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2003 Member Calendar

Dates are subject to change. Check www.aarweb.org for the latest information.

May

May 1
Nominations (including self-nominations) for committee appointments requested. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/membership/committeeapv.

May 2
New England-Marietimes regional meeting, Andover, MA.

May 15
Annual Meeting registration & housing opens for 2003 Annual Meeting.

May 25
Registration for the Employment Information Services Center opens.

May 30
Annual Meeting Additional Meeting requests due for priority consideration.

(June 1
For more Annual Meeting information, see www.aarweb.org/annualmeet/2003/default.asp)

June

June 15
Membership renewal deadline for 2003 Annual Meeting participants.

June 19-21
Chairs Workshop at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

July
Annual Meeting Program goes online.

July 1
New fiscal year begins.

July 15

August

October 15
Annual Meeting Program Books mailed to members.

October

November
November 1
Research grant awards announced.

November 20
Executive Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

November 21
Fall Board of Directors meeting, Atlanta, GA.

November 21
Chairs Workshop at the Annual Meeting, Atlanta. Free for department members enrolled in the Academic Relations Program. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/departmentaldevel.asp.

December

December 5
New program unit proposals due.

December 12-13
Program Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

December 15

December 31
Membership renewal for 2004 due. Renew online at www.aarweb.org/dual/page01.asp.

And keep in mind throughout the year...

Regional organizations have various deadlines throughout the fall for their Calls for Papers. See www.aarweb.org/regions/default.asp.

In the Field: News of events and opportunities for scholars of religion. In the Field is a members-only online publication produced ten times a year on the first of the month. In the Field accepts calls for papers, grant news, conference announcements, and other opportunities appropriate for scholars of religion of no more than one hundred words. Submit text electronically by the 20th of the month for the following issue to infodev@aarweb.org.

Openings: Employment Opportunities for Scholars of Religion

Openings are viewable from the first through the last day of each month. Openings ads are to be submitted by the 20th of the previous month. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/opening/institution.asp.
Atlanta, I Hear You Calling . . .

The sultry South will play host to this year’s Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. But don’t come expecting antebellum columns and Spanish moss — Atlanta is a booming international city with a little something for everyone. From one of the busiest airports in the world to the dazzling city skyline, Atlanta has a truly cosmopolitan feel. Sessions will be held in the headquarters hotels: the Atlanta Marriott Marquis, and the Hyatt Regency Atlanta. They are right in the thick of downtown, and are within walking distance of many local attractions.

Whether it is museums, art galleries, good food, or shopping, Atlanta has it all. Mark your calendars now for the opening of fax, mail, and online housing and registration on Thursday, May 15, 2003.

Annual Meeting Registration Opens May 15, 2003

Fax: 1-330-363-0319
Web: www.aarweb.org/annualmeet
Mail: Annual Meetings of AAR and SBL
Registration & Housing
c/o Conferon Registration and Housing Bureau
2450 Edison BLVD, Ste. 2
Twinsburg, OH 44087 USA
Questions:
Tel: 1-800-575-7185 (U.S. & Canada)
1-330-425-9330 (outside U.S. & Canada)
E-mail: aarblog@conferon.com

Getting to Atlanta
We’ve teamed up with Delta Airlines to give you the best price and flexibility on airfare. Attendees traveling to Atlanta will receive a discount airfare using the Delta telephone reservation system. Please reference the special file number below when you or your travel agent make reservations.

Delta Airlines International Reservations Desk Reference file number: 195265A
Tel: 1-800-241-6760 (or Delta’s local toll-free number)

Additional Meetings
Conferon, our meeting planning partner, is now accepting requests for Additional Meeting space. Requests will be filled according to space and time-slot availability. The Additional Meetings program, held in conjunction with the AAR Annual Meeting, is an important service to AAR members. All Additional Meeting participants are expected to register for the Annual Meeting. Be sure to read the instructions carefully before completing and submitting your space request. The deadline for priority scheduling is May 30, 2003. For more information about the Additional Meetings or to obtain a request form, please see www.aarweb.org/annualmeet. Questions should be directed to:
Erin Vonder Bruegge Conferon, Inc.
Tel: 1-314-997-1500
E-mail: aarblog@conferon.com

Employment Information Services
The 2003 Employment Information Services Center will be located in the Hyatt Regency Atlanta Hotel. Candidates and employers who wish to participate should visit the AAR website, www.aarweb.org/eis. Registration opens on May 15, 2003, along with Annual Meeting registration and housing.

AAR Annual Meeting Online Services
At www.aarweb.org/annualmeet you can:
• Register for the Annual Meeting
• Reserve your hotel room
• Find a roommate
• Retrieve your Additional Meeting requests/forms
• Register for EIS
• Download EIS Center forms
• Search the Online Program Book

Twin Towers
The Atlanta public transit system, MARTA, is your gateway to other area attractions. For more information, visit the MARTA website at www.itmarta.com.

Annual Meeting 2003 Important Dates

May 15
Registration and Housing opens for the 2003 Annual Meeting. You must be registered to secure housing!

EIS Center registration opens. Register for the meeting and then register for EIS.

June 15
All AAR Annual Meeting participants must be current members and registered for the Annual Meeting or else their names will be dropped from the Program Book.

August 1
Membership dues for 2003 must be paid and address changes must be on file with AAR Member Services in order to receive an advance copy of the Annual Meeting Program Book.

Early September
Annual Meeting Program Book mailed to all current AAR members. Please allow three to four weeks for delivery.

September 16
Second tier pre-meeting registration rates go into effect.

Mid-September
Pre-registration packets mailed to those who registered from May through September 15.

October 16
Third and final tier registration rates go into effect.

October 21
EIS Center preregistration deadline.
EIS Candidate Resume Forms due for inclusion in binders. After October 21, CRFs may be filed onsite by candidate’s last name.

October 25
Special housing rates end. (Continue to contact Conferon for housing throughout the meeting.)

November 5
Pre-registration refund request deadline. Contact Conferon for refunds. (See Premeeting Registration Form for details.)

November 8
Premeeting registration ends at 5 PM EST. All further registrations must take place onsite in Atlanta at the Marriott Marquis Atlanta Hotel.

November 22-25
Annual Meetings of AAR and SBL, Atlanta, GA.
The Entrepreneurial Chair

AFTER A SUCCESSFUL workshop at the 2002 Annual Meeting, the Academic Relations Task Force is preparing a summer workshop entitled “The Entrepreneurial Chair: Building and Managing Your Department in an Era of Shrinking Resources and Increasing Demands.” Spend two and one-half days with your colleagues, learning how to build, sustain, and reform a department, and work with the dean. The workshop, set to take place June 19-21, 2003, will be held on the Georgetown University campus overlooking Washington, D.C.

This workshop is ideal for new chairs, seasoned chairs looking to sharpen their leadership abilities, campus teams hoping to help their institutions, and deans seeking to improve working relationships with chairs.

The workshop will feature three speakers, all experts in higher education administration who have developed excellent religion and theology departments. Breakout sessions will focus on faculty retention, tenure, and promotion; mentoring junior faculty; faculty evaluation; curriculum development; and research. There will be also plenty of informal opportunities for gathering the collective wisdom of the group.

The fee to attend is $175.00. Second, and all subsequent, registrants from the same department can register for only $125.00 each. Departments enrolled in the Academic Relations Program receive one complimentary registration. Lunch, midmorning, and midafternoon breaks and receptions are included in the registration fee.

This workshop is part of the AAR’s Strengthening College and University Religion & Theology Programs initiative and is supported by a grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc.

To register, fill out and return the registration form on this page, or go to: www.aarweb.org/department/chairsworkshop/2003Georgetown/registration.asp

TO REGISTER

Complete the information below, arrange payment, and send via fax, surface, or electronic mail.

Name: ___________ 

Title: ___________ 

Department: ___________ 

Department Enrollment: ___________ 

Institution: ___________ 

Serving as Chair since: ___________ 

Number of faculty in department: ___________ 

Please provide the following information if you are not a current AAR member.

Address: ___________ 

City: ___________ 

State: ___________ 

Zip Code: ___________ 

Email: ___________ 

Phone: ___________ 

Fax: ___________ 

Surface Mailing Address: ___________

PAYMENT INFORMATION

☐ Check (payable to “AAR Summer Chairs Workshop”)

☐ Credit Card [Check one]: 

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover 

Credit Card Number: ___________ 

Expiration Date: ___________ 

Cardholder Signature: ___________ 

Name on Card (Please Print): ___________

REGISTRATION FORM

TO REGISTER

1. Complete the information below, arrange payment, and send via fax, surface, or electronic mail.

2. Registration is limited to the first 75 participants.

3. Send your registration form and payment of $175.00 before May 1, 2003 ($225.00 onsite). Additional registrations from the same department are $125.00 before May 1, 2003 ($165.00 onsite).

4. Departments enrolled in the Academic Relations Program receive one complimentary registration for the workshop, which can be used by the chair or a designee.

5. More information is available at chairs@aarweb.org.

POST-CONFERENCE EVENT: A reception will follow on the evening of Friday, June 20, and the workshop will conclude with an informal dinner on Saturday, June 21.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Georgetown University Conference Center at the specially negotiated rate of $145.00 per night (state and local taxes not included). The special rate applies only to reservations made before May 29. A block has also been reserved at the Marriott Key Bridge Hotel, which is one mile away from the Conference Center. Transportation to and from the Conference Center will be provided for those staying at the Marriott Key Bridge. The group rate for this hotel is $135.00 per night (state and local taxes not included). Reservations must be made by May 30 to receive this rate. Contact the Marriott reservation service at 1-800-228-9290 and ask for the American Academy of Religion rate. Space is limited, so reservations should be made early.

For more information, contact Carey J. Gifford, Director of Academic Relations, at cgifford@aarweb.org, or by phone at 1-404-727-2270.

Subscribe to chairs@aarweb.org for updates to the workshop program and other news for chairs.

Developed by the Academic Relations Task Force, AAR leadership workshops are part of the AAR’s Strengthening College and University Religion and Theology Programs initiative supported by a grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc.
Humanities Advocacy Day

Humanities Advocacy Day is organized by the National Humanities Alliance (NHA) to promote federal support for the humanities. Now in its fourth year, this national event is developing a network of humanities advocates from across the country and from a variety of institutions, including colleges and universities, humanities institutes, scholarly societies, state humanities councils, libraries, and museums. This year's Humanities Advocacy Day events were held February 24 and 25 on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

The primary focus of advocacy always includes federal appropriations for the Humanities, the largest single funder of humanities programs in the United States. This year, NHA advocates were seeking congressional support for the $352 million earmarked for NEH in President Bush's proposed 2004 budget, which would represent an increase of $25 million over the current NEH budget. Bush's 2004 request features his "We the People" initiative that aims to educate Americans about the nation's history and to encourage scholars, teachers, filmmakers, curators, and librarians to submit grant applications for programs that will explore significant events and themes in US history and culture and advance knowledge of the principles that define America. For more information about this new program, see www.webeople.gov.

