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Spotlight on Teaching
Teaching with Site Visits
2004 AAR Member Calendar

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

October
Spotlight on Teaching Fall 2004 issue.

October 1–31. AAR officer election period. Candidate profiles will be published in RSN.


October 15. Excellence in Teaching Award nominations due. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/publications/awards.asp.

October 16. Third and final deadline for Annual Meeting registration fees go into effect.

October 21. EIS preregistration closes.

November
November 1. Research grant awards announced.

November 18. Executive Committee meeting, San Antonio, TX.

November 19. Board of Directors meeting, San Antonio, TX.

November 19. Chairs Workshop at the Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX. Free for departments enrolled in the Academic Relations Program. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/department/acadrel.asp.

November 20–23. Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX. Held concurrently with the Society of Biblical Literature, comprises some 8,500 registrants, 200 publishers, and 100 hiring departments.

November 22. Annual Business Meeting. See the Annual Meeting Program Book for time and place.

December

December 2. New program unit proposals due.

December 10–11. Program Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.


And keep in mind throughout the year...

Regional organizations have various deadlines throughout the year for their Calls for Papers. See www.aarweb.org/regional/awards.asp.

In the Field, News of events and opportunities for scholars of religion. In the Field is a members-only online publication that accepts brief announcements, including calls for papers, grant news, conference announcements, and other opportunities appropriate for scholars of religion. Submit text online at www.aarweb.org/publications/inthefield.submit.asp.

Openings: Employment Opportunities for Scholars of Religion. Openings is a members-only online publication listing job announcements in areas of interest to members; issues are viewable online from the first through the last day of each month. Submit announcements online, and review policies and pricing, at www.aarweb.org/openings/submit.asp.

December 2004 Issue

Temporary position: Associate Director of Religious Education in the Academy of Religion in January, May, March, and October. See www.aarweb.org/openings/submit.asp for information.

Religious Studies News—AAR Edition is a members-only online publication that is published quarterly by the American Academy of Religion, and is available online from the first through the last day of each month. Submit announcements online, and review policies and pricing, at www.aarweb.org/openings/submit.asp.

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Religious Studies News—AAR Edition is the newspaper of record for the field, especially designed to serve the professional needs of persons involved in teaching and scholarship in religion (broadly construed to include religious studies, theology, and sacred texts). Published quarterly by the American Academy of Religion, RSN is received by some 10,000 scholars, by departments enrolled in the Academic Relations Program, and by libraries at colleges and universities across North America and abroad. Religious Studies News—AAR Edition communicates the important events of the field and related areas. It provides a forum for members and others to examine critical issues in education, pedagogy (especially through the biannual Spotlight on Teaching), research, publishing, and the public understanding of religion. It also publishes news about the services and programs of the AAR and other organizations, including employment services and registration information for the AAR Annual Meeting.

For writing and advertising guidelines, please see www.aarweb.org/publications/enas.asp.
Annual Meeting Countdown!

September
Mailing of the Annual Meeting badge materials to all preregistered attendees began in mid-September. Materials include your name badge and drink ticket. Put these in a safe place for use in November. Contact Conferon Registration & Housing at sendreg@aarweb.com if you did not receive your materials.

October
Third-tier (“regular”) registration rates go into effect on October 16, so register early to get the best rate!

November
November 8 is the pre-Annual Meeting registration deadline. After this date must take place onsite at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio. No badge mailings will occur after this date.

November 20–23 is the Annual Meeting in San Antonio. Check www.aarweb.org/annualmeeting for up-to-date information about the meeting.

Checklist for when you arrive at the Annual Meeting:

• If you received your name badge by mail, all you need to do is swing by the Registration area in the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center to pick up a name badge holder. Then you are ready to attend sessions and visit the Exhibit Hall.

• If you did not receive your badge materials or if you need a copy for the Annual Meeting, visit the AAR & SBL Meeting Registration counter.

• Pick up a copy of the Annual Meetings A-Z Glance. This booklet shows the updated program and locations of all sessions. Updates or changes will be marked by gray shading. This is an invaluable addition to your Program Book!

• Interested in a certain session’s topic? Want to learn more before heading to the session? Check out the Book of Abstracts, located in the bins near registration, for more information.

• Pick up your tote bag! Tote bag tickets were mailed with the name badge materials. Tote bags are available while supplies last.

• Visit the Find-a-Friend boards in the Registration area to find whether your colleagues are attending.

• Swing by the AAR Member Services desk if you have any other questions.

• Enjoy the meeting!

Featured Speakers at the Annual Meeting

The AAR is proud to present a strong program of speakers during this year’s Annual Meeting

TEXTexts, Gestures, Power: Orientation to Radical Excavation (A20–21)
Saturday, 9:30 AM–1:00 PM
Vincent L. Wimbush, Claremont Graduate University

Vincent L. Wimbush is professor of religion and director of the recently established Institute for Signifying Scriptures (ISS) at Claremont Graduate University. (See the related article on page 15.) His teaching and research interests include the New Testament and Early Christianity as ancient and modern literary-rhetorical-ideological formations; the ideologies and politics of ancient and modern asceticisms and renunciations; and the practices and politics involving the making and engagement of “scriptures.” For eight years Wimbush directed the New York City-based African Americans and Bible Research Project. In Claremont he has expanded upon this project with the establishment of the ISS, whose agenda is to facilitate research into “scripturalizing” across communities worldwide, with focus upon historically dominated peoples. Recent publications include: The Bible and African Americans: A Brief History (2003), editor, with the assistance of Rosamond Redman; Africans Americans and the Bible: Sacred Texts and Social Texts (2001), co-editor with Richard Valantasis; and Anarchism (1995, 2003).

Islam in the West: The North American Context (A21–128)
Sunday, 1:15 PM–4:15 PM
Tariq Ramadan, University of Notre Dame

Tariq Ramadan lives in Geneva, Switzerland, where he was born. He studied as imam in Cairo and, back in Switzerland, took an undergraduate degree in French literature and two doctorates, in Islamic studies and in the philosophical thought of Friedrich Nietzsche. He teaches at the University of Geneva and the University of Fribourg, and is the Luce Professor of Religion, Conflict, and Peace-building at the University of Notre Dame this year. Since 1993 he has dedicated himself with growing intensity to teaching in Switzerland, France, and Belgium, with frequent engagements in the United States. He is the author of over a dozen books; one, entitled To Be a European Muslim, published in 1999, has been translated into 14 languages. He is listened to as an expert at the European Parliament.

A God of Incredible Surprises (A22–127)
Monday, 7:15 PM–8:15 PM
Virgilio Elizondo, University of Notre Dame

Farther Virgilio Elizondo, an Mexican-American theologian from San Antonio, Texas, has had a worldwide impact upon Hispanic religion through his writings, lectures, and internationally televised bilingual worship. As rector of his city’s San Fernando Cathedral for over 12 years, Elizondo became a leader in bringing Mexican religious customs and traditions into the Catholic service. Still, Elizondo struggled with the church’s paternal attitude toward Mexican Americans and vowed to go beyond simply elevating cultural traditions in church services. His most influential and widely accepted book to date, The Future of the Mexican — Life Where Cultures Meet (2000), discusses the outcome of the blend of Mexican, Spanish, indigenous, and Anglo cultures in the U.S. and its effect upon the Catholic Church. As a result of his work, the Mexican American Cultural Center in San Antonio, he has built a model for communitarian religious education that extends worldwide. In 1997, Elizondo was honored with the highest honor a Catholic can receive in the United States, Notre Dame’s Laetare Medal, becoming the first Latino given this honor. As the author of 12 books and the editor of many others, Elizondo has introduced new and creative ways to teach Americans the concepts of peace, acceptance, and faith through art and the teachings of the Bible.

Latina/o Experiences and Lives in Literature and Theology: A Reading by Sandra Cisneros (A20–100)
Saturday, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM

Latina women’s lives and experiences are central to the work of Latina theologians and writers of novels and short stories. In this panel, we will first hear a reading by renowned novelist Sandra Cisneros. She will then engage Latinas who teach theology, ethics, literature, and biblical studies in a conversation about the use of Latina/o experience in the work and the work of Latina/o theologians. Latina culture is alive in the experiences of its women. Sharing these experiences is a perfect vehicle for teaching the broader society Latina values and way of life.

Foucault Consultation
Foucault in Contemporary Theological and Religious Studies (A20–73)
Saturday, November 20, 1:00 PM–3:30 PM

Sacred Space in Contemporary Asia Consultation

What It Means to Say That God Is Relational (A21–28)
Sunday, November 21, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM

Screening and Panel Discussion of the Documentary Film Opening the Gates to Heaven: A Pilgrimage to Osu-ama by Barbara Ambros (A22–21)
Monday, November 22, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM

Islamic Mysticism Group
Discourses of Early Sufism (A20–109)
Saturday, November 20, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM

In Theory and in Practice: Sufi Thinkers on the Integration of Ontology and Ethics (A22–65)
(co-sponsored with the Mysticism Group)
Monday, November 22, 1:00 PM–3:30 PM

Transformations of Islamic Mystical Traditions (A22–118)
Monday, November 22, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM

Learning and Teaching in the Abrahamic Traditions (A21–76)
Sunday, November 21, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM

SBL Meeting Registration counter.
Swing by the AAR Member Services desk if you have any other questions.
Enjoy the meeting!

Annual Meeting

ANNUAL MEETING NEWS

October 2004 AAR Review 3
A Message from the AAR Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee is pleased to place four excellent names on the ballot this year: two for Vice President and two for Secretary. We are grateful to each of them for their willingness to serve the Academy in this way.

Once again, AAR members will be able to vote by electronic ballot. A paper ballot will be mailed to members whose e-mail addresses are not on file. Please know that we guarantee the privacy of your vote.

We expect a large number of our members to vote in this election. Please be among them.

Peter J. Paris, Chair
Nominations Committee

Call for Nominations

The Nominations Committee will continue its practice of consultations during the Annual Meeting in San Antonio to begin the process for selecting nominees for President to take office in November 2005. The committee takes seriously all recommendations by AAR members.

The following characteristics regularly surface in discussions of candidates for vice president:

(a) Scholarship: "represents the mind of the Academy;" "international repute," "breadth of knowledge of the field;" "widely known."
(b) Service to the Academy: "serves the Academy broadly acknowledged." "gives papers regularly;" "leads sections;" "chairs committees;" "supports regional work.
(c) General: "electable," "one of the average member of the Academy will look upon with respect," "one whose scholarship and manner is inclusive rather than narrow, sectarian, and/or exclusive."

Please send your recommendations of persons the committee should consider to the AAR Executive Office marked "Recommendations for Nominations Committee."

How to Vote

All members of the Academy are entitled to vote for all officers. The elected candidates will take office at the end of the 2004 Annual Meeting. Please vote online at aarvote.org. Paper ballots are sent only to those without e-mail addresses on file or by special request (please call 404-727-3049). Vote by November 1, 2004, to exercise this important membership right.

Candidates for Vice President

Francis X. Clooney

Francis X. Clooney, SJ, received his PhD from Weston Jesuit School of Theology (1979) and his PhD from the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago (1984). He is Professor of Comparative Theology at Boston College, where he has been a member of the faculty since 1984. He was the first President of the Society for Hindu-Christian Studies, and has just completed a three-year term as Academic Director of the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies. His publica-
tions include in the fields of classical Hindu traditions, the Hindup Christian encounter, and comparative theology, and include Theology after Vedanta (1993), Hindu God, Christian God (2001), and Divine Mother, Blessed Mother: Hindu Goddesses and the Virgin Mary (2004). He joined the AAR in 1985, and is currently Chair of the Publications Committee and consequently a member of the Board. He is also a member of the JAAR Editorial Board.

Statement on the AAR

T ITS BEST, the American Academy of Religion has always been shaped by the cultures of its members, as we have endeavored to artic-
ulate and refine disciplinary ways to under-
study the complex, and to engage the fluid images, and deeds of religious people ancient and modern. As North American life becomes more richly complex and multicultural, the AAR itself has been diversifying, and today is more global than ever before. Our postmod-
ern age calls into question every hegemony and elite theorization of religion, and there is no easy consensus as to how religious are to be studied and interpreted; we therefore also keep multiplying approaches, out of necessity and not simply academic curiosity. By strategies of teaching, mentoring, research and publication, deliberations in AAR sec-
tions and groups, and in the voting of members on choices of themes and panel participants each year, AAR members keep rehashing the schol-
ary della of religious and religious. We also keep bringing this study back into dialogue with broader religious discourses where cor-
relate notions of faith, commitment, moral, and practice still command attention. The AAR process in these multiple particulari-
ties, as further religious possibilities are noted from within the discipline, and from dif-

erent faith traditions are increasingly heard and recognized as the subjects, as well as objects, of study.

