



Speaking of Students

American Academy of Religion

In This Issue

STUDENT EVENTS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

The Graduate Student Committee is excited to announce the events it has planned especially for students at the San Diego Annual Meeting. In addition to the Graduate Student Business Meeting and New Member Welcome, we will host a Special Topics Forum, "Graduate Training and Scholarly Formation," for you to share your feedback and ideas for student programming in the AAR as well as a series of roundtables on professional development in our Student Lounge. Please take advantage of these opportunities!

Special Topics Forum:

Graduate Training and Scholarly Formation

Saturday, November 22nd, 2014, 1:00–3:30 p.m.

Panelists:

Thomas A. Tweed, University of Notre Dame

David Harrington Watt, Temple University

Kathryn Lofton, Yale University

Vasudha Narayanan, University of Florida

Lester Edwin J. Ruiz, Association of Theological Schools

Jeff Wilson, Renison University College, University of Waterloo

President: Adam D. J. Brett, Syracuse University

Graduate training is one of the foundations of our academy. It shapes individual scholars, academic structures and expectations, and

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conceptual categories and methods within scholarship. This panel considers the following: Are scholars in the academic study of religion "well trained"? For what are students being trained? Through which avenues does scholarly formation take place? How does graduate training shape scholarly identity and career options? How do mentoring relationships factor into graduate training? What innovative methods and "best practices" have been developed by those doing the training and those experiencing the training? To what extent does this training take into account the conditions of graduate life? These concerns relate to the larger task of how we might re-envision the relationship of graduate training to the rest of the academy and how a critical re-evaluation of our current practices of scholarly formation could be used to shape the future of our discipline.

Graduate Student Business Meeting and New Member Welcome

Sunday, November 23rd, 2014

9:00–10:00 a.m. in the Student Lounge

Presider: Kristy L. Slominski, UC Santa Barbara

Like most "business meetings" at the Annual Meeting, this one is open to all and is an opportunity to share your ideas and feedback. What events would you like to see the Graduate Student Committee plan in the future? What are your main concerns as a student member within the American Academy of Religion? How can the Graduate Student Committee better represent student needs? This is a space to ask questions and to learn more about student resources and initiatives. You will meet the regionally elected student directors who serve on the Graduate Student Committee and represent students on their regional board of directors. This is also a chance to network with other student members and to learn tips for making the most of your Annual Meeting experience and AAR membership.

Student Lounge Roundtable Series:

Saturday, November 22nd, 2014

9:00–10:00 a.m.

Preparation and Skills for Alternative Employment

Emily R. Mace, Harvard Square Library and Jessica Lee Ehinger, St. Peter's College, University of Oxford

10:00–11:00 a.m.

Networking for Non-Academic or Alternative-Academic Employment

Laura Alexander, University of Virginia

11:00 a.m.–noon

Sharing Your PhD: Using the 'Religion in North Carolina Digital Collection' to Explore Creative Approaches to Doctoral Formation

Kenneth Woo, Duke Divinity School

4:00–5:00 p.m.

The Promiscuous Term Paper: CV Building through Effective Use of Seminar Papers

Cristina S. Richie, Boston College

5:00–6:00 p.m.

From Advisor = Mentor to Color Matching: Questioning Common Assumptions About Mentoring in Religious Studies & Theology

Elonda Clay, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

Sunday, November 23rd, 2014

10:00–11:00 a.m.

Effective Teaching: What We Know From Research on Learning

Susan Hill, University of Northern Iowa

11:00 a.m.–noon

Teaching with Technology: Practical Advice and Best Practices

Joshua Canzona, Georgetown University

Noon–1:00 p.m.

Managing Your Thesis: Tools Toward Empowerment

Raj Balkaran, University of Calgary

1:00–2:00 p.m.

On My Own: Transforming Our Role from Graduate Student to the Student Transformer

Joel E. Stoker, Arizona State University

2:00–3:00 p.m.

Designing a Successful College Course

Susan Hill, University of Northern Iowa

3:00–4:00 p.m.

Partnering Communities and Universities: The Transformative Power of Community-Engaged Research, Scholarship, and Teaching

Sara Williams, Elizabeth Whiting Pierce, and Barbara A. B. Patterson,
Emory University

5:00–6:00 p.m.