A coalition of more than eighty associations, the National Humanities Alliance is a nonprofit organization founded in 1981. NHA advocates support for humanities research and represents its members in matters of policy and legislation affecting work in the humanities. It is the only organization that represents the US humanities community as a whole. The American Academy of Religion is a founding member of NHA, AAR Executive Director Barbara DeConcini sits on the organization's Board of Directors and serves on the Advocacy Committee that plans the annual Humanities Advocacy Day.

This year, several AAR members joined DeConcini on Monday, February 24 at a planning session and then at the NEH reception in the Hart Senate office building sponsored by US Senator Thad Cochran. Those speaking to the crowd that evening included NEH Chair Bruce Collier, Civil War historian and 2000 NEH Jefferson Lecturer James McPherson; and historian Barbara Oberg, editor of the *The Thomas Jefferson Papers*. AAR representatives visited on the Hill were organized and coordinated by Shannon Planck, Director of Development. On Tuesday, February 25, DeConcini, Planck, and others made significant contributions to the advocacy efforts.

With one or two exceptions, scholarship on teaching showed little interest in syllabi until the mid-1980s. Now, however, a few dozen publications exist, several offer examples of course syllabi, and instructional development offices throughout North America regularly counsel faculty on how to construct effective syllabi. Times have changed. Both teaching and the scholarship of teaching and learning are increasingly valued in colleges and universities. Most institutions now have instructional development offices, and graduate students often demand pedagogical training. For the academic study of religion, Lilly grants (supported by profits generated by the Eli Lilly pharmaceutical company) have made a vital difference. Under the leadership of the Whabah Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion (directed for years by Raymond Williams; the current director is Lucinda Huffman) and the AAR (Executive Director Barbara DeConcini), these grants funded a decade of teaching workshops and related activities, including the founding of the journal *Teaching Theology and Religion* in 1998. Thank God for Prozac . . . and the foresight of a few dedicated individuals!

Close attention to college and university syllabi is a recent phenomenon. With one or two exceptions, scholarship on teaching showed little interest in syllabi until the mid-1980s. Now, however, a few dozen publications exist, several offer examples of course syllabi, and instructional development offices throughout North America regularly counsel faculty on how to construct effective syllabi.
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Caroline M. Bell
Martin Riesebrodt
Steen Wassenstrom

CONSTRUCTIVE-REFLECTIVE STUDIES JURY

Lorne E. Cady
Julia A. Lemen
Dale S. Wright

HISTORICAL STUDIES JURY

Anne M. Blackman
Bruce B. Lawrence
Laure M. Maffly-Kipp

BEST FIRST BOOK IN THE HISTORY OF RELIGION JURY

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Volunteering for Committee Service in the Academy

MUCH OF THE WORK of the Academy outside of the Annual Meeting is accomplished through its committees. These groups are composed of individuals who contribute their time and talents to the AAR’s mission of fostering excellence in teaching and scholarship in religion. For the ongoing vitality of the Academy’s work, it is important to continually welcome new voices into the conversation and to achieve a broad and diverse range of member participation in these leadership positions. The Academy encourages letters of nomination for committee appointments, including self-nomination. These appointments are made by the President in consultation with the Executive Director. Please send nominations, including a curriculum vitae or resume, to Barbara DeConcini at bdeconcini@aarweb.org. Calls for nominations to elective office and committee appointments are published regularly in Religious Studies News, AAR Edition and within the AAR e-Bulletin.†
We book the meeting for the National Park Service rangers, are available family are on display. Tours, led by originals or similar period reproductions, uniquely Atlanta experience. The CNN rating organization is lots of fun, and a touring event is being held at the site where street vendors can be seen CNN newscasters at work. The site of Underground Atlanta is the historic hub of the city, centered on the Zero Milepost that marked the terminus of the Western & Atlantic Railroad in the 1800s. For many years a flourishing locale, the area became so congested in the early 1900s that permanent concrete viaducts were constructed over it, elevating the street system and routing traffic over a maze of railroad tracks. Merchants moved their operations up to the new level, using the lower level for storage space. For most of the twentieth century, it remained a deserted catacomb. In 1969 a group of Atlanta businessespeople decided to create an underground entertainment complex of restaurants, shops, and bars in a setting that retained the historic feel of the area. The original endeavor closed a decade later, but the site was reopened in 1989 and still thrives today. Occupying twelve acres in the center of downtown, Underground offers nearly one hundred retail operations and restaurateurs, many of them national chains. The site of Underground Atlanta is the historic hub of the city, centered on the Zero Milepost that marked the terminus of the Western & Atlantic Railroad in the 1800s. For many years a flourishing locale, the area became so congested in the early 1900s that permanent concrete viaducts were constructed over it, elevating the street system and routing traffic over a maze of railroad tracks. Merchants moved their operations up to the new level, using the lower level for storage space. For most of the twentieth century, it remained a deserted catacomb. In 1969 a group of Atlanta businessespeople decided to create an underground entertainment complex of restaurants, shops, and bars in a setting that retained the historic feel of the area. The original endeavor closed a decade later, but the site was reopened in 1989 and still thrives today. Occupying twelve acres in the center of downtown, Underground offers nearly one hundred retail operations and restaurateurs, many of them national chains. This tour of the world’s largest news-gathering organization is lots of fun, and a uniquely Atlanta experience. The CNN Center is headquarters for CNN, CNN International, and Headline News. During forty-minute guided walking tours, visi tors get a behind-the-scenes look at the high tech world of twenty-four-hour TV network news in action. You will see timelines of important events and interactive kiosks that show clips of some of these events, and can even learn some of the secrets of television reporting. The highlight of the tour is a bird’s-eye view of the main CNN newswroom from a glass-walled observation station. You’ll see the hustle and bustle of the domestic desk with writers composing news scripts. If a live broadcast is in progress — and the chances are good that one will — you can see CNN newscasters at work.

On Selecting Our Annual Meeting Sites

The permanent collection includes more than ten thousand pieces, among them a significant group of nineteenth- and twentieth-century American paintings. It features Hudson River School artists such as Thomas Cole and Frederic Church, as well as works by Thomas Sully, John Singer Sargent, and William Harnett. The Virginia Carroll Crawford Collection comprises Italian paintings and sculpture from the fourteenth through eighteenth centuries. The Uly Print Collection contains important works by French Impressionists and post-Impressionists, German Expressionists, and American nineteenth-century artists. Also notable are collections of sub-Saharan African art, folk art, and nineteeth- and twentieth-century American and European photography. The High also displays several major exhibits each year, in addition to its permanent collection.

Atlanta Sites

FILLED WITH A WEALTH of attractions and activities, Atlanta offers something for every visitor. Metropolitan Atlanta museums highlight the arts, the Civil War period, Atlanta and Georgia history, science and technology, and African-American history. Some of Atlanta’s well-known tourist destinations include the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site, the CNN Studio Tours, Underground Atlanta, and the High Museum of Art.

Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site

Designed by architect Richard Meier, this facility — part of the Woodruff Arts Center complex — is itself a work of art. A dazzling white porcelain-tiled building with an equally pristine white interior, it houses four floors of galleries dedicated by semicircular pedestrian ramps girding a spacious, sun-filled, four-story atrium.

Underground Atlanta

This tour of the world’s largest news-gathering organization is lots of fun, and a uniquely Atlanta experience. The CNN Center is headquarters for CNN, CNN International, and Headline News. During forty-minute guided walking tours, visitors get a behind-the-scenes look at the high tech world of twenty-four-hour TV network news in action.

T HE AAR ANNUAL MEETING is a complex, expensive, and labor-intensive undertaking. By and large, we in the executive office feel pretty good about how we pull it all off. However, from time to time (i.e., every year), there are questions and complaints from members about one or another aspect of the meeting arrangements — room assignments, convention centers, distant hotels, location of exhibits and EIS Center, accessibility, child care, food, weather. With this column, we in the executive office are introducing a forum for the exchange of questions, suggestions, complaints, and opinions about all aspects of this venture. We urge you to participate by sending your comments to annualmeeting@aarweb.org.

Some Frequently Asked Questions About Annual Meeting Sites

What are the most important factors in selecting the site of an Annual Meeting?

The most important issues are availability, space, and cost.

Availability. We book the meeting for the weekend before Thanksgiving because that is the time of year when we can negotiate the best hotel rates. The only cheaper time is the week between Christmas and New Year’s, when several of the large societies still meet (e.g., MLA). Other possibilities for deeply discounted rates when hotel occupancies are typically low include early January, Easter weekend, and Labor Day weekend. Historically, AAR and SBL enjoy the lowest hotel rates of any meeting of comparable size.

Space. With the concurrent AAR and SBL meetings involving some nine thousand attendees, eighty concurrent sessions, a large book exhibit, and the EIS Center, most sites cannot accommodate the size of the meetings. Since we need four thousand rooms on Saturday night and over seventeen thousand during the course of the meeting, we are currently limited to what the industry calls “first-tier cities.” While we used to fit comfortably in one large convention hotel with several nearby overflow hotels for accommodations (Chicago, San Francisco), now we look for clusters of large convention hotels (Atlanta) or for a convention center that is neither too small nor too large with several nice hotels nearby (Boston). When we find a location that seems to work well and that members like, we typically begin working immediately to rebook. An example is Philadelphia. A few months after the 1995 meeting, we entered into negotiations to rebook. We are going back in 2005, the first available year for our dates and space needs.

Cost. As noted above, the dates of the meeting affect cost. Cost factors matter in other ways as well. Since we always need several hotels in our block, the hotels must cooperate with one another on rates. If there is one standout that is critical for our needs, it can scuttle an otherwise good option. Convention centers typically provide meeting space at low cost as part of our contractual commitment to fill the hotel sleeping rooms. Convention centers do not. Indeed, besides high fees for space (in the $1.00-$2.00 per square foot range, often dependent on a minimum food and beverage consumption guarantee), convention centers charge fees for everything — chairs, tables, resetting chairs, security, arranging food outlets, opening business centers, coat checks, trash pickup, shipment handling, etc.). That is why, for instance, we did not use more of the available space at the Toronto Convention Center. The extra costs would have driven registration fees unacceptably high. Hence the inconvenience of trekking those distances. Other major cost factors include whether we will need shuttle bus service from venue to venue, and whether we can make a multiyear deal with major hotel and audiovisual companies.

Atlanta has... 