For another reason, too, the AAR is in a time of change. The recent decision to meet separately from the Society of Biblical Literature is one I, a current Board member, support as a substantively good one even if, as a Board member, I agree with those con-
vinced that the deliberations should have been more democratic from start to finish. For now, the matter is settled, and the deci-
don free from the culture of academic discipline that the academic study of the Bible holds a position of privilege with respect to the wider scholar-
ly deliberations of the AAR. This new sit-
tation is more a beginning than an end, for it will engender new ways of studying the Bible, and in correlation Jewish and Christian traditions, in conversation with other sacred texts and religious traditions of the world. As a Roman Catholic who takes seriously the categories of revelation, truth, and tradition, I believe that the newly charted direction of the AAR should enhance rather than hinder our appreciation of deep edges of commit-
tments, including Jewish and Christian iden-
tities rooted in the biblical heritage.

The current pluralization of possibilities would be overwhelming the AAR not committed, by its history and our recurrent choices, to the professional study of religion instantiated by a rich set of historical, cultur-
aly, linguistic, and hermeneutical disciplines. Religions and theologies do, of course, defor-

tish apart from the AAR. My own career-long study of some Hindu traditions (Mimamsa ritual theory, Vedanta exegeis and theology, certain Gatha texts, Tantric and Vedic mys-
tionalism), and of the historical and contem-
porary implications of the study of India for Christian considerations, would surely have been possible even if I not a member of the AAR. But I also know that my research would have been cramped, diminished in accuracy, imagination, and fruitfulness, had I not been engaged in what is now a 20-year conversation with AAR colleagues on how to study religious traditions in ways that keep

Statement on the AAR

IT IS NO SECRET that members of our profession are interested in religion for different reasons. We do not define or delimit our subject matter in the same way. Accordingly, we do not all seek the same kinds of knowledge and understanding, employ the same methodological tools, or judge the effects of our scholarship and teaching from the same point of view. We are a contentious lot, and we need to work hard at keeping a conversation going that includes the full range of voices in the discipline.

The AAR is a framework we use for commu-

nicating with one another and acting on whatever common concerns we manage to identify. The organization has grown so big that many of us feel alienated from it. Bureaucratic arrangements are not suitable to the scholarly world we serve. But there is a need to expand the opportunities for presenting papers at our meetings. But the most impor-
tant question to ask about the Annual

Meeting is whether the process of job place-

ment can be more humane than it now is for the graduate students entering the market for the first time. How, and under what circumstances, do we intend to conduct these interviews? We have made our hiring procedures much fairer than they used to be, but there is no reason the experience has to be dehumanizing.

Jeffrey Stout

The Vice President serves on the Executive and Program Committees, as well as on the Board of Directors. He will be in line to be confirmed president-elect in 2005 and presi-
dent in 2006. During his tenure, the Vice

President will have the opportunity to affect AAR policy in powerful ways, in particular, during the presidential year, the incumbent makes all appointments of members to openings on committees.

Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for recording and verifying the official records of the AAR. He is also ex-officio a member of the Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee.

The Secretary serves a three-year term and is eligible for reelection to one additional three-year term. ♦

See CLOONEY p.5

See STOUT p.5
The American Academy of Religion is the premier professional organization for religious studies scholars. As such, its importance is crucial in providing a meeting place for the exchange and sharing of scholarly research and the forging of professional associations and alliances for its members. The AAR is also about something else, too, thanks to the success of these research-oriented tasks. As such, the AAR is instrumental in building a scholarly community which extends well beyond the time frame of the annual AAR national and regional meetings, and in my case, beyond national borders, as well. As a Canadian, my perspective is informed by the significance that the organization has played in my professional life and development as an international member. Attendance and participation in annual national meetings is a crucial part of my professional life, allowing me to interact with scholars from not only across North America but internationally as well. The continued development of the AAR to include diverse scholarly perspectives on the study of religion from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds is an important task, as I see it. It is one for which my experience, thus far, has prepared me.

Participating in the AAR through making scholarly presentations of my work has enabled me to receive crucial feedback from colleagues with special interests. Reflecting my diverse research interests, I have presented papers on panels in several areas: black theology in the history of North America, and teaching and learning. As well, attendance at other sections and groups in areas in which I do not conduct specialized research has enabled me to practice a kind of scholarly eclecticism which I have found to be particularly distinctive and nurturing of my scholarly development.

I have also participated in leadership roles in the AAR. At the regional level, I served as a member of the Eastern International Steering Committee from 2000–2002. I have served on the steering committee of the Black Theology Group since 2002 and since 2003 on the Religion and Social Science Section. As well, since 2003, I have served as a member of the Executive Committee of the Black Religious Scholars Group (BRSG) of the AAR. Each year since 1997, in an effort to bring the black church, community, and scholars of black religion into conversation, the BRSG has organized a pre-annual conference consultation hosted at a local black church in the history of the AAR meeting, which brings together AAR scholars of black religion with community activists and church members. I look forward to the opportunity to contribute to the growth and development of the national AAR organization through an elected office.

Just as we need to take proper care of our newest members, we need to recognize the significance of the contribution made by the generation now reaching retirement age. The field as we know it was largely created by that generation. We owe it to them an obligation to record the history of that generation. The AAR has an obligation to the growth and development of the discipline.

One final point. Bureaucracies tend by nature to insulate themselves from challenge. It is therefore always appropriate to ask whether the Board of Directors and the permanent staff of a professional organization are sufficiently sensitive to the concerns of the rank and file. When major decisions are to be made, members ought to be properly informed and consulted. The Board needs to conduct its deliberations on important issues against the background of an open debate involving all members who wish to be heard. The tone set by the leadership should be completely free of intimidation.

S AAR MEMBERS anticipate their first stand-alone meeting in 2008, they will have opportunities to consider the future direction of AAR meetings. I believe AAR should continue to encourage diverse and shared intellectual conversation among its members. I believe I can bring my first Annual Meeting in San Francisco in 1992 and the excitement and energy of choosing among the numerous sessions. The sessions I attended were lively and powerful for someone new to the field. My own development as a scholar is due in no small part to my participation in these important sessions with various groups, including the Women and Religion Section, Roman Catholic Studies Section, Religion, Medicine, and Healing Consultation, and Law, Religion, and Culture Consultation. Joint sessions such as these offer the benefits of conversations across disciplines, as well as deeper understanding of specific traditions. Our separation into a smaller annual meeting will not only afford members the opportunity to expand existing units, but also to expand in new areas of study and to consider new initiatives for the Annual Meeting. AAR members face the challenges of interpreting and expounding on the complexities of a global society that is unavoidably drawn into religious issues that affect everyone’s social, political, and economic well-being. Innovation and shared conversations are more important than ever.

I believe the separation of AAR and SBL will be a great loss to many of us who have shared research and camaraderie with SBL members. AAR members have benefited from the challenge of finding ways to continue to benefit from intellectual conversations with scholars in SBL. Special invitations or special sections, as suggested by the AAR Board (see “FAQ: AAR Board Makes Historic Decision” on the AAR Web site), can provide a forum for shared scholarship with SBL members. However, I believe it is important that we continue to envision alternative ways to maintain a working relationship with members of SBL. Many of us have benefited from the theories that have developed out of feminist and indigenous concerns in SBL. Although some of our colleagues have separated the two meetings, shared interests continue to inform scholarship in religious studies and theology.

I would like to see AAR establish a more effective role in the development of the field of religious studies within institutions of higher education. By this I mean more involvement in the development of standards for teaching and scholarship that reflect the diversity of the field, including those in traditional areas and those who are exploring new and innovative methods. Our membership consists of a significant number of graduate students and junior faculty as well as senior scholars, all of whom can benefit from AAR’s advocacy of diversity and innovation.

The post-9/11 era, AAR is an invaluable academic society whose membership is immersed in scholarship that enhances understanding of and interaction with diverse cultures and religious groups around the world. I believe that AAR can be an effective institution in our search to understand the many conflicts that are having a tremendous impact on our global society. AAR is and can continue to be an effective conduit for shared conversations within and outside the field of religious studies. 
Being a Chair in Today’s Consumer Culture: Navigating in the Knowledge Factory

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. The discussion leaders are experienced chairs. The workshop is formatted as a mix of 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 interested in attending this workshop. Chairs may want to bring a team of faculty or send a designated faculty person to the workshop.

Further information on the workshop can be found at: www.aarweb.org/department/workshops/2004/SanAntonio and in the Annual Meeting Program Book, page 27.

Our panelists include:
• Carol S. Anderson, Kalamazoo College
• Steve Friesen, University of Missouri, Columbia
• William K. Mahony, Davidson College
• Robert C. Neville, Boston University
• Elizabeth A. Say, California State University, Northridge
• Gerald S. Vigna, Averna College

Chairs from departments enrolled in the Academic Relations Program receive a complimentary registration. For information on enrolling your department, see: www.aarweb.org/department.

We look forward to seeing you in San Antonio!

The Academic Relations Task Force: Warren G. Friahs, Chair, Fred Glennon, Kathryn Kleinhans, Laurie L. Paton, Elizabeth A. Say, and Terrence W. Tilley

—

To Register

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

Name:

Department:

Institution:

Serving as Chair since:

Number of faculty in department:

Fax:

E-mail:

Surface Mailing Address:

Registration is limited to the first 75 participants.

Send your registration form and payment of $75.00 *** before October 31, 2004 ($100.00 on site).

Payment Information

Checks (payable to “AAR Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop”)

Credit Card (Check one):

Visa  Mastercard  American Express  Discover

Credit Card Number

Expiration Date (MM/YY)

Cardholder Signature

Name on Card (Please Print)

For more information, contact Carey J. Gifford, Director of Academic Relations, at cgifford@aarweb.org, or by phone at 404-727-7270.

*** Chairs from departments enrolled in the Academic Relations Program receive a complimentary registration. For information on enrolling your department, see www.aarweb.org/department.

Subscribe to chairs@aarweb.org, the listserv for leaders in the field, for updates to the workshop program and other news for chairs. For the most up-to-date information on the workshop, see www.aarweb.org/department/workshops.
Latin American Scholarship
An Interview with Sylvia Marcos, Claremont Graduate University

Sylvia Marcos researches and writes on gender issues in ancient and contemporary Mexico. She has been awarded the H.W. Luie Visiting Professorship at Union Theological Seminary, New York. Currently she is Visiting Professor of Mesoamerican Religions and Gender in the School of Religion at Claremont Graduate University. Her academic appointments have included teaching undergraduate-level courses in psychology and sociology of religion at Harvard University. She is a member of the editorial board of Religion, educational advisor for Conference: International Review of Theology, and international editor for Gender and Society. She has served on the International Commission of the American Association of Religion and on the board of the Religious Consultation on Population, Reproductive Health, and Ethics. She is Secretary for International Affairs of the Permanent Board of Directors for the Asociación Latinoamericana para el Estudio de las Religiones (ALER).

In Mexico, Marca is a research associate in Religion and Society with the Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia (ENAH). She is also a founding member of the Permanent Seminar on Gender and Anthropology with the Institute for Anthropological Research at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). As a member of the permanent seminar, she is a member of the organizing seminar on Reproductive Health and Society. Previous academic positions include professor of social and cultural psychology at the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Centro de Derechos Humanos Don Sergio for indigenous woman rights.

RSN: Tell us something about the Latin American Association for the Study of Religion (ALER).

Marcos: The Asociacion Latinoamericana

The Study of Religion in Latin America Today
Nelson Maldonado-Torres, University of California, Berkeley

DURING JULY 5–9, 2004, more than 300 scholars from 18 different countries participated in the X Congress of Religion and Ethnicity in San Cristóbal de las Casas, México. The Congress of Religion and Ethnicity is organized by the Latin American Association for the Study of Religion (ALER, in Spanish), founded in 1987. During approximately the same dates, there was an encounter on intercultural feminist theology in Mexico City. Participants included Latin American and Latin American theologians from the United States. It was organized by the Center for the Study of Latino/a Catholicism at the University of San Diego, and Missio Institute in Aachen, Germany. In the X Congress of Religion and Ethnicity, there were announcements of other conferences and meetings dedicated to the scholarly study of religion in the following months. And of course, many were already waiting for the meeting of the Association of Social Scientists of Religion in South America, which meets as an association approximately every two years, just like ALER, in order to promote cooperation and collegiality, the associations meet in alternating years. Between one year and the other, there are symposia, journal publications, newsletters, and workshops organized by the two associations, and by the universities, colleges, and research institutions with which many of the members teach and do research. The scholarly study of religion in Latin America today is exciting and vibrant. In the last 15 years, Latin America has gradually become a site of academic, interreligious, and intercontinental dialogue about religion.