The Ethics and Politics of Queer Identity in the Field

Stephanie Bilinsky, Arizona State University

Monday, November 24th, 2014

9:00–10:00 a.m.

Dollars and Cents: Making Sense of Funding Education and Academic Research

Dustin Benac, Duke Divinity School

10:00–11:00 a.m.

Eating Disorders, Food Issues, and Managing Graduate School

Maria Junttila Carson, Syracuse University

11:00 a.m.–noon

Time Management: The Coveted Key to a Healthy Work-Life Balance

Christine Atchison, Kingston University

1:00–2:00 p.m.

Seeking Sanity: Balancing Graduate Work with Marriage, Children, and Employment

Brandon Turner, Catholic University of America

2:00–3:00 p.m.

Priorities, Preparation, and Process: Time Management for the Rest of Us

Thomas J. Whitley, Florida State University

REGIONAL STUDENT DIRECTOR INTRODUCTIONS

Southeast Region



Bhakti Mamtora, a PhD student in the Religions of Asia track at the University of Florida, is interested in studying textual production and canon formation in contemporary Hindu devotional traditions. She completed her undergraduate study at Fordham University in 2010 and received an MA in South Asia studies from the University of Pennsylvania in 2012. Her

forthcoming publications include two encyclopedia entries in *Great Events in Religion: An Encyclopedia of Pivotal Events in Religious History*. As Student Director of the Southeast region she hopes to enhance graduate specific programming during the regional meetings. Bhakti Mamtora also currently serves as the editor of the *Speaking of Students* newsletter.

Southwest Region



B. J. Parker is from Atlanta, Georgia. He graduated from Atlanta Christian College in 2003, earning a Bachelor of Arts in biblical studies. After college he worked as a campus minister at Thammasat University in Bangkok, Thailand from 2003 to 2004. B. J. entered the McAfee School of Theology in 2006 and focused his work on the Old Testament. While at McAfee, B. J. also met and married his wife, Courtney Bailey Parker. In 2010 they both entered master of arts programs at Baylor University. Now in his third year of his PhD in religion, B. J. is focusing his studies on the experience of suffering as articulated dialogically in the Psalms. When not exploring the world of the Old Testament, B. J. enjoys working on and riding motorcycles, drawing, and painting. As the Student Director of the Southwest region, B. J. hopes to establish an ongoing workshop for graduate students at the Southwestern regional meeting and raise awareness of AAR opportunities and resources available to students.

Pacific Northwest Region



Currently a doctoral student at the University of Oregon in the anthropology department, Rupa Pillai is interested in the intersection of religion, gender, race, and migration. Her project examines how Caribbean Hinduism is observed and practiced in the Indo-Caribbean enclave of Richmond Hill, Queens, New York.

Before joining the doctoral program at the University of Oregon, Rupa completed her undergraduate training at the University of Texas at Austin and earned an MA in social sciences from the University of Chicago. Rupa is also a producer for AnthroPod, the podcast for the Society of Cultural Anthropology.

Mid-Atlantic Region



Dan Randazzo is completing his doctoral dissertation from the University of Birmingham (UK), developing a Liberal Quaker theology of reconciliation. He is developing reconciliatory models of God based on the image of God as 'Light', a central divine symbol of Liberal Quaker theology. He is also examining the ethics and practices of Quaker communities of reconciliation

from the perspective of narrative theology and virtue ethics. Randazzo holds masters in theology and reconciliation theology and theory, having earned the latter studying in the context of the post-conflict society of Northern Ireland. He's an adjunct at several universities in the Baltimore,

Maryland, area. Most of his time, he's spending time with his family, trying to discover what it feels like, after a lifetime of moving all over the place, to live somewhere for more than two years at a time.

In his capacity as Student Director for the Mid-Atlantic Region, he hopes to develop a stronger sense of community amongst students in the region by holding semi-annual meet ups for graduate students in a few areas within region and developing an active social media presence for students in the region.

New England-Maritimes Region



Cristina Richie, MDiv, ThM will be a PhD candidate in theological ethics at Boston College in November 2014. For the last four years she has been an adjunct professor in the Boston area, teaching world and comparative religions and health care and bioethics at such illustrious institutions as Tufts University and Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences [MCPHS], Boston. She has published (or had accepted for publication) over twenty articles, book reviews, or book chapters. Recent publications appeared in the *Hastings Center Report* and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

In 2013, Richie won the Catholic Health Association [CHA] Annual Theology and Ethics Colloquium contest for her paper "Building a Framework for Green Bioethics: Integrating Ecology into the Medical Industry." In addition to being the Student Director of NEMAAR, Cristina is also a full member of the Evangelical Theological Society Northeast Region steering committee.