• one hundred streets with the name Peachtree
• the largest cable-supported domed stadium in North America: the Georgia Dome
• the world’s largest bas-relief sculpture and largest exposed mass of granite at nearby Stone Mountain Park
• the oldest continually operating ballet company in the nation: the Atlanta Ballet, founded in 1929
• the largest hotel in the Southeast: the Atlanta Marriott Marquis, with 1,671 rooms
• the tallest hotel in the western hemisphere: the Westin Peachtree Plaza, which is 73 stories and 723 feet tall
• the second-largest theater organ in the nation at the Fox Theatre
• more shopping center space per capita than any other US city except Chicago
• largest 10K race in the world, the annual Peachtree Road Race with around 60,000 runners
Please renew your membership now, and consider Academy Fund. Membership dues cover less than 8 percent of programs and services.

www.aarweb.org/renewal

Mary Mac’s Tea Room
224 Ponce de Leon AVE
Long the standard for the sweet-tea meat-and-three crowd, this half-century-old tea room has played host to generations of Atlantans. The fried chicken is good and you’ll fight over the yeast rolls. $  
Trader Vic’s
255 Courtland ST NE
Hidden in the bowels of the downtown Hilton, this large, darkened restaurant quickly seduces with elegant kitch. Order a dependable mai tai, the better to enjoy Vic’s Polynesian-themed décor: carved wooden masks, bamboo, bamboo, flowered carpeting, and the occasional turtle or blowfish. Huge barrel-like hot tubs for meat sit in a glassed-in room where a chef tends to pork, chicken, lamb, beef, and salmon. $$$

Café Alsace
121 E. Ponce de Leon AVE
The Alsace region of France is famous for its blend of German and French cuisine, and this tiny hole in the wall skillfully recreates that unique taste in Atlanta. The décor is horrifying quaint, and the cuisine is spectacular. The host/owner is a charming Frenchwoman who offers customers a long wine list and a small but memorable brunch menu. This place is wonderful! $  
Café Oli
5342 Tilly Mill RD, Suite 1330
Meat Café & Dairy Café $  
Chai Peking
2205 LaVista RD
Chai Peking is a glatt inside the Toco Hills Kroger, specializing in authentic Chinese cuisine that you can take out or eat there. The menu of 109 items includes beef, chicken, vegetables, Chinese wraps, hamburgers, and Hamburger. All meats at Chai Peking are Glatt Kosher. Catering is also available for parties of up to three hundred people. There is a lunch special from 11 AM to 3 PM and a daily special from 11 AM to 9 PM. $  
Pizza Palace
2157 Briarcliff RD
Pizza Palace is a new chowel and pan yin- noel pizza shop in Atlanta that specializes in pizza, calzones, fish plates, salads, sandwiches, and soft ice cream.

Casablanca Bar
Hilton Atlanta Hotel
Bogey and Bergman would have felt right at home here and you will, too. Have a cocktail, enjoy billiards, or catch the large-screen TV in a nostalgic setting.

Jocks & Jills
1 CNN CTR
Jocks & Jills is the place to be when you’re in downtown Atlanta. Located in the CNN Center, it’s right next door to the new Philips Arena and only a short walk to the Georgia Dome, Georgia World Congress Center, and Centennial Olympic Park. With more than 90 TVs, and seating for 350, you will not miss a game at this place! $-$

Churchill Grounds
660 Peachtree ST
This jazz-centric watering hole next to the Fox Theatre is a convenient and classy place to gather after a show.

ParaSoL Bar
Atrium Lobby of the Hyatt Regency Atlanta Hotel
This place is great for cocktails and catching the latest sports action on its multiple TVs. ParaSoL Bar specializes in spirits, and has the largest selection in the city, with more than two hundred different varieties and an endless supply of appetizers for late-night bites.

CNN Center
1 CNN CTR
CNN Center is the global headquarters of Turner Broadcasting System, as well as the studios and newsrooms for CNN’s international networks. It also houses eateries and specialty stores, including the Turner Store. Visitors can take a firsthand look at global news in the making on the CNN Studio Tour: 1-404-827-2491.

Georgia State Capitol
Capitol AVe
Native gold tops the dome of Georgia’s Capitol, an 1889 building that houses natural science displays, a Hall of Flags, and a Hall of Fame honoring outstanding Georgians.

The Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site
449 Auburn AVe
Visit the King center site and Dr. King’s grave, the King birth home, and Ebenezer Baptist Church, where he preached. The surrounding historic “Sweet Auburn” district, centered around Auburn Avenue, was the thriving center of black enterprise in Atlanta from the 1890s through the 1940s.

Underground Atlanta
Peachtree at Alabama STS
Six city blocks in the heart of Atlanta have been transformed into a spirited urban marketplace featuring twelve restaurants, more than one hundred specialty shops and entertainment emporiums, and dozens of street-cart merchants.  

What’s On Atlanta

Price Guide:
$ (under $10)  $$ ($11-20)  $$$ ($21-35)  

Barley’s Billiards
350 Peachtree ST
Voted number-one billiards club in America. Enjoy great casual food in a classy, smoke-free environment. A favorite gathering place. $  
Blue Trout
554 Piedmont AVE
Stylish but not stuffy, Blue Trout is an excellent restaurant. With a focus on fresh seafood, the kitchen produces solid renditions of American and French classics. Melt-in-your-mouth salmon tarte is served with chopped eggs, cornichons, and capers, while an addictive tomato fondue complements a wonderful light goat cheese croquette. $$

Café Alsace
121 E. Ponce de Leon AVE
The Alsace region of France is famous for its blend of German and French cuisine, and this tiny hole in the wall skillfully recreates that unique taste in Atlanta. The décor is horrifying quaint, and the cuisine is spectacular. The host/owner is a charming Frenchwoman who offers customers a long wine list and a small but memorable brunch menu. This place is wonderful! $  
Café Oli
5342 Tilly Mill RD, Suite 1330
Meat Café & Dairy Café $  
Chai Peking
2205 LaVista RD
Chai Peking is a glatt inside the Toco Hills Kroger, specializing in authentic Chinese cuisine that you can take out or eat there. The menu of 109 items includes beef, chicken, vegetables, Chinese wraps, hamburgers, and Hamburger. All meats at Chai Peking are Glatt Kosher. Catering is also available for parties of up to three hundred people. There is a lunch special from 11 AM to 3 PM and a daily special from 11 AM to 9 PM. $  
Pizza Palace
2157 Briarcliff RD
Pizza Palace is a new chowel and pan yin- noel pizza shop in Atlanta that specializes in pizza, calzones, fish plates, salads, sandwiches, and soft ice cream.

Casablanca Bar
Hilton Atlanta Hotel
Bogey and Bergman would have felt right at home here and you will, too. Have a cocktail, enjoy billiards, or catch the large-screen TV in a nostalgic setting.

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**Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop**

**Scholarship, Service, and Stress: the Tensions of Being a Chair**

**Friday, November 21, 2003, Atlanta, Georgia**

Part of the AAR’s Strengthening College and University Religion & Theology Programs initiative supported by a grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc.

### PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>9:00-9:30</td>
<td>Opening remarks – Laurie Patton: Identity and Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30-10:00</td>
<td>Professional Identity – 3 panelists</td>
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<td>10:00-11:00</td>
<td>Roundtable discussions</td>
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<td>11:00-11:30</td>
<td>Reporting</td>
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<td>11:30-1:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>1:30-1:50</td>
<td>Leadership Styles and Department Culture – 3 panelists</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00-2:30</td>
<td>Roundtable discussions</td>
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<td>2:30-3:00</td>
<td>Reporting</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00-3:30</td>
<td>Closing remarks – Laurie Patton: Discernment</td>
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### ANNUAL MEETING NEWS

**LAW** from p 5

“demons-possessed pedophile.” The Bush administration attempts to distance itself from such remarks.

4. At their meeting in Dallas, Catholic bishops listen to the stories of some abuse victims and adopt a “one strike and you’re out” policy to permanently remove any priest who has abused a child from any public ministry. Five months later, at the Vatican’s insistence, they approve creation of tri- nups to consider cases of priests who proclaim their innocence. The church’s religious order supe- riors criticize some aspects of the policy, saying the norms were adopted without their consultation.

5. The clergy sexual abuse scandal gives rise to new groups seeking a greater role for the laity in Catholic Church decision making. A new lay group Voice of the Faithful draws five thousand people to a convention in Boston. Although Cardinal O’Malley and Voice leaders several months later, he does not immediately list his ban on the group meeting on church property in his archdiocese. With the new attention from the media, victims’ advocacy groups also experience a resurgence.

6. The US Supreme Court upholds the constitu- tionality of the use of school vouchers for chil- dren attending religious schools.

7. A circuit court of appeals judge in San Francisco rules that the words “under God” in the Pledge of Allegiance are unconstitutional. But the judge in the case stays his own ruling to allow for an appeal.

8. The National Council of Churches, the United Church of Christ, and other religious bodies express their opposition to a possible US invasion of Iraq. America’s Catholic bishops raise concerns as well, questioning whether a preemptive strike can be morally legitimate under the traditional just war theory.

9. Palestinian gunmen take refuge in Bethlehem’s Church of the Nativity, setting the stage for a thirty-nine-day siege by the Israeli military. Suicide bombings, killings, and violence continue to spread fear throughout Israel and the occupied West Bank.

10. Scholars announce they have discovered a two-thousand-year-old burial box that bears the words “James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus.” While hailed as a great archaeological find, some others say they cannot rule out the possi- bility that the inscription is a hoax.

This year’s RNA ballot was compiled by Providence Journal religion writer Richard Dujardin. Seventy- one religion writers participated in the poll. The poll was distributed to two hundred forty three journalists.

### DEPARTMENT ENROLLMENT

Please provide the following information if you are not a current AAR member.

(You may check your membership information on the AAR home page www.aarweb.org)

**PAYMENT INFORMATION**

- **Credit Card**
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- **Discover**

For more information, contact Casey J. Gifford, Director of Academic Relations, at cgifford@aarweb.org, or by phone at 1-404-727-2270.

For news about AAR, see www.aarweb.org/about/department.

**Register by Fax:** 1-404-727-7959

**Register by surface mail:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chairs Workshop</th>
<th>American Academy of Religion</th>
<th>Suite 300</th>
<th>Atlanta, GA 30329-4246</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Check** (payable to “AAR Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop”)

**Credit Card** (Check one)

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**Expiration Date**

**Name on Card**

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**Register by Fax:** 1-404-727-7959

**Register by surface mail:** Chairs Workshop American Academy of Religion 825 Houston Mill Road NE Suite 300 Atlanta, GA 30329-4246

For more information, contact Casey J. Gifford, Director of Academic Relations, at cgifford@aarweb.org, or by phone at 1-404-727-2270.