In addition to ALER and the Association of Social Scientists of Religion, there are important centers and institutes for the study of religion and journals in Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, Costa Rica, Colombia, and many other countries. The vibrancy of the study of religion in Latin America is evinced not only in the increasing publication of books on themes such as religion and globalization, postmodernity, Pentecostalism, popular religion, New Age, religion and ethnicity, and gender and family, among others, but in the newsletter of the Asociación de Cientistas Sociales de la Religion for reviews and a

Latin American Sessions

LATIN AMERICAN Scholars and Students is the international focus of the 2004 AAR Annual Meeting. Listed below are some sessions with such a focus:

San Antonio Ritual Drama and Dance: Hispanic Roots and Contemporary Flowering (A20–53)

Spiritual Practice in Latino/a Art and Devotion (A20–60)

Looking for Justice in Latin America: Balancing the Demands of Justice and Peace (A20–75)

Latina’s Experiences and Lives in Latin American Theology: A Reading by Sandra Cisneros (A20–100)

Alewist (A20–130)

Mujietería Theology, A Theology of Struggle and Liberation: The Work of Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz (A21–20)

Nos Iríamos o Nos Quedaríamos: The Ethics of Border Crossings and Global Trade (A21–75)

Beyond the Borders: Religion and Ecology in Latin America (A21–68)

Transnational Dialogues: A Panel in Celebration of Enrique Dussel’s 70th Birthday (A21–69)

Latin American Liberation Theology: The Next Generation (A21–119)

Sanctus (Little Saint) (A21–129)

Latina/o Religiosity: Public Ritual and American Catholism (A22–22)

Gender and Geography in the Study of Indigenous Mexico and the Southwest United States (A22–24)

Latino Studies and Wesleyan Studies (A22–27)

Latin American Discourse: Contributions to the Study of Religion (A22–50)

Evangelicalism in Latina/o and Latin American Communities (A22–64)

Ekkelesia and/as Koinonia: The Ecclesiological Influence of Latin American Theologies in North America (A22–114)

Reinventing America at the Borders (A22–117)

A God of Incredible Surprises (A22–127)

Iluh da Magia: Nature, Spirit, and Belief on Santa Catarina Island, Brazil (A22–128)
Religious Studies News — AAR Edition

Where to Eat in San Antonio

Pico de Gallo
111 S. Leona ST
Downtown San Antonio politics and legal eagles prefer this bright, festive, and highly promoted restaurant, one of the few in central downtown that locals frequent. Pico is the place to go for cabrito (roast baby goat), a true Mexican specialty. You can’t find a bad meal here.

Las Canarias
112 College ST
Hunting at San Antonio’s Canary Island heritage, Las Canarias offers a variety of dishes in the Southwest style. Lobster with blue crab, sweet potato hash, and Scorn bonnet aioli hint at the exotic unions Chef Scott Cohen executes. A salad of organic bonnet aioli and more convivial than anything else the coziness makes the experience warmer.

The Guenther House
205 E. Guenther ST
Located in a bustling part of the Riverwalk, the relaxing Fig Tree is a treat. The dining area is split between a Victorian-style interior and a multi-level villa-style outdoor terrace. Chef Stephen Papatocki serves up an impressive array of delicate, highly composed dishes. The lobster bisque is rich, sweet, and subtle. Kobe beef carpaccio with truffles is a decadent treat. Menu highlights include traditional chateaubriand and beef Wellington.

The Davenport
200 E. Houston ST
The eight-page drink menu offers the first hint that tipping is serious business here. If the Flirtini originally created for Sarah Jessica Parker doesn’t interest you, how about a Green Monkey Butt made with vodka and melon liqueur?

Swig
111 W. Crockett ST
You won’t go thirsty or coffee-less at this lounge that features an awesome array of martinis and the largest humidor on the Riverwalk. The house drink is the Swig (Absolut vodka infused with seasonal fruit, shaken over ice, and served straight up). Favorites include the Goldfinger (Gordon’s gin and Noilly Prat vermouth garnished with bocconcinis and marinated olives, not stirred) and the St. Valentine (Absolut Peppar and the bar’s Bloody Mary mix garnished with anchovy olives).

Club Cohiba
1015 Navarro ST
Most people are attracted by this club’s intimate setting. The soft, piped-in jazz allows conversations at a reasonable level. As for drinks, the bar is known for its chocolate martinis, mojitos, and an impressive selection of single-malt scotch-es. If you’re hungry, the kitchen dishes up an array of tasty taps, including garlic shrimp, beef chimichurri, and empanadas.

Joey’s
2417 N. Saint Mary ST
With 15 beers on tap, 50 bottled beers, and a full bar, drinkers have an abundance of options. It’s a simple but reliable plan: reasonable priced drinks, better-than-average pub grub, plenty of pool tables, and friendly service.

Lulu’s Jailhouse Cafe
1126 W. Commerce ST
Have you ever seen a 3 1/2-pound cinnamon roll? What else would be a suitable dessert for a 1 1/2-pound chicken-fried steak? Lulu’s Jailhouse Cafe, whose motto is “Never trust a skinny cook,” serves up massive portions of some of the finest Tex-Mex style food available in San Antonio. Chicken-fried chicken, chicken-fried steak, and award-winning redneck enchiladas are some of the famed dishes that keep regula- tors coming back. And even though Lulu’s promises “There won’t be an alfalfa sprout in sight,” its large selection of salads and vegetable dishes is fresh, flavorful, and generous.

Hanatei
101 Bowie ST
Set in the Marriott Rivercenter’s second-floor atrium, this cafe is intimate but modern. The maki, sushi, and sashimi served here by swift, efficient hands are delicately prepared and noticeably fresh. The array of colorful dishes focuses on seafood and vegetables. Anago (sea eel) and sake (salmon) sushi are well-prepared and precise. Dinosaur maki, a com- bination of fresh fish served raw with fried soft-shell crab, and green tea ice cream are also recommended.

Annual Meeting Performances and Exhibitions

The AAR is pleased to present the following performances and exhibitions during this year’s Annual Meeting:

The Holy Artwork (A20–6)
German video-artist Christian Jankowski approaches a religious leader in the San Antonio area and poses the ultimate question: What makes a work of art holy? The video piece is formed by the ensuing dialogue between artist and minister, each bringing their expertise and experience to the conversa- tion. Leaving room for poetics, humor, irony, and sincerity, the work addresses questions of spirituality and the divine. What may seem an unlikely topic for contemporary art in the 21st century generates a larger narrative about artistic inspiration and transformation.

Videotaped in the format of an evangelical tele- vision program, The Holy Artwork evokes the legacy of religious art while presenting a con- temporary take on the religiosity of art (or perhaps the art of religiosity) in today’s society.

SAYAE (San Antonio Vocal Arts Ensemble) and Mexican Folklórico Dance Performance (A21–J32)
Efforts to recover the devotional music of the ancient Middle East have had several ground-breaking proponents, such as A. Z. ıdelsohn and Suzanne Haïk-Ventoura. Now to these we add Christopher Melton and SAYAE. With The Holy Echoes, Moroney and SAYAE attempt to recreate music of the Judeo-Christian-Muslim-Mediterranean world. The texts that SAYAE sings come from the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Torah, the Peshitta, and the Qur’an — sung in ancient dialects of Hebrew, Arabic, and Aramaic. SAYAE also accompanies itself on reproductions of ancient instruments. Angela Mariani, pro-ducer of the nationally syndicated radio program Harmonia said, “In ‘Ancient Echoes’ we find one of those rare instances in which scholarly research, abundant cre- ativity, and a high level of musicianship have been combined to create an important work of historical interest, musical musical beauty, and great spiritual depth.”

Mexican Folklórico Liturgical Dance
Mexican folklórico dance flourishes in San Antonio where the majority population is Hispanic. Examples of folklórico liturgical dance will be given with some expan- sions of how local Christian worship has been enriched by these traditions for over 25 years. There will also be examples of different dances peculiar to states of Mexico.

Shopping is a favorite pastime in San Antonio. From the small boutique stores lining the Riverwalk to the Riverwalk Mall, connected to the Marriott Rivercenter Hotel, there are plenty of treasures to discover. The Riverwalk is by far the most popular shop- ping destination for visitors to San Antonio. Take a river taxi ride while you shop! The Alamo Plaza area is a pleasant place to shop as well — all within view of the historic Alamo. For one-of-a-kind items, visit the art galleries in La Villita or Artisan’s Alley. Visit the Market, otherwise known as El Mercado, for further shopping opportunities.

San Antonio Museum of Art
200 W. Jones AVE
www.sasma.org
Institute of Texan Culture
801 S. Bowie ST
www.texanculture.ttu.edu/public/
Centre Cultural Aztlán
555 W. Bittters RD
www.artisanalley.com
Artisan’s Alley
El Mercado
514 W. Commerce ST
www.taverinis.com/mercado/
La Villita
418 E. Commerce ST
www.lavilitta.com

The ALAMO may be the first thing people envision when thinking about San Antonio, but there is much more to this city. Take some time out from the Annual Meeting to visit some of these attractions.

Museums and art galleries make thought-pro- voking destinations in San Antonio. During the month of November, the San Antonio Museum of Art will be featuring an exhibition titled “Visions of a Vanishing Culture: Edward S. Curtis: The North American Indian, 1900-1930.” The University of Texas Institute of Texan Culture is a museum dedi- cated to enhancing the understanding of cul- tural history, science, and technology, and their influence upon the people of Texas. During the Annual Meeting, two exhibits will be on offer: “Creation and Cosmos,” focusing on the spirituality of the local Native Americans, and “El Día de los Muertos,” about the traditions behind the Day of the Dead celebrations.

Other opportunities to learn about Día de los Muertos can be found throughout the city during the month of November. All them, art, books, poetry, and music are all part of this celebration. Observed on November 2, with exhibits and events continuing throughout the month, Día de los Muertos is a colorful flurry of traditional and contemporary festivi- ties that celebrate ancestral remembrance and harvest season rituals from Central Mexico’s indigenous cultures. Organized since 1978 by Centro Cultural Aztlán, with altars and exhibits on display all over the city. Día de los Muertos is a mainstay of San Antonio folklore and cultural heritage.
Regional Meetings and Calls for Papers

Midwest

Midwest Regional Meeting
April 8–9, 2005
DePaul Center
Chicago, Illinois

The 2005 theme “Religion in the Public Sphere” is intended to solicit papers and panels exploring the varied intersections between religion and public life, largely but not exclusively in North America. Papers/panels on other topics are also invited. The title of each proposed paper/panel, an abstract of not more than 250 words, and names and affiliations of presenters/paneldists should be sent to the appropriate section chair (available on our Web page, www.aaraphiladelphia.org/meetings-aars). Proposals that do not fit under a current section should be sent to the program chair for possible inclusion in a special section(s). Submissions should be made as early as possible, but no later than December 15, 2004. Younger scholars and graduate students are especially encouraged to submit proposals and participate in the conference. Senior scholars are encouraged to serve as respondents or presiders for sections and panels.

New England–Maritimes

The current members of the Regional Board of the New England-Maritimes Region of the AAR (NEMARR) have reviewed the feedback to the regional survey conducted earlier this year. We have extrapolated projects that seem to be the areas of greatest interest to our members, and will base our work for the coming year on providing support for related member efforts in the region.

1. Co-Sponsoring Conferences: Instead of organizing an annual regional meeting, NEMARR will function as a co-sponsor of conferences proposed by members around the region. NEMARR’s contribution will involve a) assistance in developing AAR regional grants to help with funding of such conferences; b) NEMARR grants of up to $500 to help support conference-related costs; c) assistance with resources to facilitate conference planning, including best-practice planning schedules, and access to regional e-mailings to publicize the event; and d) inclusion in the regional Web site calendar. Proposals should

See CALL FOR PAPERS, p.28

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The American Academy of Religion offers Awards for Excellence in order to recognize new scholarly publications that make significant contributions to the study of religion. These awards honor works of distinctive originality, intelligence, creativity, and importance—books that have a decisive effect on how religion is examined, understood, and interpreted.

Awards for Excellence are given in three categories (Analytical-Descriptive, Constructive-Reactive, and Historical Studies). Not all awards are given every year. In addition, there is a separate competition and prize for the Best First Book in the History of Religions. For eligibility requirements, awards processes, and a list of current jurors, please see the Book Awards rules on the AAR Web page, www.aarweb.org/lawsandbookrules.asp.

The AAR is pleased to announce this year’s recipients of the Awards for Excellence in Religion and the Best First Book in the History of Religions:

**Analytical-Descriptive**

**Best First Book in the History of Religions**


**Constructive-Reactive**

Jeffrey Stout, Princeton University, Democracy and Tradition, Princeton University Press, 2004

**Historical**


**Book Awards**

**Excellence in Teaching Award**

Timothy Renick will receive the Excellence in Teaching Award at the 2004 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. Renick teaches at the Georgia State University, where he offers courses in contemporary religious thought; religion and ethics; philosophy of religion; war, peace, and violence; and various special topics. As the first appointment in Religious Studies at Georgia State, he helped develop a thriving program that now offers both BA and MA degrees and includes some 80 undergraduate majors.

