to circulate drafts in advance and revise their papers in conversation with each other. At least one session will include textual study in small groups. We invite papers or panel proposals concerning the arts and scriptural interpretation, how engaging with the religious "other" shapes questions of ethics and politics, and the role of traditionally sacred texts for "Interpreting Multiculturalism and Pluralism." We welcome proposals on other topics as well and encourage complete panel proposals, especially text-based panel proposals that encourage scriptural study.

Proposal Submission

Please send proposals by e-mail attachment to the Section Chair(s) for the Section to which you are applying no later than **Friday, November 11, 2011**. You may submit *no more than one* proposal to an AAR section at this regional meeting, although MAR–AAR members who are also members of MAR–SBL may also submit a second proposal for a SBL session.

Note about Registration Fees for Non-Presenters

Conference attendees who are not presenting may register at a discounted rate of \$30. Note that presiding at a session is **not** considered presenting, and non-presenters who volunteer to preside at sessions will still be charged this discounted rate of \$30. Both presenters and non-presenters are encouraged to volunteer to preside at sessions. The preregistration form below has an area that you may check off if you are interested in presiding at a session.

Mid-Atlantic Regional Awards

As has become our custom, MAR–AAR will award the Kate Connolly-Weinert Prize of \$200 to the most innovative group session (or panel) dealing with peace issues or women's studies. The deadline for submission is **November 5, 2011**. Applicants should send their proposals to the appropriate Section Chair.

To help foster graduate student participation, the Executive Committee of the MAR–AAR will again award the Robert F. Streetman Prize of \$200 for the best student paper presented at the conference by an AAR regional member. Those interested in the Streetman prize should submit their entire paper by **February 15, 2012**, to the appropriate Section Chair and clearly indicate they are submitting the paper for prize consideration.

New England–Maritimes Regional Awards

To help foster graduate student participation, the Executive Committee of the New England–Maritimes Region will again bestow the NEMAAR Graduate Student Awards for Excellence for the three best student papers presented at the conference by a NEMAAR regional member. Those interested in applying for the awards should submit their entire papers by February 20, 2012, to the appropriate Section Chair(s) and clearly indicate on the submission sheet that they are submitting the paper for NEMAAR award consideration. You are required to be registered for the conference in order to be considered for the awards.

Preregistration

Online preregistration will open soon. Please utilize the AAR website at http://www.aarweb.org/About_AAR/Regions/Mid-Atlantic

for registration, as it saves paper and helps the region fulfill our national AAR mandate to promote environmentally sustainable gatherings. If you choose to preregister for the meeting using a paper form, please print out and complete the Registration Form (available soon) and return it by mail no later than

March 1, 2011

, to J. Marc Beard, Campus Box 408, 300 North Washington Street, Gettysburg, PA 17325.

Hotel Information

[Hyatt Regency New Brunswick](#)

Two Albany Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Phone: 732-873-1234
Fax: 732-873-1382

The Hyatt Regency is offering [online hotel room registration](#) for the MAR/NEMAAR regional meeting. In order to receive the discounted conference rate when booking online, you must reserve your room through this website and NOT through the general Hyatt website.

Alternatively you may call Hyatt Central Reservations at 888-421-1442 to reserve rooms. Please indicate that you are attending our conference so that you can receive the conference rate. Discounted single and double-occupant hotel rooms (\$119 plus state and local taxes) will be held until **February 22, 2012**. After that date, normal hotel rates will apply. Since only fifty discounted rooms have been reserved for Wednesday, March 14, and Thursday, March 15, and fifteen discounted rooms have been reserved for Friday, March 16, we strongly encourage you to reserve your room early. Parking is available at the Hyatt for conference participants at a discounted rate of \$7 a day.

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 [http://www.aarweb.org/About AAR/Regions/Mid-Atlantic](http://www.aarweb.org/About_AAR/Regions/Mid-Atlantic)

. Information will be posted as it is available during the upcoming academic year.

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