**Chairs from departments enrolled in the Academic Relations Program are pleased to offer a Chairs Workshop during the Annual Meetings of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature in Atlanta, Georgia, on Friday, November 21, 2003, from 8 AM to 4 PM. This workshop will provide a day of structured discussion where chairs can exchange personal narratives and strategies for navigating the pitfalls of life as a chair. All of the speakers are AAR members who have experience in being a chair. The workshop is formatted as a mix of short panel presentations and small group discussions. During lunch we will break up into groups by institutional type and discuss issues that are unique to religion departments. Colleagues in your institution, such as chairs, other members of the faculty, faculty- being developed to assume leadership responsibilities, and deans, may be interest- ed in attending this workshop. Chairs may want to bring a team of faculty or send a designated faculty person to the workshop. The topics for past Chairs Workshops have been:**

- **Summer 2003 - The Entrepreneurial Chair: Building and Sustaining Your Department in an Era of Shrinking Resources and Increasing Demands**

  **2002 Annual Meeting - Running a Successful Faculty Search in the Religious Studies Department**

  **2001 Annual Meeting - Evaluating and Advancing Teaching in the Religious Studies Department**

  **2000 Annual Meeting - Assessing and Advancing the Religious Studies Department**

  **We look forward to seeing you in Atlanta!**

  The Academic Relations Task Force: Warren G. Frisina, Chair, Kathryn Kleinhans, Laurie L. Parton Elizabeth A. Say, Terrence W. Tilley
**Religious Studies News, AAR Edition**

**In Memoriam**

Willard G. Oxtoby 1953-2003

Editor's Note:
Willard G. Oxtoby was the AAR's lecturer for the American Lecturists in the History of Religious series during calendar year 2003. He was Professor emeritus at the University of Toronto, where he taught for 28 years, and founding Director of the University of Toronto's Centre for Religious Studies.

**Christopher Buck, Michigan State University, writes...**

Several years ago, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation televised a documentary on the Dead Sea Scrolls, and showed film footage of Willard Oxtoby as a young postdoctoral fellow among the first team of American scholars sent to the Holy Land to help piece together the fragments. Shortly after his retirement, Oxtoby heard a paper (R. Morton Smith, "II Isaiah and the Persians," JOAS 1963) that changed the course of his research from comparative religion to the comparative phenomenology of religions. From that point forward, Oxtoby was immersed in a lifelong dialogue with other faiths, as exemplified in his book, The Meaning of Other Faiths — one of the classics in the theology of pluralism.

Oxtoby was my PhD supervisor, a role that stretched back to when he was Jonathan Z. Smith's surrogate PhD supervisor decades ago. Oxtoby would often tell his students that, had he his life to live again, he would still choose "comparative religions." Often given to punning, Oxtoby had a mischievous arsenal of religious jokes. His irreverent charm was his charisma. Oxtoby was an almost saintly devil's advocate. He could pose a critical question by means of a joke. His love of the profession made a difference, as he engaged the interest of numerous undergraduates and helped launch the careers of more than a few of us in the profession. The editing and publication of Oxtoby's unpublished work would be the most befitting tribute to this consummate comparativist.

**Alan F. Segal, Barnard College, writes...**

The following are excerpts from the eulogy for Willard G. Oxtoby given by Alan F. Segal on March 12, 2003 in Toronto, Ontario.

Will was my teacher and colleague, mentor and director, editor and friend. We first met in 1970 at Yale. From there, the Oxtoby family were off for the adventure of Toronto, where he became the Director of the Centre for Religious Studies, which he founded and which remained the center of his academic interests ever since. He continued in that capacity until his retirement very firmly with the life of the University.

Will was one of the nicest, kindest people I have ever met, a person of impeccable character and irrepressible good humor. He was a quick wit. You all know about his puns. I will not dwell on the years, as he traveled the East Coast in a VW station wagon, we would look forward to his arrivals, as he always saw the same stop as a step on our way, to our delight. He was, above all, one of the most exuberant scholars I have ever met, who researched everything, great and small, with the same optimistic good humor. Nothing escaped his eye. One morning, after about fifteen years ago, I came downstairs to start breakfast for Will, who was our guest overview, to find him already up and deeply involved in a conversation with my son Jordan, who was then about six. The subject was European chamber pots, which Will was describing in great detail. Will certainly knew his business, Jordan was at the perfect age to appreciate the technology and artistry of this mundane object. This exuberance extended to every subject. Ask Will anything, anything at all. Our came the file cards and pen, scribbling bibliography, source creation, points of interests, which came at you like a blizzard. Want to know how to drive from New York City to Toronto? Well, Will had at least thirty routes, twenty-five of which he had personally driven and would describe in detail, down to points of interests, the donut shops, and truck-stops. And he had plans for traveling the other five. He recommended the ones that were off the main highways and had the best views. He could tell you the time of year to take each route, the best direction for the views, and when you had to try for reservations at the well.

Without exaggeration, he could write every single chapter of his two-volume study of world religious traditions, East and West. And his knowledge extended not just to the major points philosophical but the literatures (usually in the original language), to the major rituals (which he had witnessed and could discuss) and the major sites (which he had inevitably visited and could describe with the appropriate humorous anecdotes). His transcriptions and consistency were absolutely infallible. His sense of the crucial historical conceptualization for comparison was unfailing.

He and Julia [Ching] published a good deal together. After the shock and the grief of July's death a little over a year ago, Will began at his scholarship alone. He was doing a one-volume version of his World Religions text. He had planned out a reader in the religions of the West from its beginnings through Islam. Its outline alone was a piece of genius. It was an enormous task and I don't know anyone else who could have done it so well. He also became the America's first Reader in Religion for this year.

He told me about several humorous firsts in his career: (1) He became a Presbyterian minister without actually attending divinity school; (2) He gathered the inscrational data for his dissertation in one day; (3) He learned how to smuggle pork sausage into Israel.

**Amir Hussain, California State University, Northridge, writes...**

Here's a Message on the wind / Calling me to glory somewhere". So go two lines from a song by Richard Thompson that I was listening to on March 6 when I got the news that Willard Gurdon Oxtoby had passed away that morning in Toronto.

Many in the AAR knew Will, so I won't go into detail about his biography. He was born in California in 1933, and attended Harvard, McGill, Harvard and Yale before moving to the University of Toronto where he taught from 1971 to 1999. He was married twice, to Layla Juji who died in 1980, and to Julia Ching who died in 2001. Will was there for both of them, providing love and support as they both died from cancer.

Earlier this year he was diagnosed with cancer. I last spoke to him six days before his death while he was in the hospital recovering from a round of chemothera- py. He didn't know if the chemo would give him a few more days, a few more months, or a few more years.

I had the privilege of having Will as my pastor first in my undergraduate at the University of Toronto. I supervised both my MA and my PhD. I learned a tremendous amount from Will, ranging from major issues about religious pluralism, to minor issues about the occurrence between an "N" dash and an "M" dash. I first learned to teach comparative religion as one of the many teaching assistants for his course on world religions. Out of that developed Will's magisterial two-volume textbook with Oxford University Press.

Like many of you, I will miss Will very much as a teacher, a mentor, a colleague and a friend.
Employment Information Services Center

RE YOU LOOKING for a job in the field of religion? Or are you an employer looking for qualified job candidates? If so, be sure to register for the Employment Information Services (EIS) Center 2003. The EIS Center, held each year as part of the AAR Annual Meeting, offers services to registered employers and candidates that help to ease the communication and interview process.

The Center will be based this year in the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Atlanta, and will offer services such as job postings, candidate credentials for review, a message center through which registrants communicate, and an interview facility. Additionally, the EIS Center staff is evaluating past Centers and hoping to find new ways to serve the needs of registrants.

The Center kicks off on Friday evening, November 21, with an orientation session for both candidates and employers. Come and receive your Annual Meetings Special Edition of Openings, and learn how you can best utilize the Center. Also, the EIS Center Staff is hoping to incorporate new programs into the orientation to make the session more helpful to candidates and employers. The message center will open after the orientation, and the EIS Center will be fully operational all day Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and half a day on Tuesday.

EIS preregistration opens on May 15, 2003, and closes on October 21, 2003. Please see www.aarweb.org/eis for other important information, including deadlines and registration information.

SYLLABUS, from p.5

on Teaching and Learning, then chaired by Tom Peterson, nurtured the project in those early years, and they have continued to do so. When I began to develop the site with the help of my son Adrien, who designed it and served as its Webmaster until 2001, nothing like it existed in religious studies and few existed outside our field. Not everyone thought it was a good idea. There was some resistance to sharing syllabi — partly, I discovered, because faculty tended to generate their course syllabi by lightly modifying those of their teachers, and they hesitated to reveal this process in public; and also because there was no tradition of making syllabi public.

Now the site contains nearly four hundred course syllabi that cover a wide range of subfields. These syllabi vary enormously in style and content. Teachers now often contact me directly to offer new or revised syllabi that sometimes reflect hundreds of hours of work. The AAR is indebted to the generosity of these individuals. The site also includes other key resources. I think especially of a page that complements the use of film in teaching, another that provides links to syllabi compilations in other disciplines, and a section that offers a comprehensive list of publications dealing with syllabi.

The Syllabus Project is heavily used by graduate students and faculty alike. Teachers look to it for ideas on books, how to frame a course around a theme or tradition, and tips on using audiovisual resources. Many browse for pedagogical insights. Some also look for conversation partners via phone and e-mail (‘I'm also teaching a course on Islam and saw your syllabus. I see that you focus on North American expressions of Islam. Wonderful! I have a few questions for you . . . ’). Graduate students especially have been efficacious with their testimonials — e.g., ‘This site, in my opinion, is a great example of a community of scholars. Education and scholarly work benefit when walls are down and dialogue is able to flow.’ (Jessica Ragam, Southwest Missouri State University, November 2002)

This past year was particularly productive. All contributors were asked to review their syllabi and offer new ones. The site grew by 22 percent as a result, and many existing syllabi were revised. The current Webmaster, Joe DeRose, was busy . . . and patient, as usual. I also consulted with chairs and co-chairs of the AAR’s program unit sections and groups. In addition, categories were expanded — e.g., there's now one on ‘animals’ — and links were created to additional auxiliary sites, such as the Food and Society syllabi collection. The site is now also listed on MERLOT (the Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching).

What does the future hold? A large collection of syllabi (195) prepared by the Society of Christian Ethics in the late 1970s and early 1980s will soon be available. So, too, will a more recent collection on Christian ethics that was part of a Wabash initiative. The Committee on Teaching and Learning continues to develop links with the Philosophical and Religious Studies wing of the Learning and Teaching Support Network in the United Kingdom. We hope to make some British syllabi available to AAR members in the coming year.

Of broader import in the long term is that the Syllabus Project is soon to nestle into an expanded Virtual Teaching and Learning Center. This center will offer members a wide range of online teaching resources (see the May 2002 RSN for more information).

Starting this November, the editor of this new center, including the Syllabus Project, will be Nicola Denzey, who teaches at Bowdoin College (www.bowdoin.edu/~ndenzey). She too, like Professor Gummer above, has a deep interest in marrying teaching and technology. Professor Denzey's pedagogical work on the Web is well known in Canada; she created and manages the main Canadian site for scholars of religion (www.crcr.ca). A resident of the US for the last twelve years, she was also a Lilly Fellow between 1998 and 2000. We will be in good hands. I wish her the same degree of support that has so graciously been accorded to me these last six years.