Professor Renick is lauded by his colleagues for his tireless dedication to his students, perhaps most evident in his frequent supervision of independent studies, honors theses, and Master’s theses; his ability “to speak eloquently to all the students in his classes — black and white, rich and poor, motivated and unmotivated”; and his ability to provide insightful and helpful responses to student writing. One colleague enthusiastically commends him as a “model for education in Religious Studies.”

Students have praised the “uncommon clarity” of Renick’s lectures, “the quality of his feedback on written work,” and his dedication to students outside the classroom. They have consistently rated his teaching as outstanding. Among other honors, Professor Renick has received the Outstanding University Teacher Award for the State of Georgia in 2002, the Blue Key National Honor Society Outstanding Teacher Award and the Distinguished Honor Professor Award from Georgia State University in 1995, and the Georgia State University College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teacher Award in 1991.

Professor Renick has extended his teaching outside the classroom by organizing a course in the comparative study of world religions for Atlanta senior citizens and by making numerous public presentations on topics such as religion and war, abortion, cloning, and the Bible and homosexuality.

He has also published Aquinas for Armchair Theologians. At this year’s Annual Meeting, for the first time, participants will have the opportunity to engage in conversation with the recipient in Teaching Award—winner during a special session, scheduled for Saturday afternoon from 1:00–3:30 p.m.

**Husston Smith, 2004 Recipient of the Martin E. Marty Award**

Husston Smith is Thomas J. Watson Professor of Religion and Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Philosophy emeritus at Syracuse University. He has also taught at Washington University in St. Louis and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His most recent teaching has been as Visiting Professor of Religious Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Smith is the author of over 70 articles in professional and popular journals, and his book The World’s Religions, formerly The Religions of Man, (Harper San Francisco, 1958, rev. 1991) has sold several million copies and has been the most widely used textbook for courses in world religions for many years. In 1996 Bill Moyers devoted a five-part PBS special, “The Wisdom of Faiths with Husston Smith,” to his life and work.

Given annually since 1996, the Martin E. Marty Award recognizes extraordinary contributions to the public understanding of religion. The award goes to whose work has a relevance and eloquence that speaks not just to scholars, but more broadly to the public as well. The first recipient was Martin Marty himself; since then, awardees have included Robert Wuthnow (2003), Diana Eck (2002), David Kipke (2001), and Eileen V. Barker (2000). The contribution can be through writing (e.g., books, film, TV, public speaking), so long as it is based on educational and teaching leadership. The CPUR enthusiastically solicit nominations from the membership for future recipients. Nominations need not be AAR members or academics. Nominations are reviewed by the AAR Committee on the Public Understanding of Religion. You will find a nomination form on the AAR Web site at www.aarweb.org/lawsandteaching.asp.

**JAAR Focus Issue Call for Papers**

Historically and at present, religious secrecy has simultaneously captivated and threatened religions and the cultures and states they inhabit. The Journal of the American Academy of Religion seeks papers on all aspects of religion and secrecy for a focus issue to be published in 2006. Some questions that might be considered are the following: How do these complementary and conflicting tendencies intersect and affect both religions and the study of religions? How do states manage their interest in the “secrets” of religions? How do religions reconcile conflicting tendencies toward secrecy and publicity or transparency? How is the connection between religion and secrecy represented and confronted culturally? Furthermore, what responsibilities do scholars have for protecting the privacy of religious groups we study while accurately illuminating the phenomena and trends we seek to address?

The papers chosen for this issue will discuss these and other issues related to the nature of secrecy in religions the world over, using diverse methodological approaches, and addressing the topic from theoretical and/or empirical perspectives.

Papers should be 6,000–8,000 words in length and should be received at the below address no later than Monday, March 15, 2005. Submissions should include three hard copies of the manuscript along with a copy on disc (using a standard word-processing program in either PC or Mac format). An abstract of not more than 150 words should accompany each manuscript. Please provide full contact information, including e-mail, with the submission. All manuscripts accepted are subject to editorial modification.

Please direct submissions to: Charles T. Mathews, Journal of the American Academy of Religion, Department of Religious Studies, University of Virginia, PO. Box 400126, Charlottesville, VA 22904-4126, USA. 
AAR Honors Journalists for Best In-Depth Reporting

L AURIE GOODSTEIN of the New York Times, John Dart of Christian Century, and Douglas Todd of the Vancouver Sun have won the 2004 American Academy of Religion awards for Best In-Depth Reporting on Religion.

Goodstein won the contest for journalists at news outlets with more than 100,000 circulation; Dart won for journalists at news outlets with less than 100,000 circulation; and Todd won for opinion writing.

Fifty-nine journalists entered the contest, the most in its five-year history. The awards recognize “well-researched newswriting that enhances the public understanding of religion,” said Barbara DeConcini, AAR Executive Director.

Goodstein submitted articles on evangelically inclined Christians in Ohio seeking to convert Muslims; the pervasiveness of the Catholic Church crisis; the selection of a gay bishop in New Hampshire; and the movie The Passion of the Christ.

The judges said Goodstein’s articles show exceptional intellectual sophistication. This was “prize newswriting, including possibly the most comprehensive piece written on the Catholic clergy scandal,” one wrote.

“The Catholic abuse article was especially noteworthy for its effort to interpret statistical data for a general audience,” another judge said.

Dart submitted stories on faith in the movies; interfaith efforts to send relief packages to Iraq; the question of who belongs in Jesus’ family; how stress is a leading cause of my anthropologically inclined intelligentsia across cultures, I could not agree to be done with the reductionist claim that religion is all about ritual.

But if belief in God or Gods (the kind we know this is because anthropologists discovered cultures as lacking religion—not science. Social scientists, like other scientists, have not banished belief from academic study; they have quite rightly redefined Stark’s efforts to escape the subjective blinders of a theology that demands them as fundamentally moral agency.

Sociologist Stark begins his argument by noting that most religious people say religion is about ‘God or the Gods’ but most social scientists have ignored what people believe about Gods. Yet, as Edward Tyler (1881) pointed out well over a century ago, ‘By requiring in this definition the belief in a supreme deity or of judgement after death, the adoration of idols or the practice of sacrifice, or other partially-diffused doctrines or rites, no doubt many tribes may be excluded from the category of religious.’ And how right he was. Religious Western travelers, and not just missionaires, disdained animists in many newly discovered cultures as lacking religion and thereby lacking morality. The reason we know this is because anthropologists from Malinowski on have done precisely what Stark says they have not: ethnographers record what people say they believe. In fact not all peoples say they believe in what we call God or Gods. There does appear to be a universal belief in some kind of soul, spirit, shadow, or spiritual essence, but looking for ‘Gods’ is a very ethnocentric spin for what animists say, in their own language, that they believe.

The fundamental problem I have with the sociothology of Starks is that his ‘Gods’ are supposed to make religions moral rather than mere ritual pastime. The judges said Waldman wrote with a ‘clear, solid voice, but he doesn’t rely on just that. He does some good reporting to inform and support his opinion.’

Bill Tammeus of the Kansas City Star placed third in the opinion-writing category. Since the beginning of the AAR contests in 2000, Tammeus has consistently placed in the top three in this category; he won it two years ago. The judges said Tammeus has strong views, but supports with ‘argument, rather than mere assertion.’ One judge said, “the columns work because they are written with authority; yet manage to ask a few questions along the way.”

In each contest, the prize for first place is $500. Each contestant submitted five articles published in North America during the three prior years. Names of contestants and their news outlets were removed from submissions prior to judging.

The judges were Kelly McBride, an ethics faculty member at the Poynter Institute and a former religion reporter; Mark Silk, the founding director of the Leonard E. Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion and Public Life at Trinity College and a former journalist; and Michael Barkun, a political science professor at Syracuse University and a member of the AAR’s Committee for the Public Understanding of Religion.

Letter to the Editor

A Response to Stark

Daniel Martin Varisco, Chair of the Department of Anthropology, Hofstra University

“So then, let us finally be done with the claim that religion is all about ritual. Gods are the fundamental features of religion.” — Rodney Stark (AAR Religious Studies News, March 2004)

As an anthropologist who studies religions across cultures, I could not agree more with Rodney Stark’s passionate call to be done with the reductionist claim that “religion is all about ritual.” Most of my anthropologically inclined intelligentsia, I could not agree to be done with the reductionist claim that religion is all about ritual. Gods are the fundamental features of religion. — Rodney Stark (AAR Religious Studies News, March 2004)

I hope social science is not to be capitalized God or Yahweh or Allah — a belief-defying supernatural object of belief, this is the norm of much writing across disciplines. But if belief in God or Gods (the kind we know this is because anthropologists have done precisely what Stark says they have not: ethnographers record what people say they believe. In fact not all peoples say they believe in what we call God or Gods. There does appear to be a universal belief in some kind of soul, spirit, shadow, or spiritual essence, but looking for ‘Gods’ is a very ethnocentric spin for what animists say, in their own language, that they believe.

The fundamental problem I have with the sociothology of Starks is that his ‘Gods’ are supposed to make religions moral rather than mere ritual pastime.

Read the award-winning articles at: www.aarweb.org/awards/journalisms/
After Lonnie moved to Southern Methodist University and became the chair of our department, our paths crossed frequently. I was frequently on the phone in the pre-personal computer days and later exchanged regular e-mail messages. Since then, on my at-least annual trips to Texas, I never failed to spend some time with Lonnie.

James B. Wiggins, Syracuse University, writes...

I don’t know how much more time we have here, but I think it is important to say that Lonnie was a man of great humanism, and I think that is the reason we know him. It was a joy to spend time with him, even when we were in disagreement. The way he would approach his work, the way he would approach his life, was always with a sense of humanity and compassion. He was a man who was able to see the good in others, even when they were not good to him.

Another theologian from Texas, John Dunne, once posed the ultimate issue in this way: “Lonnie, did you ever stop to ask yourself, ‘Can I do to live?’” Lonnie was well acquainted with the reality of his mortality, and he overflown with a determination to live a life that would remind me of his human capacity to establish and maintain friendships was a defining quality of Lonnie. I am sure there must have been someone who was not drawn to him from the moment of first meeting him, but I am unaware of whom that might have been. I had the great good fortune of being within that friendship circle for almost 30 years, and it was one of the greatest gifts I have ever received. I would have lived a life of love and purveyor of many jokers, some good and some awful. His sense of humor was another constant companion. He was one of my favorite comedians. My, what a joy that man’s laughter was for everyone near him!

After Lonnie moved to Southern Methodist University and became the chair of our department, our paths crossed frequently. We were frequently on the phone in the pre-personal computer days and later exchanged regular e-mail messages. Since then, on my at-least annual trips to Texas, I never failed to spend some time with Lonnie.

Lonnie spoke frequently and wrote occasionally about euthanasia and assisted suicide. He profoundly explored the reality of human mortality. Nobody I have ever known more openly and frankly about the experience of death and dying, and the end of human life. Lonnie was deeply concerned about the nature of human mortality. Nobody I have ever known more openly and frankly about the experience of death and dying, and the end of human life. For those in the Academy who did not have the joy of knowing Lonnie, his leadership and his example as an excellent teacher and scholar helped cultivate some of the very best students and values of the American Academy of Religion. In our wake we presently know it, a subject I am sure others will address at some length. I will, however, attend briefly to his sense of humor as a manifestation of his courage.

The narrative of Lonnie Kliever’s life and work is a profile in courage both personally and intellectually. He walked the lonesome valley with grace, great humor, amazing vivacity, and a wondrous capacity to connect with and selflessly support and sustain the family members, friends, and colleagues who came into his magnetic field. We are simultaneously the poorer for his having left us physically, and the richer for all that he gave to us in so many ways. Words are inadequate to express the gratitude due to him. May he forever rest well.

Paul Courtright, Emory University, writes...

If one day I must die, what can I do to live? Lonnie was a defining quality of Lonnie Kliever’s life and work in a profile in courage both personally and intellectually. He walked the lonesome valley with grace, great humor, amazing vivacity, and a wondrous capacity to connect with and selflessly support and sustain the family members, friends, and colleagues who came into his magnetic field. We are simultaneously the poorer for his having left us physically, and the richer for all that he gave to us in so many ways. Words are inadequate to express the gratitude due to him. May he forever rest well.