Western Region



Sarah E. Robinson is a PhD Candidate in religion at Claremont Graduate University, studying the confluence between sustainable agriculture and religion with a subfield of women's studies in religion. Her dissertation title is *Refreshing Religions with Edible Ethics: Local Agriculture and Sustainable Food in Muslim, Christian, and Buddhist Projects in the U.S.* She cowrote an encyclopedia entry on "Islam and Food" for the Springer *Encyclopedia of Food and Agricultural Ethics* (2014), as well as two recent book chapters, "Refreshing the Concept of Halal Meat in Muslim American Context in Taqwa Eco-food Cooperative" in *Religion, Food, and Eating in North America* (2014) and "Seeking Common Ground, Finding Sacred Earth in Christian Ecofeminism and Environmental Islam: Unearthing Ecological Solidarity between Nasr and Ruether" in *Voices of*

Feminist Liberation: Celebratory Writings in Honor of Rosemary Radford Ruether (2012). Robinson intends to listen well to students who voice their interests, concerns, and initiatives in order to enhance graduate student resources for the vast, intricately complex study of religions. She is grateful every day for this irreplaceable earth, her family, and her garden.

Rocky Mountains-Great Plains Region

Joshua Schachterle is starting the joint PhD program in theology, philosophy and cultural theory at Denver University and the Iliff School of Theology this fall. He has a BA from the University of Colorado at Boulder in English, an MA in applied linguistics from the University of Colorado at Denver and an MA in Comparative Religion at the Iliff School of Theology.

His research interests center around asceticism and monasticism in late antique Christianity. This includes a wide range of topics, including asceticism's intersection with gender subversion and ascetic theory and the construction of the self. In addition, Joshua is a stay at home father of two boys and an avid runner who has completed four marathons.

INTRODUCING THE FROM THE STUDENT DESK EDITOR



We are pleased to introduce the current "From the Student Desk" Editor for the AAR *Religious Studies News*. Emily Bailey is a PhD Candidate in Religious Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. AAR student members are invited to submit articles to *Religious Studies News's* "From the Student Desk" column on issues and topics especially for students. For more information, visit the [website](#).

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR GRADUATE CONFERENCE ON RELIGION

Ways of Knowing: Graduate Conference on Religion at Harvard Divinity School (Oct 23–25, 2014)

The Science, Religion, and Culture Program at Harvard Divinity School is soliciting proposals for the third annual graduate conference on religion at Harvard Divinity School (October 23–25, 2014). The conference aims at promoting interdisciplinary discussion of prevailing assumptions (both within and outside the academy) about the differentiation, organization,

authorization, and reproduction of various modes of knowing and acting in relation to religion. We invite graduate students and early career scholars to submit paper proposals representative of a variety of theoretical, methodological, and disciplinary approaches.

General Call: For projects that explore religious practices and modes of knowing especially in relation to identities, authorities, discourses, texts, and experiences. Papers may focus on a specific period, region, tradition, person or group. They may address a set of practices, texts, doctrines, or beliefs.

Special Calls

- 1) "The Study of Religion: Past, Present, and Future"
- 2) "Religion and Environmental Imagination"
- 3) "Epistemologies of Emotion"
- 4) "Religious Meaning of Skin"

Submission Deadline: **July 1, 2014**

For further details on the Call for Papers, please see the conference [website](#).

FACEBOOK PAGES FOR STUDENT MEMBERS

Our [Student Members and Friends of the American Academy of Religion Facebook page](#) is available for all members and friends of the AAR. Members can post calls for papers, job listings, requests for more information, forthcoming publications, and more.

If you haven't done so already, stay connected with the students in your region by "liking" the Facebook page.

[Student Members of the AAR EIR](#)

[Student Members of the AAR Pacific Northwest Region](#)

[Student Members of the AAR and SBL Rocky Mountain-Great Plains Region](#)

[Student Members of the AAR Southeast Region](#)

[Student Members of the AAR Upper Midwest Region](#)

[Student Members of the AAR Western Region](#)