The Syllabus Project is soon to nestle into an expanded Virtual Teaching and Learning Center. This center will offer members a wide range of online teaching resources.

Please mark your calendar for a conference at Drew University.

An American Empire?

Globalization, War, and Religion

September 26 - 28, 2003

Speakers will include:

• Edward Said, Columbia University, NYC, leading public US intellectual
• Chandra Muzaffar, JUST, president of the International Movement for a Just World, Malaysia
• Nestor Miguez, ISEDET, Buenos Aires, Argentina, liberation theologian and New Testament scholar
• John Cobb, Center for Process Studies, L.A., world-renowned process theologian and critic of globalization
• Catherine Keller, Drew University, constructive theologian
• Otto Maduro, Drew University, sociologist of religion

Details available at our website: <www.users.drew.edu/nnusar/rtc3.html>
I am very excited to be taking over the editorship of the Cultural Criticism series, and to be inheriting it when it is a particularly vibrant and lively series. Bjorn Kronförder has done a marvelous job during his tenure as series editor, seeing to the publication of books on religion and film, racism and religion in Australia, and anti-Judaism and feminism — important and provocative books. It is my sincere hope that I can continue this pattern. One of the things that makes the Cultural Criticism series so interesting is precisely its focus on studies that examine the intersection of religion and culture, an intersection that produces results that are both unexpected and surprising. The series, as I see it, has three basic aims: 1) to offer close, detailed, and analytical readings of cultural phenomena and lived experiences on the ground; 2) to offer critique and criticism of existing cultural representations and practices of religion and religious experience, whether these be ideological, popular, or institutional representations; and 3) to provide a forum for constructive reworking and rethinking of established practices, institutions, and representations.

In other words, I think the Cultural Criticism series fundamentally aims to shift our scholarly and disciplinary focus, to shake things up a bit, to offer new and unusual and creative perspectives on religion and culture. As such, it offers a vibrant forum for cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary discussion and critique. The books that the series has sought to publish in the past — and which I fully intend to continue to seek — are books that cut across established disciplinary lines and that, necessarily, are accessible and relevant to scholars and students with a broad range of interests.

My own work is in Buddhism in South Asia. In particular, I am interested in issues of material culture — the construction, use, and conception of physical objects in Buddhism, the role of visual culture in religion, the intersections and tensions between doctrinal formulations and ritual practices. My first book, Imaging Wisdom: Seeing and Knowing in the Art of Indian Buddhism (Ronald), sought to establish practices, institutions, and representations.

So the answer (or part of the answer) is that I grew up in the Italian-American north Bronx, in an apartment building that was evenly divided in number between Jews and Italians. In the middle of the block there was an old Lubavitcher yeshiva hidden behind enormous and very old willow trees and a couple of streets away, tucked under the elevator train tracks, was a tiny shrine to the Blessed Mother built by an immigrant family in the early 1900s in gratitude for a grace received. Invisible beings leaned very close to this world. My relatives called on the saints to witness the most awful and wonderful moments, summoned them into tense family conflicts fraught with memory and disappointment and desire. The web of relationships that made and sustained this world stretched between heaven and earth, and figures in both places drew on the energies, fantasies, needs, and fears associated with each other. I look at a statue of Saint Anthony of Padua and think of my Uncle Tony looking back and Saint Anthony, too, and that moment when my uncle ... and on and on.

There was something mysterious and frightening about the sacred world to me as a child, frightening because I could sense, in the postures and tonalities of adults engaged with the saints, secrets and stories that I couldn’t fully understand, like a child trying to figure out what’s going on at an adult dinner party. People’s engagements with the saints and the Blessed Mother were so fierce. One of the plot stories of my childhood involved a relative who came home from the hospital where his beloved wife had just died in childbirth and systematically smashed every saint’s statue in the house. The saints were not going to be forgiven. People loved the Virgin Mary with the kind of ambivalence and intensity with which they loved their mothers, living and dead.

I have personal interest in several contemporary issues that I would be very happy to see addressed in manuscripts and proposals: the ideology and practice of Christian rock music; new religious movements; issues of conversion and syncreticism; religion and the popular media (especially television and film); ritual practice and belief; and religion and political structures.

Robert A. Orsi, Harvard University
President, American Academy of Religion

Robert Orsi is Charles Warren Professor of the History of Religion in America at Harvard Divinity School. He received his PhD from Yale University in 1982, and was an undergraduate at Trinity College. His most recent research includes a cultural, historical study of growing up Catholic in the United States in the twentieth century and work on the poetics of Catholic memory over the last 20 years. His publications include three books: The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950 (Yale, 1985); Thank You, Saint Jude: Women’s Devotion to the Patron Saint of Hopeless Causes (Yale, 1996); and Gods of the City: Religion and the American Urban Landscape (Indiana University Press, 1999).

RSN: Tell us something about your background. Where were you born? In what kind of religious life, if any, did you participate?

Orsi: A deep reticence about revealing anything of our own religious stories is so much a part of the discipline and practice of religious studies — I usually deflect questions like this when they come from students, treating them instead as opportunities to explore the limits and boundaries of the critical study of religion — that it is not easy for me to take up your question, “tell us something about your background. . . . In what kind of religious life, if any (and I appreciate this “if any?”) did you participate?” Do I answer such a question now as President of the AAR?

But I also think, apart from my own story, that the time has come in the history of the discipline for a season of autobiographical self-reflection, an unearthing of the varied pathways, social, psychological, and cultural, that led each of us to our particular work, within the broader frame of the history of the discipline itself, and to try and figure out the deep connections between the two sets of stories, of the discipline and of ourselves. Anthropologists no longer hide themselves in the field; they no longer pretend to be the absent presence, and we shouldn’t even. Certainly our religious past haunts the discipline, one way or another — I’ve always imagined the hallways of religious studies departments as dense with ghosts: of the minister father, the tongue-speaking mother, the born-again brother, and so on, whose presence is real, whether acknowledged or not, as real as the saints, demons, ancestors of the religious worlds we study. I think that we’ll be better able to talk about the reality of the sacred figures in people’s lives when we acknowledge the reality of our own invisible and ancient interlocutors, that our recognizing and finding ways to talk about the ontological realness of the religious imaginations we study depends on our excavations of our religious histories. Sexual relations in the field are the great taboo of anthropology, the disciplinary reality that until recently has dared not speak its name; for religious studies, the great taboo has been our own religious histories.

RSN: How did your parents or your extended family influence your career?

Orsi: So the answer (or part of the answer) is that I grew up in the Italian-American north Bronx, in an apartment building that was evenly divided in number between Jews and Italians. In the middle of the block there was an old Lubavitcher yeshiva hidden behind enormous and very old willow trees and a couple of streets away, tucked under the elevator train tracks, was a tiny shrine to the Blessed Mother built by an immigrant family in the early 1900s in gratitude for a grace received. Invisible beings leaned very close to this world. My relatives called on the saints to witness the most awful and wonderful moments, summoned them into tense family conflicts fraught with memory and disappointment and desire. The web of relationships that made and sustained this world stretched between heaven and
What are your core or introductory courses, the courses that year after year seem to attract the most students?

Patton: We just completed a major overhaul of our curriculum, designed in part to focus on making those introductory courses more attractive and more regularly taught. Our core courses are at the 100 and 200 level, many of them also qualifying for our distribution requirements for the college. At the 100 level, "Introduction to Religion" usually involves a comparison between two religious traditions, which also serves to introduce students to the basic issues and categories in the study of religion. We usually follow the "East/West" pattern, and have offered REL 100 courses in Christianity and Judaism, or Judaism and Hinduism. But we’ve also done some more creative ones, such as African Traditional Religions and Christianity. Our REL 150, "Comparative Sacred Texts," introduces students to at least four thirty or forty; some are more comfortable with a full class of eighty to ninety.

RSN: What distinguishes your department from other departments on campus?

Patton: We are a midsize department by Emory’s standards, and certainly one of the more respected departments on campus. We have a tradition of embracing social action that goes back to the 60s. Although we’ve become more "professional" as departments, many of our faculty members still engage in a lot of community education and activism. In addition, many of our faculty members’ writings are on social justice and religion, and are, in their own right, a form of activism. As a department, we also tend to be able to make stronger stands in the university. For instance, we have this year declared a department-wide "sabbatical" from hosting speakers or planning conferences. We did this as a way of trying to reembrace ourselves, and inspire others to reembrace, the core values of research and teaching that are at the heart of our mission at Emory.

RSN: How many students take introductory courses? Is this number increasing?

Patton: Our core courses are at the 100 and 200 level, many of them also qualifying for our distribution requirements for the college. At the 100 level, "Introduction to Religion" usually involves a comparison between two religious traditions, which also serves to introduce students to the basic issues and categories in the study of religion. We usually follow the "East/West" pattern, and have offered REL 100 courses in Christianity and Judaism, or Judaism and Hinduism. But we’ve also done some more creative ones, such as African Traditional Religions and Christianity. Our REL 150, "Comparative Sacred Texts," introduces students to at least four

RSN: What is distinctive about the department of Religion, housed at Emory University, Department of Religion, Graduate Division of Religion (GDR) and Department of Religious Studies.

Patton: We have twenty full-time faculty members, with at least two more, and very likely three, of them teaching in each of the world’s major religious traditions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity), and several historians of culture working in American religious thought. The department regularly collaborates with the Candler School of Theology and the Pew Interdisciplinary Center for the Study of Religion, housed at Emory’s Law School.

RSN: How long have you been in the Department of Religion? How long have you been the Chair?

Patton: I came to Emory in the fall of 1996. I have been Department Chair for three years.

RSN: How many full-time and adjunct faculty do you have in your department?

Patton: We have twenty full-time faculty, including lecturers, and we regularly hire five or six adjunct faculty per semester. We also take in twenty of advanced graduate students in the Graduate Division of Religion (GDR) and the members of the community.

RSN: Can you tell us a bit about the department?

Patton: While I will be writing a little more about the department’s intellectual strengths below, I will say now that I like to think of us as an intellectual San Francisco — where there is no single major of religious tradition, culture, or methodology. With twenty faculty members within the department, and faculty major world traditions through the rigorous methods of textual exegesis — both the traditions’ own methods as well as scholarly methods. This has been a very successful class because the skills of textual analysis are transportable across disciplines. Our 200-level classes tend to be comparative, but more tradition- or culture-focused. "Biblical Literature" (205); "History of Religions in America" (299); “Western Religious Traditions” (211); “Asian Religious Traditions” (212); and so on. We also have a course in the classical sacred texts at the 200 level where students can study the work of a great author, such as Augustine, or a genre, such as Midrash or Veda.