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It is easy to forget how difficult those times were. Lonnie carried a sign. At one point, what he later described as a portly draft dodger, he stood less than five feet tall, thanks to a chronic congenital condition, a rare form of Rickets that inhibits growth hormones. One time he remarked to me, “Through the grace of the government, shrinking from the grimness of reality, a manifestation of his courage. Lonnie made me laugh. Almost every time we spent with Lonnie over the years. As I understand it from Bill Walker, a mutual friend and co-conspirator, during the ‘60s when Lonnie taught at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas, a position I later held as well, he joined a peace vigil one Saturday afternoon at that most sacred of Texas sites, the Alamo. (It was a one-hour vigil, held weekly.) For those of you who did not have the joy of knowing Lonnie, his leadership and his example as an excellent teacher and scholar helped cultivate some of the very best students and values of the American Academy of Religion. In our wake we presently know it, a subject I am sure others will address at some length. I will, however, attend briefly to his sense of humor as a manifestation of his courage.

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In the now-famous Gifford lectures that he delivered 100 years ago, William James remarked, “I do not see why a critical Science of Religions might not equally command as general a public admission as is commanded by a physical science.” James had in mind that a science of this kind could do better at shining light on religion than could philosophy. The trouble with philosophy, he said, was that it “lives in words,” whereas one can appreciate the depth, motion, and vitality of religion. Science could do that. Properly conceived, it would focus on the facts of religion, employing the tools of social knowledge from the concreteness of spiritual experience. James gave few examples of what such a science might have been intrigued by studies of prayer, religious experience, and healing.

History has been kind to James, but not to his point regarding a “Science of Religions.” As generations of students tackle his *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, they discover in its pages interesting anec
dotes about the saints and timeless musings about the differences between human-mindedness and the sick soul. But they sel
dom come away inspired by the idea of applying science to religion.

The reasons are not hard to find. Human behavior has proved more complex than early advocates of the human sciences imagined. Positivism has given up ground in the face of arguments about the inevitability of interpretation and perspec
tive. But the brave new world promised by science has turned out to be dominated by war and injustice as much as by techno
dological progress. If the choice C. S. Lewis offered between two cultures—one scientific and one humanistic—has to be made, the spiritual inclination will reasonably opt for keeping religion in the realm of values and meaning, rather than reduc
ing it to the dry world of scientific investi
gation.

In his book *Theology and Social Theory*, Ronald Reagan Blackwell (1990), John Milbank, a professor of religious stud
es at the University of Virginia, wrote a powerful critique of the scientific impulse in the realm of human research. Standing firmly on his head, Milbank argues that the human sciences are not about knowledge at all, but about power. The study of religion, for example, scholars a half-century ago to be the province of philosophers and theologians. Today, all of those gener
alizations have been qualified. We are once again, just as we were a century ago, faced with a new and innovative wave of research that promises to shed light on the role of science in this broader way, then we can identify more clearly some of the challenges in which it may usefully be employed.

One of the greatest challenges is understanding the differences between religious and non-religious ways of thinking. Is there a place for “Scientific” Studies of Religion? That is a harder question.

Isn’t it a mismatch to impose scientific methods on religion? Haven’t hermeneutics and phenomenology taught us to be skep
tical of science? And, for that matter, what do we mean by “science”? I thought about these questions recently when I asked a graduate student if she thought of her research on Native American religion as scientific. Taken aback, she replied, “Well, no, it’s just religious study, definitely not science.” She said science smacked of pos
tivism, which, by all means, she wanted to avoid.

I’d like to be counted among those who see a place for a scientific study. And yet, I have been drawn to the study of religion. However, in that context, I think we need to interpret the word “scientific” broadly.

The more scholars have applied scientific methods to the study of human behavior, the more they have learned that human behavior is indeed contextual and contingent, and that its meanings must be examined from multiple perspectives.
I VISITED the Library of Congress when I was a high school student, but had not returned until a rainy February afternoon when I joined other members of the AAR’s Public Understanding of Religion Committee for a tour. Like Washington, D.C., its imposing government buildings, the Library of Congress is somewhat intimating to the first-time visitor. But once inside, though it is still grand, its interior spaces are beautiful and inviting. Established as a legislative library in 1800, it is now the largest library in the world, with approximately 119 million items in almost all formats and languages. One of the library’s three buildings is named for Jefferson, whose personal library is at the core of the collections, and the others are named for James Madison and John Adams. The library shares its neighbor- hood with the Folger Library next door, and with the nearby Cannon House Office Building and the Supreme Court Building.

The Library of Congress is a treasure trove for religious studies scholars, and especially for scholars working with American his- tory and culture. Cheryl Adams, the library’s reference specialist in religion, guided us through the main reading room, the library’s Web site, and its manuscript holdings, and her excitement about sharing the library’s resources and especially historical documents per- taining to religion — was infectious. She laid out a selection of items from the Manuscript Collections for our perusal and among the most memorable were different versions of Thomas Jefferson’s original “wall of separation” letter delineating the separation of church and state, and the letter from a student that put into motion a landmark Pledge of Allegiance case.

“I will never forget walking into that room with all the documents on the table, and speculate whether it was obviously a child’s letter. When I picked it up, I realized it was the letter from Billy Gobitis, 11 years old, to his school principal, explaining why he could not salute the flag. That case, of course, was decided (against Billy) in 1943, and overruled two years later. Holding and reading that letter gave me the shivers,” recalled Dena Davis, chair of our committee and a specialist in religion and the law.

As a sample of the kinds of resources that might be useful to religious studies schol- ars, Cheryl also showed us, among other things, a Seventh-day Adventist tract called “Straightening Out Mrs. Perkins,” proceedings from a Spiritualist conven- tion, and a cowboy pictorial Bible. But what was most striking to me about these and the library’s other sources for religious studies research was how many of them were available through its Web site.

The Library of Congress World Wide Web Site is visually engaging and easy to use. Its home page includes links for chil- dren and teachers, as well as for research. Many of the holdings of the library’s resources available through the Internet are organized into several areas: American Memory (digitized historical collections, including maps, sound recordings, manuscripts, early motion pictures, and other primary source materials); THOMAS (legislative information including full-text legislation and the Congressional Record back to the 101st Congress, bill summaries and status back to the 93rd Congress, and committee information and links to other online govern- ment information); Global Gateway (international exhibits, global resources, and information about the Area Studies reading rooms); Exhibitions (online images and descriptions of exhibitions held at the library); and America’s Library (an interactive journey through American history).

Many of the holdings accessed through these links are also useful for teaching reli- gious studies courses. Many of the staff has scanned historical materials so that let- ters, old maps, engravings, and other images can be examined online and shown to students in computer-mediated class- rooms. American Memory is one of the best resources anywhere for teaching and researching American history and culture, and includes 7 million digital items from over 100 different historical collections. In many cases, the full texts of books, periodicals, letters, and tracts are available online. For instance, searching American Memory for images online enables students to show documents in my seminar on religion and violence, I found texts and drawings for Indian captivity narratives and an exe- cution sermon preached by Cotton Mather about the death sentence of Margaret Guthiel, who murdered her illegitimate child in 1715. Many other similar resources for the study of American religious history and gender and religion are available through these elec- tronic gateways. Instructors can project primary materials on large screens to give students a closer look at historical events. Online exhibits and images also make primary sources more accessible for student research.

As well as many kinds of images, cyber- casts of interviews and lectures, as well as audio recordings of historical events, are also among the many resources available through the library’s Web site that might be of use to scholars of religion. The audio recordings are diverse and include such topics as a collection of readings of the 1941 Fort Valley State College Folk Festival, with such songs as “I Know I Got Religion.” Recordings of lectures given at the library are also online, including a recent highlight: author Susan Weidman Schneider discussing her two decades of editing the Jewish women’s magazine Lilith.

Our tour included a stroll through seem- ingly endless rows of manuscripts in the vast rooms of the Manuscript Division, which was established in 1897. The collection contains more than 5 million items. I was not alone in feeling some amount of awe as we were led past hundreds of nearly labeled boxes containing writings by famous people. Journalist Debra Mason told me how much she enjoyed “wandering among the stacks of the official papers, walking past file after file of Supreme Court justices, presidents, and statesmen. I couldn’t help but think of all the history we were walking past.” Many of these resources pertain to religious studies scholar- s’ research interests, especially law, reli- gion, and politics. Presidential papers include Washington’s first inaugural address and Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, as well as 23 groups of presidential papers ranging from Washington to Calvin Coolidge. Organizational archives are available for scholars researching African-American religious history, the history of women’s history; the archives of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National American Woman Suffrage Association are two of many examples. The Manuscript Division also holds papers from a wide range of famous historians, anthropolo- gists, reformers, artists, and writers interested in religious studies scholars: Walt Whitman, Margaret Mead, Frederick Douglass, Margaret Sanger, and Susan B. Anthony, to name a few. Professional refer- ence librarians and a staff of historians are available for consultation in the Division’s Reading Room.

As might be expected, our nation’s library’s holdings on American history and culture are rich and diverse; however, two- thirds of its books and periodicals are in languages other than English. Maps, images, and sound recordings pertaining to many other parts of the world are also available online and include sources for scholars of religion and literature and his- tory of religions, such as a 1524 map of Molière Manua in the Library of Congress, and sound recordings of 80 authors reading their work in 17 different Asian languages as part of the South Asian Literary Recordings Project. Among the library’s most impressive assets for scholars work- ing outside the United States are the Jefferson Building’s Area Studies reading rooms, such as the African and Middle Eastern Reading Room (including Hebraic and Near East reference services), the Asian Reading Room (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and South Asian sections), and the Hispanic Division Reading Room. Scholars who are interested in research visit to these reading rooms can find everything they need to know through the library’s Web site, which has catalogs of the collections and a link to information about how to prepare for a visit to the library. Each reading room has its own online site, and the African Room even has an illustrated guide of its collec- tions online.

For scholars interested in extended periods of study at the library, the Kluge Center awards a variety of fellowships each year. The Kluge Chairs are chosen by the Librarian of Congress, in consultation with a council of scholars, and Kluge post-doctoral fellows are selected by international competition. Fellowships emphasize cross-cul- tural, multilingual, and interdisciplinary work. Information on these opportunities is available at www.loc.gov/kluge. Other fellow- ship opportunities at the library that might be of interest to religious studies scholars are the Rockefeller Fellows in Islamic Studies, the J. Franklin Jameson Fellowship for research in American History, the International Studies Fellow for research in non-English language collec- tions, or East and Southeast Asian regions and languages, and the Henry Alfred Kissinger Chair in Foreign Policy and International Relations. All fellow- ships offer stipends of varying amounts and tenures that run from a couple weeks to 12 months.

I walked away from the Library of Congress wishing that I did not live on the other side of the continent so that I could return soon to search its archives and enjoy the pleasure of looking through old documents in its comfortable reading rooms. I was most impressed by the scale, importance, and accessibility of its holdings, the welcoming attitude of the librarians, and the beauty of its interior spaces.

Resources

Library of Congress Web site: www.loc.gov. For those unable to visit, the library offers a photo-duplication service that provides copies of holdings from the various collec- tions, be they in microfilm, digital, or photographic format. ♦

The Great Hall of the Thomas Jefferson Building (Photo courtesy of Levon Avdoyan).
Greetings from the American Academy of Religion

To CGU Institute for Signifying Scriptures

February 27, 2004

I BRING TO YOU the greetings, good wishes, and good cheer of the American Academy of Religion on this splendid occasion. This inaugural conference of the Institute for Signifying Scriptures is a signal event in our field. And it is fitting that so imaginative and, indeed, so daring a scholarly initiative should find a home in the School of Religion at the Claremont Graduate University, since this young school itself is fast earning a reputation for entering new ventures in our field. This institute envisions a new conversational space. It is a space in which a capacious understanding of “scriptures,” a term that is the basis for historical and comparative study, not only of “sacred texts,” but of the communicative that receive and shape them. For “scripture” is always both text and performance, always already embedded in communities of discourse and practice.

"Beginnings are beautiful things, celebrations of agency and originality and perhaps even some semblance of freedom. Yet they are also treacherous and delusional in their seductive promises.”

— Joe Parker, Pitzer College

THEORIZING SCRIPTURES, the inaugural conference of the Institute for Signifying Scriptures, was indeed a “beautiful thing.” The conference opened with a dramatic drum ceremony in which students from Claremont Graduate University and Claremont School of Theology pronounced blessings of light, strength, and knowledge on the Institute, setting the stage for an intense and engaging weekend of transdisciplinary dialogue to launch the beginning of an ongoing conversation regarding scriptures.

According to the conference convener, Vincent L. Wimbush, Professor of Religion at Claremont Graduate University, this ongoing conversation will be facilitated through the newly established Institute for Signifying Scriptures. Among these congratulating Wimbush on the establishment of the institute were Claremont Graduate University president Steadman Upham, the academic deans, colleagues from the Claremont Colleges, and executives from several national organizations, including the Society for Biblical Literature, the American Academy of Religion, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Academy of Catholic Hispanic Theologians in the U.S.

