

## **Student Events at the AAR Annual Meeting in Atlanta, October 30–November 1, 2010**

### **Student Lounge Hyatt Regency - Chicago C**

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 chance to talk with fellow students. The lounge will be in the Hyatt Regency – Chicago C and the lounge hours are Saturday-Monday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. 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 for coffee and snacks as we discuss the following topics.

### **Roundtable Discussions**

#### **Saturday, October 30, 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm**

##### **What's the Use of Academic Rubrics?**

*Led by: Whitney Bauman*

When rubrics are imposed upon you, they can feel stifling. However, when done well, they can be a tool of creativity when assessing student work. This workshop will be devoted to the joys and pains of developing rubrics. Please come with an assignment in mind so that we can put these ideas into practice.

#### **Sunday, October 31, 9:00 am – 10:00 am**

##### **Balancing Career and Family in Graduate School: A Discussion on Institutional Policies and Personal Practices**

*Led by: Herbie Miller and Meredith Minister*

Many graduate students on the fast track to service in the academy live with a tension between their academic careers and their personal lives. In response to this tension, this discussion attends to the personal aspects of balancing career and family life and the institutional aspects of developing family-friendly policies for graduate students.

#### **Sunday, October 31, 10:00 am – 11:00 am**

##### **Beyond the Classroom: A Holistic Approach to Student Life as Preparation for Departmental Life**

*Led by: William Myatt*

Graduate education is not unidimensional. Students and faculty who excel are able to supplement scholarly pursuits with emotional intelligence, approaching academia in a holistic manner. This roundtable discussion will draw from interviews with successful faculty from around the country to explore the possibilities for cultivating a fully integrated approach to graduate education as preparation for success in an academic department.

#### **Sunday, October 31, 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm**

##### **Distant AND Communal: Exploring New Forms of Online Pedagogy**

*Led by: Marilyn Matevia and Jim Siburt*

Where and when education occurs is increasingly dictated by students without traditional residency at a physical academic location. This session will explore how identifying the key traits that make you unique and effective as an instructor and transferring them into an online environment is one of the most difficult, yet rewarding, aspects of online education.

**Monday, November 1, 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm**

**The Balancing Act: Teaching and Coursework/Dissertation**

*Led by: Emily Bennett and Beth Lawson*

Many students juggle independent teaching with completing our degrees, whether in coursework, exams, or the dissertation stage. This session will discuss issues that include: how we prioritize our own work and our teaching responsibilities, how our teaching and studying can enrich each other, and strategies for managing our time and resources.

**Monday, November 1, 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm**

**Taming the Transitions:**

**Negotiating Challenges in Advanced Graduate Work**

*Led by: Amy DeBaets, Kate McEachen, Almeda Wright*

This session will focus on challenges in transitioning into advanced graduate work, including exams, theses, and dissertations. We will discuss committee composition and development, managing the loss of structure and community that often accompanies the end of coursework, and best practices for getting major writing projects up and running smoothly.

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**Student Town Hall Meeting: Come, Listen, Learn, Get Involved!**

**Saturday, October 30, 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM**

Location: Marriott Marquis - M304

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, yes, 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 you can be involved 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.

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**LGBTIQ Mentoring Lunch**

**Saturday, October 30, 11:45 AM to 12:45 PM**

Location: Hyatt Regency - Lenox

Sponsored by the Status of LGBTIQ Persons in the Profession Task Force

All graduate students and junior scholars who identify outside of normative gender histories and/or sexualities are welcome to join us for an informal lunch. No fee or preregistration is required; please bring your own lunch.

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**SWP, REM, and LGBTIQ Women's Mentoring Lunch**  
**Sunday, October 31, 11:45 AM to 12:45 PM**

Location: Marriott Marquis - Marquis Ballroom C

Sponsored by the Status of Women in the Profession Committee, the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession Committee, and the Status of LGBTIQ Persons in the Profession Task Force

We invite women who are graduate students and new scholars to a luncheon with over thirty womanist and feminist midcareer and senior scholars. Women will have the opportunity to mentor and be mentored in a context where every question is valued. The lunch costs \$10 per person; sorry, no refunds. Registration is limited to 100.

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**Special Topics Forums:**

**How to Get Published (A30-202)**  
**Saturday, October 30, 1:00 PM to 3:30 PM**

Location: Marriott Marquis - A703

Sponsored by the Publications Committee

Based on notions that scholars have an understanding of the books needed in the fields of religion, religious studies, and theology, the AAR publishing program with Oxford University Press (OUP) produces quality scholarship for religious scholars and their students. OUP is an outstanding international publisher and the AAR has published hundreds of titles, many of which have become critical tools in the development of our fields and in training new scholars. AAR/OUP books include five published series: Academy Series; Reflection and Theory in the Study of Religion Series; Religion, Culture and History Series; Religion in Translation Series; and Teaching Religious Studies Series. The panel provides an opportunity to hear from experienced OUP and AAR editors, and to ask any and all questions you might have regarding the AAR/OUP series. Also, the *JAAR* Editor will discuss essay publishing. You will have opportunities to speak with individual editors. In addition, come meet an author who has journeyed from start to finish in the publishing process and can answer your most pressing questions.