RSN: How many students take introductory courses? Is this number increasing?

Patton: Of the four hundred or so students registered for our courses each year, we regularly get about one to two hundred of them in the core courses. We like to keep our enrollments flexible for the faculty members. Some faculty teach more effectively when they cap these core courses at

RSN: What are your core or introductory courses, the courses that year after year seem to attract the most students?

Patton: We just completed a major overhaul of our curriculum, designed in part to focus on making those introductory courses more attractive and more regularly taught. Our core courses are at the 100 and 200 level, many of them also qualifying for our distribution requirements for the college. At the 100 level, "Introduction to Religion" usually involves a comparison between two religious traditions, which also serves to introduce students to the basic issues and categories in the study of religion. We usually follow the "East/West" pattern, and have offered REL 100 courses in Christianity and Judaism, or Judaism and Hinduism. But we’ve also done some more creative ones, such as African Traditional Religions and Christianity. Our REL 150, "Comparative Sacred Texts," introduces students to at least four

RSN: What do your students major in? What types of courses do students take to fulfill the requirements for a major? What do you think students learn in your department?

Patton: Our current strengths are in Judaism, Hinduism, and Christianity. We are currently conducting a search in Ethnography of Judaism. After that is completed, our immediate hiring priorities are in Islam and Tibetan Buddhism. A gap speakers or at least ten. We are excellent Islamicists at various schools and departments at Emory, since 9-11 we need a higher faculty representation of Islamic studies within the department itself. We hope to collaborate with another department to focus on Islam in America. In addition, we would like to augment our work in Emory’s current study-abroad program in Dharamsala, India, in Tibetan Studies. Two of our faculty members are heavily involved in that program, and we would like to bolster our offerings even more in that area with a new hire.

RSN: What is distinctive about the teaching that you and your colleagues do?

Patton: We have a very distinguished record of teaching, with six of our colleagues in the department nominated for university-wide teaching awards. We tend to teach according to our intellectual strengths — with courses in textual analysis and ethno-religious methods being some of the major emphases within the department. We have recently collaborated with the Department of Comparative Literature to make our offerings stronger in those areas. Emory University also has a long tradition of practical training, service learning, and internships. This tradition is endowed under the term "Theory/Practice Learning," and has been written up in the Chronicle of Higher Education, as well as in Liberal Education. Theory/Practice Learning is a teaching strategy that combines theoretical work with practical experiences. TPL models of teaching create well-structured opportunities for students to think critically and synthetically, develop and test hypotheses, and reflect ethically and personally on ideas, and engage in social action that goes back to the 60s. Although we’ve become more "professional" as departments, many of our faculty members still engage in a lot of community education and activism. In addition, many of our faculty members’ writings are on social justice and religion, and are, in their own right, a form of activism. As a department, we also tend to be able to make stronger stands in the university. For instance, we have this year declared a department-wide "sabbatical" from hosting speakers or planning conferences. We did this as a way of trying to reembrace ourselves, and inspire others to reembrace, the core values of research and teaching that are at the heart of our mission at Emory.
In MY SIX YEARS as a doctoral stu-
dent I have often wondered, along with my fellow students, about the job
search process: At what point should I look for a teaching job? What is involved in the
process of finding academic employment? How do I efficiently market my skills to
show both my experience and potential? Wishing other students and graduates
conduct job searches made it evident that there is no one correct method for every
person. However, there are some advantages to preparing early for the job search
process. Even though I am in the initial phases of my dissertation, I decided to try
two things as a sort of dry run for future

.job searches: I applied for a job in my
field, and I registered with Employment
Information Services at the Annual
Meeting. Both proved to be valuable
learning experiences. This essay focuses on
what these experiences taught me about
the value of preparing for the job search
before graduation.

I began by applying for a job in my field.
After seeing an announcement for an
appropriate position, I realized that the
hiring school was probably interested in
someone who was further along in their
career than I was. It was a dream academic
job, however, with opportunities to work
with students at all levels of graduate work
— I had to go for it!

It was a dream academic job, however, with opportunities to
work with students at all levels of graduate work — I had to go for it! Besides giving me
experience in the process of applying for a job, it proved to give me the incentive to
assemble my application materials. Before
tackling the application, I carefully read
every page of the school’s website. I then
wrote a cover letter to identify areas of
overlap between the school’s mission and
my experience. Writing this cover letter
helped me to identify the areas of teaching
that interest and excite me the most.

I asked a professor how to approach people
for reference letters. The advice I received
was practical and solid. Approach profes-
sors with a request that simply states the
date and reason for the job; the name of the
institution, the position being advertised, and
the date the letter is due. It was even
suggested that I inform the professor that the
due date is a week or two earlier than is
advertised! If the professor is available,
offer to send copies of any of the following
information, as they might be helpful: 1) curriculum vitae; 2) the job description; 3) the
cover letter (so they can see how you are
presenting yourself); 4) a brief summa-
ry of the work done together (so that they
do not have to hunt for the dates you asssis-
tant taught with them or which courses
you took); and 5) transcript (so they can get
an overall feel for your academic abili-
ties). Again, the professor may not be
available to write a reference letter.

In my case, I asked two professors who
were both on sabbatical that term, so their
travel and research schedules made it diffi-
cult for them to take on additional tasks.

To learn more about the job search envi-
ronment, I registered with EIS at the
Annual Meeting in Toronto. EIS offers
several resources for those in the job mar-
et: interview facilities, a confidential mes-
sage service, and candidate resume creden-
tials for review by employer representatives.
Although EIS is not designed to help stu-
dents learn to prepare cover letters, ask for
job references, or interview effectively, the
resources it does offer helped me clarify my
teaching goals and better organize my cur-
riculum vitae. EIS encouraged each appli-
cant to complete a two-page resume in a
standardized format. Since this resume
could potentially open the door to an

Editor’s Note:
The Committee on the Public Understanding of Religion (CPUR) sponsors this page. The
CPUR’s purpose is to deepen scholarly understanding of the public role of religion, and to
encourage engagement among scholars and the public. The column offers comment on any
aspect of religion in public life, especially with regard to the media, public policy, or law. Any
member interested in contributing may contact the chair of the committee, Dona S. Davis, at
dona.davis@law.csuohio.edu.

On the whole, however, I found that most journalists recognized how close the connection is
between academic freedom and freedom of the press.

Carl W. Ernst is Zachary Smith Professor in the
Department of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel
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AST SUMMER, the oldest public university in America was used for
requiring students to read a book.
The lawsuit seeking to block the assign-
ment was dismissed on appeal, for sound
academic reasons. After reading the
book over the summer, 2260 first-year stu-
dents met on August 19, 2002, for one
-two-hour session to discuss Michael Sells’
Approaching the Qur’an. The “required”
sessions went off smoothly, without assign-
ing grades or taking attendance, while
division of news reporters crowded over
the campus seeking sound bites. Students won-
dered what all the fuss was about. What
was really going on in this controversy?

When the Summer Reading Program
Committee at UNC asked me if there was a
good translation of the Qur’an that would
be suitable for its program, I immediately
thought of Michael Sells’ translation of the
short suras from the end of the Qur’an. If
this particular book were not available, I
cannot think of any other translation of the
Qur’an that I would have recommended to
assign to our incoming students.

As I thought over the obvious pedagogical
reasons for this choice, it occurred to me
to wonder whether the selection might prove
controversial, but at the same time that
seemed a remote possibility. To my surprise,
there was significant resistance among some stu-
dents and faculty on the committee to a
translation of the Qur’an. The questions
raised were framed in terms of the diffi-
culty of the text and its strangeness to most
students, but there was a tension beneath
these discussions that would soon be
reflected in public debate. Eventually, how-
ever, the committee chose this book,
although with a divided vote.

What were the underlying issues? First, the
conservative Virginia-based Family Policy
Council initiated a lawsuit charging that a
reading and discussion assignment involv-
ing a partial translation of the Qur’an
amounted to proselytism, and was an
attempt to convert students to Islam. This
was an attack on the academic and com-
parative study of religion, going against
well-established Supreme Court guidelines
on teaching about religion (as opposed to
教学 religion in religious communi-
cies). With considerable irony, this
group accused UNC of violating the sepa-
ration of church and state, though they
made it clear they would welcome a read-
ing assignment involving the Bible.

Next, this controversy helped bring to the
surface a long simmering debate about
anti-Muslim prejudice that has lain dormant since
President Bush’s post-9-11 pronouncement
that “Islam is not the enemy.” Quite clearly,
there are many Americans who disagree
with President Bush on that point. This
anti-Muslim prejudice goes back to the
Middle Ages, but has become especially vir-
tent in the colonial encounters of the past
two centuries. It has much in common
with anti-Semitism and racism as a power-
ful form of bigotry, although it is much
more acceptable in public today.

Subsequent attacks on the Prophet
Muhammad by well-known Christian funda-
mentalists leaders indicate that this
entrenched bias will continue to be a major
topic in the American social
future. Even today, the Qur’an is not
amongst the fundamentalist modes of
thinking that is taught in schools, though
most Muslims represent “true” Islam,
but also applied (negative) fundamentalist interpre-
"table techniques to the text of the
Qur’an.

But the attack on the summer reading pro-
grame was actually launched by conservative
commentators on Rupert Murdoch’s Fox
News TV channel, demonstrating the
importance of the role of the news media in creat-
ing and sustaining stories about religious
controversy. There was a wide range, how-
ever, of media reporting on this incident.
Some journalists indulged in Muslim-bait-
ing tactics; the host of Fox’s O’Reilly Factor
compared the Qur’an to Hitler’s Mein
Kampf, which he also would have prohibit-

ed students from reading. As Sells has
pointed out in a valuable summary on his
webpage (www.haverford.edu/ relig/rel/UNC_ApproachingTheQur
er.htm), journalists for Time magazine and some
major newspapers trivialized the issue, and
certain conservative commentators blantly
and irresponsibly distorted the facts of the
situation. On the whole, however, I
found that most journalists recognized how
close the connection is between academic
freedom and freedom of the press.

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Some of our eighty-odd majors elect to write honors theses in order to graduate with honors. In the recent past, these topics have varied from “Environmental Ethics” to “Ethnography of Black Churches in Atlanta” to “The Aesthetics of Graveyards.”

We also have a large number of elegantly designed joint majors that bridge Religion with Anthropology, Classical Civilization, History, Philosophy, and Sociology.

**RSN:** Would you say more about the organization of your knowledge in your department? What role does it play, if any, in attracting undergraduate students to your program?

**Patton:** Here’s where I can feature our intellectual strengths more clearly. Methodologically, we are quite strong in two different areas: the textual study of religion and the ethnographic study of religion. Students who learn with us in a textually oriented manner tend to gain an appreciation of the richness and thickness of the word “literature,” and of how to teach.