In his opening address, Wimbush, the founding director, announced that the institute will seek to advance a different founding director, announced that the institute to move beyond phenomenological studies to embrace what she termed the academic as the social-intellectual location of the signifying scriptures project, suggesting that this institutional location and its power dynamics and practices of knowledge production and socialization signify “both its historical possibility and its possible cooptation.” On a cautionary note, she summarized the prevailing paradigms of biblical interpretation, offered a critique of phenomenology, and challenged the Institute for Signifying Scriptures to become an agency of knowledge production and socialization to investigate ways in which “scriptural texts and icons exercise influence and power in cultural, social, and religious life.”

Panel 1: Phenomenology/Origins

“Do we know how we are taught academics to ‘off’ and ‘woof’?”

“How might we construe ‘scriptures’ with- out allowing them to divert our attention away from the long and bloody history of domination that brought us to our own social order?” — Joe Parker, Pitzer College

Panel 2: Settings/Situations/Practices

In her consideration of settings, situations, and practices, Elizabeth Schneider Fiorena of Harvard University, a well-known feminist biblical scholar, directed attention to the academy as the social-intellectual location of the signifying scriptures project, suggesting that this institutional location and its power dynamics and practices of knowledge production and socialization signify “both its historical possibility and its possible cooptation.” On a cautionary note, she summarized the prevailing paradigms of biblical interpretation, offered a critique of phenomenology, and challenged the Institute for Signifying Scriptures to become an agency of knowledge production and socialization to investigate ways in which “scriptural texts and icons exercise influence and power in cultural, social, and religious life.”

Panel 3: Practitioners and Practices

William Andrews, Professor of English at UNC-Chapel Hill, turned to African-American spiritual biography as a “signifying practice,” directing attention to The Confessions of Nat Turner, a narrative record- ed by Thomas R. Gray, a white lawyer and former slave owner, who interviewed the jailed Nat Turner about his leadership of a slave uprising resulting in the death of 55 white men, women, and children in 1831. Noting that this document may be “read as a kind of scripture in itself, the final testa- ment of a holy man dedicated utterly to ‘the Spirit’ even unto death,” Andrews sug- gested that “we must consider Turner’s Confessions as a revision, a strong misread- ing, an act of signifying of and on biblical traditions, particularly the prophetic books of the Bible and the Book of Revelation.”

Panel 4: Material and Expressive Representations

Many of those whose signifying practices we seek to know “have been silenced by history,” says Colleen McDannell, University of Utah. She suggested that “one way to resurrect such people so that they can signify again is to look at their pictures,” and she demonstrated her point through a captivating slide presentation drawn from an archival collection of pho- tographs taken between 1935 and 1943 by the Historical Division of the Farm Society Administration. Pointing to the photographs of a “white Jesus” on the walls of black churches, she suggested that it was not the “white Jesus” but the mean- ings assigned to the “blood of Jesus” and the “cross of Jesus” that made these pic- tures appealing to black congregations. Her comments stimulated a lively and engaging discussion.

Panel 5: Psycho-Social (and Other) Needs and Consequences

Patrick Olivelle, University of Texas, pre- sented on the Vedic Scriptures of India, focusing on “how social prestige and political power are related to the production, transmission, and preservation of scrip- tures in India within the priestly class of Brahmins.” He suggested that this notion of social and political power in the context of the production and transmission of scriptures is one that is applicable across traditions, and one that fits well with the agenda of the Institute for Signifying Scriptures.
In 2002 the number of doctorate recipients who registered as a graduate student.

Regarding placement, 65% had definite commitments for employment or study, while 35% were still seeking employment or further study.

The median number of years from matriculation to doctorate awarded was 11.5, with 9 years the median number registered as a graduate student.

Within Religion

NORC prepared two special reports for the Academy. The first Bertollini funded research doctors in just the field of religion (as distinguished from theology/religious studies) for 1962–2002. This report can be viewed on our Web site at: www.aarweb.org/department. Of the 348 doctors granted in religion in 2002 (230 granted to males and 118 to females), 294 were granted to whites. Looking at longitudinal trends across the preceding 25 years, the number of doctors awarded in any one year was 192. During the period 1997–2001, the average number per year. Hence, in 1997 the average number of doctors conferred each year has risen 72% over the previous 25-year average.

More than 66% of all religion doctorate recipients in 2002 were male. However, during the preceding 25 years, the number of females increased nearly fourfold. Over 80% of all recipients were U.S. citizens in the year of conferral of the degree; 12% were Japanese, and 6% American Indian. Twenty-eight percent of the recipients were first-generation college graduates.

Let me go one step further and argue that what is fundamental to religion is less the idea that religion is sacred or the notion that it is a system of belief. It is a system of belief that is sacred or sacredly believed.

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University of Tennessee, Chattanooga, Department of Philosophy and Religion

William Harman, Chair

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga is a comprehensive metropoli- tan university offering bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral programs. Founded in 1886 as a private Methodist institution, it became part of the University of Tennessee system of public higher education in 1969 and emphasizes a strong grounding in the liberal arts alongside professional programs. With about 6,000 stu- dents, the school offers degree through the College of Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Educators and Applied Professional Studies, Engineering and Computer Sciences, and the UTC Graduate School. The Department of Philosophy and Religion has grown from three members in 1969 to eight members today. Faculty teach primarily undergraduate- ates and occasionally masters of art stu- dents. Further information can be found at www.utc.edu/Dept/PhilosophyReligion.

William Harman traces his academic lineage- age to his Oberlin College advisor, the late Clyde Holbrook, one of the founders of the American Academy of Religion. Harman lived, taught, and studied in India for two and a half years after college and then enrolled at the University of Chicago, where he received his MA and PhD, working primarily with Westermeyer. He taught for 20 years at DePauw University before moving to the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He concentrates in comparative religions, with an emphasis on Hinduism in southern India. He has published two monographs on religion in Tamil Nadu, and, along with Literature, pub- lished several articles about the southern Dravidian goddess of forests, Marativanam. He is working currently on an edited vol- ume that addresses the dynamics of religious icon in Hinduism, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jews, and Buddhists in South Asia.

Harman: I feel brand new to the department and to the University of Tennessee, but the calendar tells me it has been just over two years. I was hired in as Tennessee, but the calendar tells me it has been over just over two years. I was hired in as the Department of Philosophy and Religion in building the department. Herb is running the adjustment have been considerable. I arrived here after teaching for 23 years in religious studies department? How long have you been teaching? Having the benefit of his experience when- we inherited a department with a tradi- tion of solid teaching, creative scholarship, and religious studies methodologist with training in philosophical phenomenology.

Harman: We have eight full-time faculty members in ten-track positions, though one of those positions involves teaching half-time in classics. Usually we have from one to three adjuncts teaching for us, according to our needs from one semester to the next. We're a department of philos- ophy and religion, and several department members have a Biblical studies way,” academically speaking, as the needs for various courses come up. The remarkable thing is that we're able to work rather closely together; our major can be taken in three ways, with a concentration either in philosophy, in religion, or in philosophy and religion. Students move back and forth between the two disciplines quite comfortably. We're also proud of the fact that our faculty cover a geographic and intellectual spread uncommon for a department our size: we have faculty publishing and teaching in Greek philosophy and religion, American religious, early and medieval Christian the- ology and philosophy, Judaism, French and German modern existentialism and postmodern thought, Buddhist, Hindu, and Chinese religions, and Hinduism and comparative religions.

RSN: What can you tell us a bit about the department's strengths?

Harman: We take pride in pedagogy, and tend to share with each other our suc- cesses and our failures. We value scholar- ship as a “two-way street” -- members of the department hold special chairs that allow them to teach fewer courses because they are expected to be more productive as scholars. But the rest of us are involved in scholarship as well. We are convinced that scholarship is important not just because we like to do it — though we are, of course, in love with the world take religion seriously. It was such a change for me when I arrived. I had been accustomed to spending the first week or two of my introductory classes trying to convince students that religion as a subject matter needs to be taken seriously, that it has an enormous role in human history. Here, there's no need to make that point. Students take our classes because they know the Accent to our curriculum. We have faculty publishing and teaching in German, Indian, and Chinese who might be persuaded to join us. Students find a congenial environment, that’s a tribute to our judg- ment and to our mentoring skills. Still, we are growing tired of job searches, and will have to fight future temptations to want to hire someone not good enough to be hired away. That kind of compromise into mediocre talent is definitely not our bag. We have a genuine power and influence. Before my arrival here, I was more accustomed to a university administers academic skills tests to graduating seniors, our majors score among the highest in the university. What's distinctive about excellent faculty, strong majors, and an atmosphere generally free from rancor and resentment.

RSN: What in subfields or subdivisions would you like to expand your depart- ment's competence?

Harman: Though we have someone who is teaching introductory Islam, it would be wonderful to have someone with specialist training in the area for upper-level courses. A dedicated analytic philospher would also be ideal. In any given year, we usually have about 35–40 majors, so there is just so much we can ask for. But in a perfect world, I think I would add a bit more. I think there is a need for a relig- ious studies methodologist with training in philosophical phenomenology.

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

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RSN: What problems will your depart- ment be facing in the near future?

Harman: For the past several years, we have seen a good deal of faculty turnover, partly because our salaries need to be higher. The next few years, about 42 percent of our majors have gone on to graduate school... And we've found over the years that when the university administers academic skills tests to graduating seniors, our majors score among the highest in the university. What's distinctive about excellent faculty, strong majors, and an atmosphere generally free from rancor and resentment.

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

Harman: We laugh about doing our teaching in the buckling of the Bible Belt. But there's something to the claim: the Scopes Trial occurred just half an hour from where we sit. A half-hour trip south of here will put you into a snake-handling community. People in this part of the country will put you into a snake-handling community. People in this part of the country are quite open to discussing religion critically. They are quite open to learning, not the least bit effeminate excuse for real learning.

Harman: I enjoy finding ways to make some time for department program- bers that they might not otherwise believe possible. Sometimes, for example, a person needs encouragement to go abroad and teach that course she has always want- ed to teach but had feared might be a bit too “fringey” or eccentric. I like keeping my ears open to new ideas about how to spend money on campus that might enable col- leges to do such things as travel to Mount Athos or, you know, it might be being able to run interference for a student or a colleague who has run head-on into an administrative wall that comes between an ear and a library, a library and a seminary pur- suits. Getting the needless garbage out of people's paths is not always fun to do, but it's satisfying when it's done, and the results speak for themselves.

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Brought scholarship and teaching together in religious studies and theology.

In the years that have passed since I first asked that question, the AAR has, of course, created and sustained a whole array of efforts to bring together scholarship and teaching in our field. We have done so on our Web site, in periodic publications such as RSN and Spotlight on Teaching, in teaching workshops, in the Annual Meeting program, and in Teaching Religious Studies Series, published by Oxford University Press. These edited volumes, focused on a theme, then, tertist, or text, are aimed at faculty who are thinking about teaching. The books bring together the best of current scholarship with the best of current reflection on teaching. Each volume (and the series as a whole) tries to do it all — to be useful for both newer and more experienced teacher/scholars, to provide input for both specialists and those called to teach a text or topic beyond their own specialty, and, in doing so, to be responsible to the scholarship of our field as well as the scholarship of teaching. Teaching Religious Studies is shaped by — and shaped — the pedagogical concerns of the wider academic study of religion. Indeed, the series makes an effort to raise the visibility of our teaching beyond the limits of our own field, as witnessed, perhaps, by coverage of early volumes in the Chronicle of High Education. Series volumes also share a commitment to considering teacherly issues particular to their subject matter — the variety of institutional and sociocultural or historical settings within which a topic might be taught (seminary, graduate school, liberal arts college, or large state university), various courses within which the topic might arise (e.g., introductory course, a specialized course), or ethical concerns relevant to teaching in particular areas or concerns raised by student demographics, for example. Thus, the series takes seriously the increasingly complex and useful literature on teaching within higher education that has emerged in recent decades.

What is currently available and what might we need to see in future volumes?

The volumes currently available in the pipeline reflect some of the diversity of our field and the potential of the series: Brannon Wheeler (ed.), Teaching Islam; Diane Jonte Face (ed.), Teaching Freud; and, in Teaching Religious Studies Series, published by Oxford University Press. These volumes, at various stages of preparation, widen the scope to include such topics as ritual, religion and healing, and American religious experience; and Marcia Crispin, The Body in Spirituality, for example. As it develops beyond these themes, the series will reflect the incredible diversity of the academic study of religion: texts from the Bhagavad Gita to the Torah, theorists and theologians from Schillemacher or Kierkegaard to Foucault or Eliade or Bourdieu and beyond; themes from sexuality to magic to fundamentalisms and from myth to politics to globalization; and traditions from Pentecostalism to Shinto to Yoruba religions. Indeed, the texts, traditions, themes, and thinkers that are examined by scholars across our field — and across our classrooms — will become the focus of this series in the 21st century.

