



Regions News

American Academy of Religion

In This Issue



From the Regions Director:

There is a lot of good news from the regions these days! As you can see below, many of the regional coordinators and affiliated faculty and staff have been hard at work planning conferences, offering workshops and carrying out our mission to be a resource for religion in the regions. We are also starting to see evidence that the

AAR's efforts to strengthen the regions are working well: a workshop on "Envisioning Alternative Academic Careers" that originated the New England-Maritimes' Region became a big hit at the national meeting in Chicago. Regions have also been inviting AAR Board and Committee members to offer workshops and give plenaries at regional meetings even more frequently. And, I hope you didn't miss the opportunity to learn about Project Interfaith in Chicago, an organization that encourages people to "share their personal experiences and connect with others of diverse beliefs and cultures." www.projectinterfaith.org. This project has received funding from AAR Regional Grants.

All of the regions are now LLCs and have operating agreements in place: this work is complete. The next step is to create a policies and procedures manual; I will be in touch when there we have a clear template for you to use as this process moves forward.

As I begin my work as the Regional Director, please do let me know if you have suggestions for the newsletter, or have regional issues to which I should

Table of Contents

1. [Welcome](#)
2. [Reminders](#)
3. [Regional Updates](#)
4. [Regional Student Directors](#)
5. [Seeking News](#)

Name: **[fname] [lname]**
Member ID: **[aar_id]**

[Log In](#)

-

be attentive.

Thank you all so much for the work that you do!

Susan Hill
University of Northern Iowa
Regional Director

[STE 300](#)
[Atlanta, GA 30329-4205](#)

- [Tel: 404-727-3049](tel:404-727-3049)
[Fax: 404-727-7959](tel:404-727-7959)

- www.aarweb.org
-

REMINDERS

- Regional Coordinators, Student Directors and other officers must be members of AAR.
- If you want to hold a meeting for your board or committees at the Annual Meeting, let Deborah know by **April 15, 2013**, so she can make sure a room will be available. She will need a day, preferred time and the length of the meeting.
- If you are an outgoing Regional Coordinator, please complete your financial statement (and share it with the new coordinator) before you leave.
- Do you ever wonder if other regions have the same problems that you do? Do you ever want to share a success story from your meeting? Here are the emails of the 10 regional coordinators plus the Student Director who is on the AAR board, Elonda Clay. dminor@aarweb.org; donnab@uca.edu; f-clingerman@onu.edu; cunningham@gonzaga.edu; vehret@mercyhurst.edu; groveharris@post.harvard.edu; mary.hinton@msmc.edu; sally.holt@belmont.edu; amarga@luthersem.edu; jokeefe@creighton.edu; dirkster42@yahoo.com; elonda.clay@gmail.com

REGIONAL UPDATES: CONFERENCES AND OTHER EVENTS

Eastern International Region

May 10–11, University of Toronto, Canada

Regional Coordinator, Verna Ehret, Mercyhurst University

The theme of the Eastern International Regional Meeting this year is *Material Religion*. There will be two keynote addresses, one from Dr. Simon Coleman from the University of Toronto and the other by Dr. Rosalind Hackett from the University of Tennessee. We will also have four panels on Material Religion led by Dr. S. Brent Plate (Hamilton College), Dr. Ellen Badone (McMaster University), Dr. Rachel Wagner (Ithaca College), and Justin Stein

(University of Toronto). Thursday, May 9, there will be a Wabash Center workshop led by Dr. Mary Hess on "Enhancing the Online Environment" for online and campus courses.

Mid-Atlantic Region

Annual Meeting, March 13-15, Baltimore, MD.

Regional Coordinator: Mary Hinton, Mt. Saint Mary's College

The theme for the 2013 Mid-Atlantic Region annual meeting is *Religious Experience Through the Senses*. The program includes a Wabash workshop on effective pedagogy; a dynamic plenary from S. Brent Rodriguez-Plate, Hamilton College, who will present aspects of his current research and book on the subject of religious experiences and the senses; a faculty workshop focused on assessment and an undergraduate research panel. There are several networking events for all members of the region, from senior scholars to graduate students. We invite members to explore religion through the various ways it is expressed through sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell.

Midwest Region

Annual Meeting, April 12-13, Ohio Northern University, Ada, OH.

Regional Coordinator: Forrest Clingerman, Ohio Northern University

This year's conference theme is *Religion and Memory*, and will include a plenary session featuring Flora Keshgegian of the Church Divinity School of the Pacific. She will speak on the topic of "Interrupting Memory, Troubling Tradition." There will also be a number of parallel paper sessions, and a film showing/discussion on the conference theme.

New England-Maritimes: News and Events

Regional Coordinator: Grove Harris

Over the past year, NEMAAR has sponsored:

- A graduate student conference on Religion at Harvard Divinity School in October on religious practices of knowledge.
- Presentations on Envisioning Alternative Academic Careers, two in the Boston area and one at the annual meeting in Chicago. Thanks to NEMAAR member Christine Kraemer for her efforts, and Amy Hale for the presentations. NEMAAR encourages proposals for workshops, discussions, or other events to explore alternative methods for sustainable scholarship.

Pacific Northwest Region

Annual Meeting, May 3-5, Seattle University, WA

Regional Coordinator, Eric Cunningham, Gonzaga University

PNW has a new Special Topics Unit beginning this year in Mormon Studies.