**RSN:** What about religion departments in other institutions — how are you alike or different?

**Patton:** Unlike many departments who must make a case for the study of religion past or at their home university, the study of religion is somewhat of a growth industry at Emory. With the recently established Pew Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Religion and the Candler School of Theology, we are a department with a great deal of collaborator’s and partners within the university itself. The Graduate Division of Religion, the Ph.D.-granting body at Emory, is made up of members of the Department, Candler, as well as other departments in the university. The department has traditionally worked quite well with the Candler School of Theology, with our pastoral study of religion students who are interested in the study of religion at the university. But to their great credit, the Candler faculty members were quite insistent that they did not want to proceed without the Department of Religion. As a result, we could make a case in the great many and varied fields of study to add up to eight new lines in our Ph.D. programs focusing on religious practices. We are hoping many of these students will be focusing on non-Christian traditions such as Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism. The members of the Department of Religion now make up one-third of the entire Ph.D.-granting body, with a huge jump in emphasis on the teaching of world religions and non-Christian religious traditions.

**RSN:** How do you attract majors?

**Patton:** We regularly attend “majors’ fairs” at the Vocation at and Oxford College, a two-year, liberal arts partner college about forty minutes away. I think our excellent teaching and the accessibility of faculty also make a large difference. Many of our majors (numbering sixty to eighty in any given year) are very much geared toward preparation for professional life as doctors, lawyers, and businesspeople. But they tend to want that something “extra” that a straight preprofessional undergraduate major doesn’t give them; so they will double-major, or make their preprofessional preparation secondary to their religion major.

**RSN:** Do you see your department being in the near future?

**Patton:** I worry a great deal about the identity politics that plague so much of academic life today. The increasing move toward specializations in particular religions, makes the possibility of splitting and factionalism more likely. In our own department, we have many

**RSN:** What features of your department do you feel while studying at Yale? While at Yale, what were your areas of greatest interest and with whom did you study?

**Patton:** This is absolutely true: wet sparrows clustered in the plaster folders of the statue of St. Francis in front of the rectory, as they had when I was little and first noticed them there. I managed to convince the person who opened the door, who didn’t know me but remembered my family, to let me wander the church by myself, and I made my way behind the altar, down a long narrow corridor crowded with old Italian saints’ statues that no one can identify anymore, to an almost-secret little side chapel to St. Anthony. I spent a lot of time in this place where I was an altar boy in the church. The chapel then glowed smoky and dark from the scores of candles the old Italians in black dresses in front of the statue of St. Anthony burned for their memories; now there are electric candles. It’s a powerful experience to be able to walk around inside a space like this, to be able to touch in with the images and in to the sounds of people at prayer, to sit beside them, and to hear the noises of the street coming through the glass panes that was donated by long-gone Italian families in the neighborhood, so that the sun warms up memory. I ask more complicated and precise questions now, but when I think about your question “At what point did you decide to become a scholar of religion?”, invariably this chapel comes to mind.

Sydney Altshrodt was a kind, gentle, and generous man. He and Sister Eileen both returned to the other side of the Hudson River. There was one little Protestant church in my neighborhood that I would know that during these times, at least, their closed and dangerous world opened up to another one.

**RSN:** Describe the period of your doctoral study. What was it like and how did you manage to study while living at Yale? Was Yale at Yale, what were your areas of greatest interest and with whom did you study?

**Orsi:** I came back to Yale to study American religious history with Sydney Altshrodt. It always stuns me to remember how little I knew about “Altshrodt” when I got to graduate school, about the US on the other side of the Hudson River. There was one little Protestant church in my neighbor- borough but I never saw anyone go into it or come out of it. At Altshrodt’s funeral in 1984, his brother said something like, “When I think of America, I think of Sydney.” Altshrodt seemed uncannily to be painted white outside the convent door in their gated Bellevue neighborhood when they were a child inside so far below the street I would know that during these times, at least, their closed and dangerous world opened up to another one.

**RSN:** The period of your doctoral study. What was it like and how did you manage to study while living at Yale? Was Yale at Yale, what were your areas of greatest interest and with whom did you study?

**Orsi:** After college I traveled around in Europe and the Middle East on a Watson Fellowship studying Christian monastism, especially the history and practice of the monastic day, and the interplay between monastic life and the marketplace. I remember trying to move beyond that debate and the Gettier stuff, which is unusual, given the old fundamentals that I, as a young college prof., was trained at Union Seminary in New York.

I went to a Jesuit prep school in the Bronx, a community of books and intel- lectual environment — you give us boys, the headmaster told our parents (most of whom had not gone to high school them- selves), and we can’t think anyone knew quite what to expect. The Jesuits understood that minds were in bodies and souls were in the social world, with its realities of social class and distinction, achievement and failure, and learning this one way or another was also what education meant.

**RSN:** What did you study in college?

**Orsi:** These were the lovely days after the Second Vatican Council. My mother worked a secretary in Fordham’s School of Religious Education, and on the week- ends young priests and nuns, away from their superiors for the first time and living in little apartments in the Bronx and Manhattan, came to drink wine and eat my mother’s pasta and, as it happened, to fall in love with each other. Lots of post- Conciliar romances began in my parents’ living room. Memory gives me the time in one of great hopefulness and excite- ment: theology classes seemed to be about taking bigger and deeper breaths in the world. I went on to study theology at Trinity College in Hartford in a great reli- gion department where almost everyone had been trained at Union Seminary in New York in the days of Niebuhr and Tilloch. My teachers there — Frank Kirkpatrick, Edward Conbonnier, Susan Pomarantz, Richard Fenno, and John Gettier — taught me, it has slowly dawned on me as my own years discipline start accumulating, how to think and how to teach.

**RSN:** At what point did you decide you wanted to become a scholar of religion?

**Orsi:** I came back to Yale to study American religious history with Sydney Altshrodt. It always stuns me to remember how little I knew about “Altshrodt” when I got to graduate school, about the US on the other side of the Hudson River. There was one little Protestant church in my neighbor- borough but I never saw anyone go into it or come out of it. At Altshrodt’s funeral in 1984, his brother said something like, “When I think of America, I think of Sydney.” Altshrodt seemed uncannily to be...
The other major public forum for this controversy was the state of North Carolina, which for many years has had a love-hate relationship with the flagship campus of the state university in Chapel Hill. UNC-CH Chancellor James Moeser from the beginning provided solid and unflinching support for the Qur’an selection, despite receiving a flood of mail, including many complaints about the assignment. The university did blink a bit, however, in mid-July, clarifying that students who found the assignment “offensive” could avoid reading the book, but that they should write a one-page essay explaining why they could not do so. Those critics who wished to spare our freshman the shock of reading a non-Christian text evidently would have been surprised to learn that North Carolina requires the study of non-European religions in the junior high school social studies curriculum.

The lawsuit against UNC galvanized the faculty by its threat of outside control of the university. But when members of the UNC Board of Governors on August 9 proposed a resolution affirming the principles of academic freedom, the measure failed to pass, ostensibly for technical reasons. A few days later, the UNC Faculty Council resoundingly passed a motion in favor of academic freedom. Simultaneously, the North Carolina House of Representatives passed a budget including an amendment to deny funding to any UNC summer reading program assignment devoted to one particular religion, unless it includes “all known religions.” Legislators saw the Qur’an assignment as equivalent to support for Muslim terrorists. “I see this as insensitive, arrogant, and poor timing to allow students to read about our attackers,” said Representative Gene Arnold, a Republican from Nash County. The amendment ultimately disappeared in budget negotiations with the Senate.

Two federal courts dismissed the lawsuit against UNC, and the discussion sessions took place without a hitch on August 19. Belatedly, several days later, the UNC Board of Governors approved unanimously a resolution in favor of academic freedom. Faculty members, administrators, students, and staff at UNC supported the summer reading program enthusiastically. The 178 volunteer discussion leaders included the chancellor and provost, the chair of the Board of Trustees, Jewish and Christian chaplains of student religious organizations, librarians, graduate students, and faculty from many different departments and schools. In representing the university to the press, members of the Summer Reading Program Committee took a leading role, especially Chair Robert Kirkpatrick, a professor of English literature. I myself gave dozens of interviews. Chancellor Moeser appeared in countless venues, including NPR’s Morning Edition, ABC’s Nightline, plus Good Morning America. The university news staff worked heroically to manage the demand for interviews. A media consultant coached Provost Robert Shelton and me in the techniques of producing sound bites for television reporters. The experience was both exhilarating and exhausting.

Dozens of letters and e-mails from around the country and overseas addressed this controversy, with about every four out of five that I received being strongly in favor of UNC and the assignment. Critics included conservative Christians as well as secularized Muslims, who were equally outraged that the Qur’an should be read instead of refuted. Supporters of the assignment, from many different religious and non-religious backgrounds, praised UNC for advocating knowledge over ignorance during a time of panic.
MEMBERSHIP FORM

2003 Calendar Year

You may also establish your membership online at www.aarweb.org/membership

Name: ____________________________

If your surname is not the last word in your name, please circle it (e.g., Kim Jong-sung, Juana González).

Address: _____________________________________________________

City: ____________________________ State/Province: ____________________________

Postal Code: _____________________ Country: ____________________________

Check here if you want your home phone number excluded from the Membership Directory:

Signature: __________________________________________

If you are counting on attending. One airline computer programmer we spoke to described his job as "making sure no two people on the plane are paying the same price for a ticket!"

You keep talking about keeping costs down. You think the prices you charge are reasonable?

Actually, we do. At least we do if we take into account that often extravagant charges AAR incurs for space, equipment, and services; our administrative costs; and the prices charged by comparable societies. But we are well aware that the Annual Meeting is an expensive venture. We want to do everything we can to keep costs down and to urge colleges and universities to support their faculties' participation in their scholarly guilds. If you have ideas about how we can be more effective in doing this, please be in touch.

Can anything be done to get cheaper air fares?

Associations like AAR used to be able to negotiate moderate price breaks (5-10 percent off published lowest fares) with the airlines. In recent years, however, airlines are losing money new never before and are not offering discounts as regularly as they used to do. It is generally a good idea to purchase your ticket well in advance. Most airlines offer reduced rates in late August when sales are down. Some consumer advisors suggest waiting until the last minute to seek deeply discounted fares, but this is a risky strategy, especially if you are counting on attending. One airline computer programmer we spoke to described his job as "making sure no two people on the plane are paying the same price for a ticket!"

Can the meeting be in smaller, cheaper cities?

Not at its current size. Very few cities in North America can host the concurrent meetings of the AAR and SBL. Indeed, one of the arguments some members make against the concurrent meetings is that an AAR-only meeting would open up many new venues.

Why haven't we met in New York City in recent memory?

We have approached New York City several times to host our event, but we haven't been able to negotiate decent hotel rates. The way the convention industry works, our rate and reliability histories follow us from year to year. Prospective cities and properties always check this. Thus we cannot "make an exception" one year to go to a significantly costlier venue. Should we do so, we will lose our bargaining power.