So, do you have an idea?

Volumes for the series usually begin with a preliminary conversation with the series editor. “What about a volume on this theme?” Formal proposals involve submitting, at minimum, the following materials to the series editor:

• A substantial narrative describing the proposed topic, attending to the potential audience for the volume, its relevance to the academic study of religion, the rationale for the volume’s organization and choice of chapter authors, and a description of the range of teacherly and scholarly concerns raised by the topic. This is often accompanied by a bibliography of relevant material at the intersection of teaching and scholarship.

• A proposed table of contents, with abstracts for chapters and biographies of chapter authors.

• Writing samples (e.g., selected chapters, introduction, etc.).

• A proposed time line for completion of the edited volume.

• Curriculum vitae for the editor(s).

These proposals are then sent to readers for review. Readers are chosen to represent excellence in scholarship, as well as teacherly concerns. Their feedback is critical to the decision (made by the series editor) to request revision of the proposal, to reject the proposal, or to propose the volume formally to Oxford University Press. Should the volume be formally recommended to OUP for consideration, OUP’s formal procedures are then central to their decision to issue a contract for the proposed volume. Such contracts, of course, require review of completed manuscripts.

Marcos:

As I was telling you earlier, I did not want to consider that “Bosniana” is bound by territorial limits. I included work by very notable feminist theologians living in the U.S., such as Daisy Machado, who researches the work of P. Aquilina, Josu Diaz, and other feminist theologians. It is also a volume that spans methodologies in an interdisciplinary spectrum. There are works of biblical hermeneutics, like Elsa disadvantage and experience and to get glimpses at the immense variability of gen-

eral construction in all these diverse religious traditions.

Bodies/Religions: What can you say about it?

I also know that there is a forthcoming book from Palgrave. How do your themes on the study of religion in Mesoamerica appear in these publications?

Marcos:

The book first is a selection of the presentations at the panels I organized at the XVIIth Congress of the IAHR in Mexico as Adjunct Proceedings, 2000. It is a study of the ways bodies are conceptualized, regulated, and infused with religious meanings with respect to gender mandates within diverse religious traditions. I included among others, for example, work by Rita Gross on Buddhism, Nancy Falk on Hinduists from the Philippines.

Impelled by the selection of these articles is a comparison with the Mesoamerican epistemological and religious issues I develop in my own article. As you see, my interest has been to record as comprehensive a spectrum of beliefs and traditions as possible. Something will emerge from the sediments of that plural analysis that will make us deeply knowledgeable about gender con- straints and/or privileges. How do religions construct and interpret bodies, physicality, sexuality? These are the main questions posed by the authors.

RSN:

What current trends in Latin American scholarship interest you the most?

Marcos: I am very interested in the indigenous movements in the Americas. They are political movements that — contrary to other revolutionary movements — claim religion and spirituality at their core. At several key moments, I have been involved with consulting on the status for the Mexican indigenous women’s movement. I speak amply of this in my forthcoming book which is also going to be published in English (Palgrave, March 2005). Indigenous movements in the Americas, as exemplified by the II Continental Indigenous Summit of the Americas (Quito, July 26–30, 2004), stressed the colonizing effects of feminism and Western conceptions on the indigenous peoples of the Americas. The indigenous peoples claim that they have a different way of conceptualizing the gender divide.
They speak of “complementarity” and “equivalents” as their own way of interfering genders. It is very paradoxical.

I remember that, following these indigenous claims, I sent a project proposal to Hunter College some ten years ago. I won the competition and was named Rockefeller Humanist in Residence for the year 1990-91. Among the things I worked on, the feminists and gender theorists were reluctant to see it as a truce, although understanding the creative gender constructions done from the perspective of the indigenous women. Consequently, they rejected my position. They could only think of my work as “interpretation” within the realm of Christian traditions that fill this world with misogynistic meanings. Of course, this kind of church-based interpretation of “complementarity” means that we are passive, the obedient, the silent sufferers. In this semantics of complementarity, the male is the active, leading, achieving part. There is even a recent letter from the Congregation of the Faith in the Vatican (7/31/2004) compelling women to conform to this model of behavior.

It is hard to give credit to such a backward interpretation of femininity!

But what do the indigenous peoples mean by complementarity? What I hear by the indigenous women says is very different from the construction of meaning I reflected by the Vatican. I am working on a book to be published by Brill in the collection Religion in the Americas directed by Hector Avalos.

There are a lot of misconceptions stemming from the inappropriate adoption of Spanish words imposed on indigenous peoples by the colonizing friars. For instance, by calling the tlatoani “rey,” or the tonalli “alma,” the Spaniards imported colonizing meanings into the indigenous worlds. These “translations” were approximate at best. So a careful interpretation of indigenous discourse — in the case of the indigenous women — reveal epistemological connections, interpretations of causalities, interconnections that have nothing to do with the semantic meanings Westerners ascribe to words. Imagine what the careful study of some basic terminology is beginning to reveal? That is my decolonizing effort and some basic terminology is beginning to disclose! That is my decolonizing effort and some basic terminology is beginning to disclose!

Books by Sylvia Marcos


Studyng Religion in an Age of Terror

Internet Death Threats and Scholarship as a Moral Practice

Paul Courtright, Emory University

In 2001 the Delhi-based Mental

Banarsidass Publishers rereleased Ganesh,

Lord of Obstacles and Beginnings by Paul

Courtright, originally published by Oxford University Press in 1980. The two recent cover features the elephant god Ganesh as a toddler with a crawling position, same clothing. That image, along with a brief, proponentically informed reading of part of the myth that recounts Ganesh’s beheading (by his divine father, who fails to recognize Ganesh as he guards his mother’s bath), angered some Hindus in the United States. They claimed Courtright had “offended” their god. An Internet petition gathered over 4,000 signatures, threatened him personally, and convinced his publisher in India to withdraw the book.

These are increasingly dangerous times for scholars who study India. Well-financed and organized groups on the political and religious right want to control the memory of India’s past in ways that suit their own ideological agendas. Consequently, scholars within or outside India who challenge those constructions become targets of attack.

My recent experience is not singular. Last December, another group in India vandalism an institute, stole ancient manuscripts, and physically assaulted a scholar who had worked with an American author whose book on a 17th-century king offended them. A couple of years before, a distinguished Indian historian was vilified for writing a meticulously documented study of meat consumption among Hindus in ancient India.

In one sense, this is an old story; scholars have been seen as suspect by orthodoxies of one sort or another, for generations. Scholars, particularly those in the humanities, tend to engage in subversive activity. To wish to resist the ethos of the colonial forms of knowing and being in the world. And in one way or another — to someone or another — this kind of critical practice may give offense. To what extent do the costs and consequences of free inquiry.

Along with this subversive element, scholar also carries an ascetic dimension, in that it sometimes requires a renunciation of comfort — for the scholar and the reader, in service to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding.

When the realm of inquiry is the academic study of religion, we commit transgressions in ways that are both the same as and different from those of our colleagues in other fields. Some scholars of religion have a foot in both academic and religious traditions, and their forms of asceticism and subversion differ somewhat from mine, as a visitor to the religious tradition I study. I have a great respect for the tradition but am not responsible for defending its orthodoxies. I speak forth with, and to Hindu scholars, certainly not for or on behalf of Hindus. So when someone says — or circulates an Internet petition or complains to the presi-

dent of my university — that “they have written, and the theories you apply, offend me; they offend my senti-

ments,” the first thing I have to do is make sure that I acknowledge that your experience is authentic for you. But as a scholar and interpreter, my intent is not to demean, dismantle, or offend. Rather, it is to explore, probe, and imagine, whatever approaches the content of the religious tradition and the tradition of critical inquiry. To do this is to engage in forms of interpretation that may not be indigenous to that tradition itself but may be illuminating and novel. Religious stories and ideas are not my own. They belong to the public domain. The same is true for interpretation. In my case, my attempt to understand the assessment of my book — its intellectual substance — but have attacked me personally and called for public censure of me by my university.

Today we find ourselves in an era when some readers will suspect anything we do, especially if we write about the poor, and insist we are “outsiders” to the tradition. Indian scholars, Hindu and non-Hindu, who are familiar with my work appreciate the necessity of free inquiry, not because they know me personally but because they know they could be the next targets of self-appointed guardians of orthodoxy. We remain silent about who we are. Scholars have to own that integrity and do our work with as much zeal, respect, and commitment as we know how. When we are in error, we must own our mistakes; when we are attacked because some don’t like our interpretation, we must reexplain ourselves to our vocation of critical inquiry.

Scholarly associations play a vital role here. Colleagues in my own association, the American Academy of Religion, have been extraordinarily supportive in both the administrative leadership of the organization and also in the scholarly conversations specific to my area of inquiry. Universities rightly step in to protect their faculty from harassment.

What about students? Whenever scholars are attacked, we need to inform our students in useful and appropriate ways. It’s a way of letting them know that the pursuit of knowledge, that scholarship may involve risks. Scholarship is a form of intellectual practice, but on another level, it is a form of moral practice. We have a duty to be accurate and put carefully thought-out ideas into the conversation for critical appraisal by our readers. Insular as students can write and participate in that process, it helps them own the work that they do and supports them in taking their own risks and engaging in critical inquiry.

When others try to silence us because they claim to take offense and insist we are “outsiders” to the tradition, we express to them that our sentiments trump our pursuit of knowledge, it reminds us that writing is often a way of letting them know that the pursuit of knowledge, that scholarship may involve risks. Scholarship is a form of intellectual practice, but on another level, it is a form of moral practice. We have a duty to be accurate and put carefully thought-out ideas into the conversation for critical appraisal by our readers. Insular as students can write and participate in that process, it helps them own the work that they do and supports them in taking their own risks and engaging in critical inquiry. When other persons try to silence us because they claim to take offense and insist we are “outsiders” to the tradition, we express to them that our sentiments trump our pursuit of knowledge, it reminds us that writing is often a way of letting them know that the pursuit of knowledge, that scholarship may involve risks. Scholarship is a form of intellectual practice, but on another level, it is a form of moral practice. We have a duty to be accurate and put carefully thought-out ideas into the conversation for critical appraisal by our readers. Insular as students can write and participate in that process, it helps them own the work that they do and supports them in taking their own risks and engaging in critical inquiry.

Editor’s Note:

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Religious Studies News -- AAR Edition

Member-at-Large

Tomoko Masuzawa, University of Michigan

Tomoko Masuzawa was born and educated in Tokyo. She earned an MA in Philosophy of Religion from Yakei, and a PhD in Religious Studies from the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she studied principally with Lawrence Riddle (Liturgical Criticism) and the late Walter Capes. For many years she taught in the Department of Religious Studies and the Program in Cultural Studies at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Since 1999 she has been on the faculty at the University of Michigan, where she holds a joint appointment in History and Comparative Literature. She is the author of In Search of Dreamtime: The Quest for the Origin of Religion (1993) and The Invention of World Religions: European Universalism in the Language of Pluralism (2005), both published by the University of Chicago Press, as well as a number of book reviews and articles such as “Troubles with Materiality: The Ghost of Feticism in the 19th Century” (Comparative Studies in Society and History, 1988) and “Comparative Studies of Religion” (The Critical Theory and Comparative Religion Group, 2007). She is also a member of the North American Association for the Study of Religion (NAASR) and the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR).

RSN: You are a religion scholar and a longstanding member of the AAR. . .

Masuzawa: Yes, since 1982. . .

RSN: But you are not in a religion department at the moment, is that correct?

Masuzawa: Right. The University of Michigan doesn’t have a religion department. My appointment is in history and in comparative literature.

RSN: Do you teach religion courses?

Masuzawa: At the moment, only occasionally. Every once in a while graduate students working on some religion-related topics come out of the woodwork. Usually, though, by the time it occurs to them that they should know something about the study of religion, they’re already beyond their course work, so we end up doing a tutorial or something very informal, which isn’t the most satisfying situation. But occasionally I offer a seminar, which I call “cultural history of the study of religion,” almost entirely based on primary sources, mostly 19th- and early 20th-century material.

RSN: Is there much interest in such material among history and literature students?

Masuzawa: There seems to be a general perception lately, even among some faculty, that somehow religion is important. So there is definitely a potential there. But the institutional literacy in scholarship on religion is pretty low. I get the impression that here “religion” is generally just a class of objects, some of which you could know about. People don’t seem to see it as a site, occasion, or strategic necessity for some understanding of the work. In other words, very little recognition that there might be a scholarship on religion. Or that this scholarship isn’t religious in origin, orientation, or goals. I’m talking about people here who are generally very smart, theoretically sophisticated, who wouldn’t be caught saying something like, well, cultures are out there and anthropologists go out and learn and know about them. They certainly know better. But that theoretical acumen doesn’t actually extend to religion. I’m generalizing grossly here, of course, but that’s my general impression at that gross level.