**If I Knew Then What I Know Now: Lessons from Academic Life from Those Who have Gone Before (A31-250)**

**Sunday, October 31, 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM**

Location: Marriott Marquis - L401-402

Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee and the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion

This panel will feature four scholars from different fields at various stages in their academic careers. They will be sharing their "hindsight" wisdom on issues such as teaching, completing the dissertation, publishing, getting the first job, tenure-process issues, balancing family and academics, and much, much more! The panel will answer a set of questions posed by the moderator, with plenty of time for questions and discussion from the audience. A light reception will be provided by the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion!

## **The Job Market for Academic Positions in Religious Studies: Recession, Depression, or Paradigm Shift? (A31-301)**

**Sunday, October 31, 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM**

Location: Marriott Marquis - M106-107

Sponsored by the Job Placement Task Force

The market for academic positions in religious studies has undergone dramatic changes in recent years. In the aftermath of 9/11, there was a shift away from advertised positions in subfields that used to constitute the heart of the discipline (e.g., theology, New Testament) and towards a range of new subfields. With the world economic crisis, the number of positions listed through the AAR online *Job Postings* and the Annual Meeting's Job Center declined by as much as fifty percent over a twelve-month period. AAR President Ann Taves has made the shifting academic job market, and the deep challenges it poses to the current generation of graduating doctoral students in the field, one of the signature issues of her presidency. This session will explore the current state of the job market in religious studies by means of the latest data from just-completed surveys of doctoral-granting departments and AAR student members, as well as through data from the AAR's online *Job Postings* and its Job Center at the Annual Meeting. A distinguished panel will join Taves and the audience in discussing the current situation, projecting where the field may be headed, and positing some steps that might be taken for the immediate and longer-range future of the field. Are we dealing with a temporary blip or a permanent paradigm shift in the way academic positions in religious studies are conceived and positioned?

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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 a series of public talks to be held around the city of Atlanta. 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:

- Religion and science,
- Religion in Atlanta, and
- Religion and pluralism.

Plan to join us for these stimulating discussions on Saturday, Sunday and Monday evenings between 6 and 8 p.m.! Consult the Student Members Facebook group for venue details and updates.

**Saturday, October 30, 2010**

[Shrine of the Black Madonna Cultural Center](#)

946 Ralph D. Abernathy Blvd SW, Atlanta, GA 30310

Shannon Montgomery, Ph.D. student, Georgia State University

*'An Influence Among Humanity': Internal Religious Debate over Narrative Paradigms*

Montgomery's project examines a 1911 controversy at Brigham Young University which ended in three professors being fired for teaching evolution. After detailing the basic controversy both

nationally and at Brigham Young specifically, the project hones in on a letter signed by more than 80 percent of the student body in that year. The letter, written in support of the teachers, offered a contrasting narrative to that of the school administration. Lodged between embattled professors and school administration (with church officials), the students had to demonstrate fidelity to the religious institution even as they sought the widest academic vision. Montgomery also considers implications for the Church of Latter Day Saints over the next century. She argues that ultimately, the controversy represents a missed opportunity for the church to be viewed as relevant in secular discourse and opens up a discussion about the potential of religious organization in general to better engage in secular discourse.

**Sunday, October 31, 2010**

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Roy Whitaker, Ph.D. student, Claremont Graduate University

*From Multiculturalism to Multireligiosity: Shifting Paradigms of African-American Religious Studies in a Pluralistic Age with Special Reference to Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Whitaker's paper tracks the shifting paradigms of African-American Religious Studies discovering that the pluralistic age is influencing how scholars do Religious Studies with a greater sensitivity to religious diversity. In *African-American Religious Thought: An Anthology* (2003), Cornel West and Eddie Glaude map the intellectual shift among black thinkers/theologians' singular focus on Christianity beginning to fade in the late 1960's; after King's assassination. James Cone's *Black Power & Black Theology* (1969) adds additional evidence as he clarifies in his 1989 forward how he never considered Christianity the exclusive religion of God. Yet, West and Glaude's periodization may be pushed back a bit if King and other black pluralists like Howard Thurman are factored into the schematization. Whitaker further emphasizes that, in the end, Black Theology is not reducible to Christian Studies. Race and religious pluralism both matter; and need to be part of the contemporary black theological discourse.

**Monday, November 1, 2010**

[St. Mark United Methodist Church](#)

781 Peachtree Street, Atlanta, GA 30308

Dong-Sik Park, Ph.D. student

*The Pursuit of Harmony in Differences between Religion and Science*

Dong-Sik Park applies Sri Aurobindo's marvelous insight, "For all problems of existence are essentially problems of harmony." to the debate of religion and science. Park argues that the debate of religion and science seems to be that of dualisms: creation and evolution, of sacred and secular, of theism and atheism, or of believers and non-believers. For theists science is unholy. For atheist religion is absurd. However, instead of following the Either-Or paradigm, he pushed for a "Both-And." He explores multiple perspectives in science and religion, including two extremes between science and religion, Daniel Dennett and Pat Robertson. However, Park argues that "we need harmony through contrasts or differences in order to combine this 'ugly ditch' between science and religion."