But we are well aware that the Annual Meeting contracts are typically signed at least five years in advance, and since our membership, attendance, and program units tend to grow from year to year, we must project our needs for space. What is more, we cannot determine precisely the precise space needs for our program from year to year, and sites vary greatly in the number, size, and configuration of their break-out spaces. The last time we were in Chicago, for example, our meeting did not satisfy legal fire code regulations for maximum room occupancy. We cannot tolerate the sort of situation that puts our members' safety at risk.

We were so spread out in Toronto! Why can we do to prevent this?

There are a number of reasons for this, but again space and cost are the most important. Since we place the meeting well in advance, the space needs of the membership may grow and change. Some close-by hotels may refuse to discount their rates for our members or may make very few rooms available at the rates we need. As noted above, hotel meeting space is increasingly expensive than convention center meeting space, and we maximize the use of less expensive space to keep registration costs down.

Why can't the whole meeting be in one place, the way it use to be?

There are few facilities that can hold our attendees, meeting space, and exhibits under one roof. In the US, we would be limited to the Opryland Hotel in Nashville. Been there, done that. Enough said!

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We have approached New York City several times to host our event, but we haven't been able to negotiate decent hotel rates. The way the convention industry works, our rate and reliability histories follow us from year to year. Prospective cities and properties always check this. Thus we cannot "make an exception" one year to go to a significantly costlier venue. Should we do so, we will lose our bargaining power.

Can anything be done to get cheaper air fares?

Associations like AAR used to be able to negotiate moderate price breaks (5-10 percent off published lowest fares) with the airlines. In recent years, however, airlines are losing money new never before and are not offering discounts as regularly as they used to do. It is generally a good idea to purchase your ticket well in advance. Most airlines offer reduced rates in late August when sales are down. Some consumer advisors suggest waiting until the last minute to seek deeply discounted fares, but this is a risky strategy, especially if you are counting on attending. One airline computer programmer we spoke to described his job as "making sure no two people on the plane are paying the same price for a ticket!"

You keep talking about keeping costs down. You think the prices you charge are reasonable?

Actually, we do. At least we do if we take into account that often extravagant charges AAR incurs for space, equipment, and services; our administrative costs; and the prices charged by comparable societies. But we are well aware that the Annual Meeting is an expensive venture. We want to do everything we can to keep costs down and to urge colleges and universities to support their faculties' participation in their scholarly guilds. If you have ideas about how we can be more effective in doing this, please be in touch.

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My favorite comment came from Malaysian human rights activist Chandra Muzaffar: "There was a report in yesterday's newspaper in Kuala Lumpur about the controversy, with a picture of you. UNCS's intellectual integrity and moral courage are a beacon of hope for the academic community, worldwide. Irrational fear, prejudice, and suspicion will remain the enemies of justice, truth, and democracy for a long while to come. Here in Malaysia we have to combat another type of irrationality — the irrationality of those who subscribe to a dogmatic approach to Islam. Their thinking is as pernicious as that of individuals who fear any contact with the religion."

This summer reading program was not a revolution. The percentage of graduation by students — about 65 percent — was about the same as last year, and the discussion sessions varied considerably in quality. But a couple of things were achieved in this process. First, the university community made a strong affirmation of academic freedom in the face of attempts by outside religious and political forces to control what books are read. Second, the university declared by this example that it is time to make the study of Islam part of liberal arts education. Both these conclusions should be kept in mind as we face the challenges ahead of us.

**KINNARD** from p.12
Carson, 1999), focuses on the intimate relationship in medieval Buddhism between philosophical discourse and sculptural representations. In particular, I look at the dynamism and tension between the doctrinal (textual) articulation of visual praxis and the artistic and ritual practice “on the ground,” and I explicitly use the work of Pierre Bourdieu to inform this analysis. I am currently working on a book entitled Shared Spaces and Blurred Identities: The Intentions of Buddhist and Hindu India that explores our typical understandings of the monastic construction and perpetuation of religious identity need to be rethought and conceived of as much more messy and fluid than the simple and singular labels can convey.

To that end, I want to encourage my colleagues across the field and subfields of religious studies to consider the Cultural Criticism series as a potential home for their scholarship. I am personally interested in several contemporary issues that I would be very happy to see addressed in manuscripts and proposals: the ideology and practice of Christian rock music; new religious movements; issues of conversion and syncretism; religion and the popular media (especially television and film); ritual practice and belief; and religion and political structures. This represents my own personal wish list, not an exclusive or complete agenda by any means. More generally, though, it is those works that speak across traditional disciplinary lines that most interest and excite me — that study put into a sophisticated and critical methodology; comparative studies that cut across historical boundaries; studies that emphasize the role and place of material culture, and the cross-historical studies that put the contemporary religious world into a historical frame.

I welcome submissions of prospectuses or sample work. I can be reached via e-mail at kjkinnard@um.edu, or by phone at 1-757-221-2174 (fax: 1-757-221-2169), or by surface mail at the Department of Religion, P.O. Box 8795, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795, USA.

**LYNDES** from p.14
interview at the Annual Meeting, I decided to take advantage of this opportunity. I had to identify up to three areas of teaching proficiency by selecting appropriate employment classification codes. As a result of this exercise, I could then carefully select my qualifications to fit succinctly on two pages and to think strategically about how I want to market myself. I then found it much easier to update my curriculum vitae with focused teaching goals in mind. I also discovered that it was helpful to read how various institutions list employment opportunities in Openings. Next year, based on the wording of the advertisements, I will have a better idea of how to tailor my application packet toward those jobs where there is a potential fit between my qualifications and a possible employer.

After going through the process of applying for a job and registering with EIS, I feel that I am in a more solid position as I approach graduation. These activities were incentive me to me to update and improve my curriculum vitae; write a cover letter, and assemble possible application materials so that, should a job opportunity present itself, I will be more prepared.

**PATTON** from p.15
faculty who also serve as heads of many smaller, interdisciplinary programs such as Asian Studies, Jewish Studies, and Violence Studies. This means that their loyalties are inevitably divided at times. The importance of person and relevance for comparative work, or attention to the larger topic of religion, with all of its problematic definitions, tends to get lost. I recently gave a lecture at a state university that was thinking about starting a religion department, and someone there suggested that it is a bad idea to start smaller committees on the study of each religious tradition instead. I said that we had something closely related at Emory in the Department of Religion itself, and it took a great deal of effort and time to maintain the “happy” part of the “happy diversity.” I spend a lot of time talking with folks in the academic community, worldwide.

In particular, I use the work of Pierre Bourdieau to inform this analysis. I am currently working on a book entitled Shared Spaces and Blurred Identities: The Intentions of Buddhist and Hindu India that explores the relationship between Hinduism and Buddhism as it is played out at several shared pilgrimage places in India. It argues that our typical understandings of the monastic construction and perpetuation of religious identity need to be rethought and conceived of as much more messy and fluid than the simple and singular labels can convey.

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**RSN**: What advice would you give to faculty members as they deal with a chair?
**Patton**: I would tell each faculty member to treat the chair as a human being and a fellow scholar and teacher, rather than just someone in a “power-position.” That means for a mature collegial relationship. I would also have them read the recent Chronicle of Higher Education article on the demands on a chair these days, and how impossible the job can become at times. We share a lot of power within the department with our committee structures — whether a personnel committee, a curriculum committee, an intellectual life committee, and a development committee. That takes off some of the load, so that the chair can focus on advocating on behalf of faculty members, garnering resources for the department, and so on.

**RSN**: What gives you the greatest satisfaction as a chair?
**Patton**: I really enjoy the one-on-one work — talking to individual faculty members about their publication plans, their projects, their hopes, their intellectual dreams, and the courage it will take to fulfill them. I also like building intellectual community, and have started discussion groups and study groups here in the department that have taken on a life of their own. We have a “Religion and Conflict” initiative that has sponsored conferences and inspired faculty to go out and redesign their teaching and research, and that’s tremendously exciting to watch. Finally, I love having the opportunity to make things a little bit fairer — getting that salary raise for the person who simply didn’t know how to ask; getting the well-deserved teaching award for the person who’s been slogging in the trenches for decades without much recognition; giving more dignity and respect to our adjunct faculty; helping senior faculty to retire with a sense of accomplishment and junior faculty to come on board with a sense of confidence and excitement. There’s nothing like being able to change academic culture, just a tiny bit, so that the workplace can reflect a better sense of the way one would like the world to be.

The Committee on Teaching and Learning seeks nominations for the 2004 AAR Award for Excellence in Teaching. Nominations of winners of campus awards, or any other awards, are encouraged. Procedures for the nomination process are outlined on the AAR website at www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching.asp.

**CALL FOR PARTICIPATION**

**EXPERIENCED MEMBERS OF SEARCH COMMITTEES**

Employment Information Services of the AAR and SBL seeks volunteers at the associate professor or professor rank, to serve as CV consultants during the Annual Meetings in Toronto. Volunteers will review CVs of registered candidates at the EIS Center and provide them with suggestions for changes based on their experience as a member of a job search committee. Consultations will be approximately 20 minutes and take place in person. Volunteers are asked to commit to at least two hours over the course of the Annual Meetings.

To volunteer, or for more information, contact Carey J. Gifford, Director of Academic Relations at cgifford@aarweb.org or 1-404-727-2270.

**KINNARD** from p.12
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Department and programs enrolled in the Academic Relations Program receive resources for strengthening the study of religion. These include:

**Program Advisory Services**
- Annotated roster of qualified reviewers
- *Guide for Reviewing Programs in Religion and Theology*

**Leadership Education**
- Chairs Annual Meeting Workshop
- Chairs Summer Workshop

**Annual Meeting**
- Priority access to the headquarters hotel

**Information & Data Resources**
- Census respondent reports
- Basic data research service with access to additional data research
- Directory of Programs

**EIS Center Services**
- Discounted fees
- Special Annual Meeting registration for non-religion faculty interviewers

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**Enrollment**

Enrollment fees are based on the size of faculty, measured as full-time equivalents. Initial enrollment ends June 30, 2003.

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<th>FTE Faculty</th>
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<td>13 or more</td>
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**To Enroll**

Name and Title of Program Head: _______________________________________________________

Department Name: ______________________________________________________________________

Institution: __________________________________________________________________________

Serving as Chair Since: ______________________ Number of Faculty (FTE) in Department: __________

My program participated in the Census of Religion and Theology Programs (circle one): Yes No

Please provide the following information if the program head is not a current AAR member. (You may check your membership information on the AAR Members-Only Menu.)

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For more information, contact
Carey J. Gifford,
AAR Director of Academic Relations
at cgifford@aarweb.org, or
by phone at 1-404-727-2270.

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Please visit our website at

(We strive for accuracy in our records. Please notify the AAR office of any incorrect listings.)