Rocky Mountain-Great Plains Region

Annual Meeting, April 5–6, Denver Seminary, Littleton, CO

Regional Coordinator, John O'Keefe, Creighton University

In addition to their annual regional meeting RMGP announced that the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Denver is holding a special one-day conference on religious identity and practice in the Rocky Mountains and Great Plains region on Saturday, June 22, 2013. This conference is partially funded with a Regional Development Grant from AAR.

Southeast Region

Annual Meeting, March 15-17, Greenville, SC

Regional Coordinator: Sally Holt, Belmont College

The plenary speaker for the 2013 Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion annual meeting is Randall Balmer, chair of the [Department of Religion at Dartmouth](#). Balmer is a leading scholar on evangelicalism in the United States, including *God in the White House: How Faith Shaped the Presidency from John F. Kennedy to George W. Bush*. His work connects with this year's SECSOR theme of Religion and the Culture War in America. We will also have a pre-conference workshop featuring Carolyn Medine (University of Georgia) the 2013 recipient of the AAR Award for Excellence in Teaching. Her workshop entitled *Getting Students to Read: Teaching Strategies for the Religious Studies Classroom* will be from 4-5 on Friday, March 15.

Presenters will give papers in 60 different sessions, and the regional presidents of AAR and SBL will offer presidential addresses.

Southwest Region

Annual Meeting, March 8-10, DFW Marriott, TX

Regional Coordinator: Donna Bowman, University of Central Arkansas

Once again we are meeting with our sister societies in the Southwest Commission on Religious Studies: Society for Biblical Literature (SBL), American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR), and Association for the Scientific Study of Religion (ASSR).

Otto Maduro and Adela Collins will present the plenary lectures at the upcoming meeting in March. Maduro, Immediate Past President of the AAR and Latino sociologist of religion, teaches World Christianity and Latin

American Christianity at Drew University. His work focuses on the interrelation of religious traditions and the yearnings for liberation among the economically, racially, culturally, and/or sexually oppressed peoples.

Collins, Buckingham Professor of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation at Yale Divinity School, focuses her research interests on the Gospel of Mark and the Book of Revelation, as well as other early Christian apocalypticism. Her recent book *Mark: A Commentary* (Hermeneia/Augsburg Fortress, 2007) has been hailed as a "magisterial study of the second Gospel." At the meeting, Prof. Collins will present "1 Corinthians 15 and Debates About Resurrection in the Early Church."

Upper Midwest Region

Annual Meeting, April 5-6, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN

Regional Coordinator: Amy Marga, Luther Seminary

We have a full program this year, with a little over 100 papers being presented. We also have exciting plenary speakers. Diana Eck from Harvard will speak on world religions. Laura Nasrallah will speak on "On the Market (in Roman Corinth): Economics, Archeology and Theology in Biblical Studies." Both scholars come to us from Harvard this year. We will also have a special forum on Religion and Economics, presented by well-known author and theologian, Joerg Rieger, from Perkins School of Theology. Our Pre-Conference Workshop is on Teaching Online. The Graduate Students are also offering a panel on "What Else? All the Ways to Use a Ph.D."

Western Region

Annual Meeting, March 9-11, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

Regional Coordinator: Dirk von der Horst, Graduate Theological Union

We are particularly honored and delighted to have the Muslim feminist scholar Amina Wadud, author of *Qur'an and Woman*, as our plenary speaker. Our 23 units responded to the religion and the public square theme with diverse and creative calls for papers, and received a great response from the region. We will have over 30 different panels over the two day conference. This year the executive board approved the creation of two new units: Catholic Studies and Graduate Students and the professions, and both will have presenters at the conference. Two units joined together to create a special session on religions of Asian America. In addition to those units, we have two special groups that meet pre-conference: queer caucus and women's caucus. The queer caucus will be showing the documentary film "Inspired: The Voices Against Proposition 8," directed by Charlie Gage.

REGIONAL STUDENT DIRECTOR INFORMATION

Need to get in touch with your regional student director, but don't know who that is? Here's a list, for your reference:

Southeast Region: Matthew Puffer, University of Virginia,
matthew.puffer@virginia.edu

Eastern International: Emma Brodeur, Syracuse University,
embrodeu@syr.edu

Mid-Atlantic: Scott Singer, Temple University, tuc73548@temple.edu

Midwest: Sarah Riccardi, Missouri State University,
Sarah110487@live.missouristate.edu

Southwest: Rachel Schneider, Rice University, rachel.s.vlachos@rice.edu

Pacific Northwest: Raj Balkaran, University of Calgary,
raj.balkaran@gmail.com

Rocky Mountain-Great Plains: Gil Rosenberg, University of Denver/Iliff, School of Theology, grosenberg@iliff.edu

Upper Midwest: John Fournelle, Bethel Seminary, jjfournelle@gmail.com

Western: Kristy Slominski, University of California, Santa Barbara,
slominski@umail.ucsb.edu

SEEKING NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you are involved with the coordination of an upcoming student-led conference or have some other opportunity for students about which you'd like to spread the word, please contact the editor, Brandy Daniels, at brandydaniels@gmail.com for free publicity in the upcoming edition of Speaking of Students. SOS is distributed to each student member of AAR, thus ensuring that your announcement will enjoy a broad readership.