RSN: So, how do you reconcile your expertise in the study of religion with your current institutional setup?

Masuzawa: Well, I can’t say it’s reconciled. But since my interest area can be framed as a subfield in modern European intellectual history, it’s not like I don’t have a place to go. It’s my pleasure to be someone with something vaguely to do with religion — but not Buddhism, Islam, the Abrahamic lineage, for instance, or that — that’s the problem, I think; that’s where I get the institutional equivalence of a blank slate. But in terms of teaching, I can offer a lot of my own research topics in various courses. For example, I offer a graduate seminar called “Comparison and Hegemony.” It’s a way of talking about the emergence of comparative studies, and we consider concretely the disciplinary development of comparativism in the last century, comparative literature, and anthropology, and the vicissitudes of the so-called universal versus the particular. Since the late 19th century, there suddenly appears a list of 11 or 12 world religions. In the early 20th century, the problem of descent began to take on a whole new character.

RSN: And that’s the area of your current research, history of comparative studies?

Masuzawa: Nineteenth-century philology has the leading role in my new book. Philology is crucial here with a tinge of “perfect inflection” — though that’s not to say it’s a pretty sight. This complex of comparative philology and comparative religion has been so incredibly interesting that the topic is finding its way into many of my courses. For instance, this semester I’ll be teaching a seminar on the concept of “Aryan,” it begins with the discovery of Sanskrit and ends with the American neo-nazis. I say “we” because I’ll be co-teaching this with two of my colleagues. Tom Trautmann has written a book on the British Sanskrit studies — called Aryans and British India — and he’s the editor of CSSH [Comparative Studies in Society and History]. Gayle Rubin, many of your readers would know her, I’m sure, from those extremely influential works of feminist criticism she wrote in the late 70s and 80s, “Traffic in Women.” She’s at Michigan now, and she’s been doing extensive research on various New Age movements and also on neo-Nazi. In fact, it was on Gayle’s initiative that the idea of the course got started. I’m really looking forward to this.

RSN: Tell us something about your new book, The Invention of World Religions.

Masuzawa: The subtitle may be the briefest description I can give. It’s called “How European Universalism Was Expressed in the Language of Pluralism.” But I should say, the book is not about the concept-formation of “religion,” or about how individual world religions like “Hinduism,” “Buddhism,” and so forth were “constructed,” in the sense of fabricated. Rather, it is about the logic of classification; it’s about categories and taxonomy.

RSN: What are your main findings?

Masuzawa: And I suppose you want them in 25 words or less? Too hard. But I can say that the main finding is that here in the language of Pluralism, there is the premise: for a long time, the standard European framework for mapping the world religiously, so to speak, has been something like this. First, there are those who know God and live accordingly and correctly. Then there are two groups of people, one small in our research and the other very large and powerful; they also know the existence of the supreme god of the universe, so they have no problem being sure, but they obviously got it seriously wrong; that’s because they either refuse to recognize Jesus as the Saviour, or they believe they follow a false prophet, thereby creating schisms. In short, there are all those unfortunate others who have never known anything about God, and since they don’t have religion, they worship sundry substitute objects. In short, according to this way of thinking, there are four kinds of people: Christians, Jews, “Mohammedans,” and a vast number of godforsaken heathen idolaters; but at the same time, there is only one religion, ultimately. It sounds paradoxical at first, but it has its own logic. Questions like “how many religions are there in the world?” seem elemental to us, but, to my knowledge, no one in the 17th or 18th century asked such a question. So, for me, this was a conventional formula for delineating the “diversity” of the world, and you find the same formula employed as late as the early 19th century. But during the 19th century, this system collapses. Then, in the early 20th century, there suddenly appears a list of 11 or 12 “world religions.” And the prima donna of this neologism itself. The list is the same as today’s. So, this book asks, what happened in the 19th century to produce this result?

RSN: Well, what happened? And why is that important?

Masuzawa: It’s important because if we don’t examine what actually went on, and if instead we just speculate based on this set of “before” and “after” pictures, we might think that this was simply a result of the progress of knowledge. We might say something like, in contradiction from those enlightened premoderns, we now duly acknowledge the reality of other religions, we recognize them individually, in their own terms . . . which also makes it seem that our present state of knowledge is more tolerant and generous. A powerful self-congratulation on our part, and an easy celebration of pluralism all at once, isn’t it?

RSN: Are you saying all this talk about increase in information and knowledge isn’t true?

Masuzawa: I’m saying all this is thoroughly ideological. This scenario purports to explain something once and for all; but in fact it’s the scenario, and its logic and its compelling power, that need to be accounted for. Of course there has been a tremendous increase in knowledge, progress in science if you will. But the question is how this progress occurs and why in those particular directions, and with what particular results.

RSN: And you find answers to these questions in comparative philosophy?

Masuzawa: Let’s say I’m prepared to claim that 19th-century philology — that is to say, roughly, from [Friedrich] Schlegel to [Ernest] Renan — is an important nodal point in this history. I don’t mean this in the sense of a unilateral causal explanation; but I privilege philology as a focal point of my analysis. You look at this nodal point long enough, close enough, you’ll see that some other notable entities floating about got snagged on it, changed their course because of it, and with enormous consequences.

RSN: Including comparative religion . . .

Masuzawa: Yes, especially comparative religion. And it was comparative religion that eventually became instrumental in authorizing today’s world religions list, its pluralist logic.

RSN: How would you describe your scholarship — your theory or method?

Masuzawa: Read very closely.

RSN: Is that a method?

Masuzawa: Well, I can’t call it a theory. RSN: OK, method, then.

Masuzawa: I could say other things to elaborate, I suppose, but they all boil down to that. It’s very elemental. This of course applies also to things other than “text.” I’m looking for descriptive material that lies before you that can make amenable for interpretation. I realize I’m sounding like a simple-minded positivist here — as if I were saying “the data will speak for itself,” or something of the sort. Now, what can I say to persuade you that this isn’t what I mean? I’m describing how I get to work. I can’t initiate any good

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In the Public Interest

Dropping the Other Shoe: The Supreme Court Decision in Locke v. Davey

Dena S. Davis, Cleveland-Marshall College of Law

I n 2002 the Supreme Court decided, in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, that it was not unconstitutional under the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment for communities to use taxpayer money to send students to religiously affiliated schools as part of a voucher plan to offer educational alternatives to public school children. Ever since that decision, Court watchers have been wondering about the obverse of that question. Zelman tells communities that they may include parochial schools in voucher programs, but what about a community that wants to exclude religiously affiliated schools? Can a community choose to make that distinction, or would that constitute an unconstitutional discrimination against some schools merely because of their religious character?

Less than two years after Zelman, the Court appears to have answered that question in *Locke v. Davey*, decided February 25, 2004. Although the facts in *Locke* are fairly narrow, most scholars believe that the decision is broad enough to encompass other voucher programs for elementary and secondary school students, and possibly for faith-based initiatives in which taxpayer money is funneled to religious providers of social services.

Joshua Davey, a student in the state of Washington, was granted a state “Promise Scholarship” to provide financial assistance in college. Davey attended Northwest College and was a double major in pastoral studies and business management. He planned to enter the ministry. Promise Scholarship recipients must meet certain academic and income criteria and be enrolled in an eligible institution; in addition, students may not be passing a degree in “theology.” This exclusion is based on a clause in the constitution of the state of Washington that states “No public money or property shall be appropriated for or applied to any religious worship, exercise, or instruction.” Therefore, Davey was told that he was not eligible for a Promise Scholarship.

For AAR members, of course, an issue of strong concern is what the state of Washington meant by the study of “theology.” As Kent Greenwich, husband of AAR scholar Elaine Pagels, pointed out in an article written before the Supreme Court’s decision, what the state meant, and what judges in the appellate court thought, was far from clear. Was the state denying scholarships only to those students studying for the profession of the ministry, or to all students studying theology? And if the latter, is the study of theology the same or different than a “religion major,” “religious studies,” “the study of theology from a religious perspective,” and other terms that judges used to characterize the state’s position?

During the course of litigation, this question was sorted out. The state, in its brief, explained that its rule denies public funds for “instruction that inculcates belief (or disbelief) in God,” but not for the “secular study of the topic of religion.” Davey took this distinction and ran with it, complaining that students who majored in theology taught from a secular perspective may keep their scholarships, but students who major in theology from a religious perspective are out in the cold. Although one could fashion a free speech argument from these facts (charging “viewpoint discrimination” on the part of the state), the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit addressed only Davey’s right to the free exercise of religion, and the U.S. Supreme Court followed suit. In his opinion upholding the state of Washington, Chief Justice Rehnquist employed the term “devotional theology” to distinguish Davey’s chosen course of study from the academic study of theology and made it clear that what was at issue was Davey’s study for the purpose of pursuing the ministry. As Rehnquist said, “Training someone to lead a congregation is an essentially religious endeavor.”

By 2002, the Supreme Court had decided that states may use funds to support study for the ministry, “an essentially religious endeavor.” Further, students who attend Northwest College, a Bible college that requires a minimum of four “devotional” courses, are eligible for Promise Scholarships as long as they are not majoring in “devotional theology.” In *Zelman*, the parochial schools were required to accept Cleveland students irrespective of religious affiliation; Northwest College, according to application instructions available on its Web site, requires a letter of reference from the applicant’s pastor and states that “the applicant must be of approved Christian character.”

And what is the bottom line for Joshua Davey? He graduated from Northwest College and is now enrolled in Harvard Law School.

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From the Student Desk

Affinity in the African Diaspora

Vanessa Lovelace, Chicago Theological Seminary

Vanessa Lovelace is a PhD student in Bible, Culture, and Hermeneutics at Chicago Theological Seminary and an adjunct professor at Elmhurst College. She can be contacted at vsmill3@bghmai.net.

I have long had an affinity for the stories in the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible (I use the terms interchangeably to identify both the Christian canon that includes the books of the Hebrew Bible and the Hebrew-language scriptures I am studying). As an African-American woman, many of the stories in the Old Testament are a part of my “canon within a canon.” The stories of Hagar and Sarah, the Exodus, Daniel in the lions den, the three Hebrew boys, and Esther, to name a few, have helped shape my faith and have informed my theology. I have also felt that the Old Testament stories are stories of my people. They include our dreams, hopes, fears, wars, dis- appointments, questions of identity, and so on. For me, the Old Testament tells me “it is us.”

As much as I loved the Old Testament, however, even when I knew that graduate studies were in my future, Hebrew Bible as a concentration had not occurred to me until I encountered Renata J. Weems, assistant professor of Hebrew Bible at Vanderbilt University, in 1995. I first heard her lecture on the Song of Songs. Following the lecture, I purchased *I Asked for Intimacy and Just a Sister Away*. I believe it was a year later when I heard her preach on Leah and Rachel (Gen. 29:31–35). I was attracted to Weems’s style of writing and preaching. The exegetical attention paid to her writing and preaching, especially from a womanist perspective, for me was new and exciting. She became my role model for my area of study. Like her, I, too, wanted to bring the Old Testament to the church and academy in a new way.

When I made that decision I was not aware of the deaths of African-American women in general, and African-American women in particular, in the field of Hebrew Bible. The only Hebrew Bible scholars I was aware of besides Weems were Randall C. Bailey, Charles Copher, and Stephen B. Reid. My knowledge of New Testament scholars fared only a little better, with Cain Hope Felder, Clarice J. Martin, Abraham Smith, and Vincent Wimbush rounding out the field. By the time I entered the PhD program in Bible, Culture, and Hermeneutics (BCH) at Chicago Theological Seminary (CTS) in fall 2002, Cheryl Anderson had joined the faculty at nearby Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary as associate professor of Old Testament. So, including myself, I knew that the number of African-American women in Hebrew Bible had increased by at least two.

With this knowledge I should have been prepared for the absence of other African-American women in the BCH program at CTS. However, by the end of my first year I was feeling isolated. The sense of isolation was not the result of anything my professors or peers did or did not do; they have always been welcoming and supportive. In fact, one of the first people to reach out and offer me support and assistance was a white female. I also have established long-lasting relationships with students from other countries, ethnicities, and races. This sense of isolation was not a feeling of being left out, but rather a feeling of loneliness. The PhD program at CTS is small and the BCH program is even smaller. There were times when I wondered whether the isolation I experienced on the back of my assumptions about race and gender in biblical studies, or womanist methods of interpretation. See LOVELACE p. 27

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Tell us about the types of activities that you have been involved in since you retired.

Russell: I do not think of myself as retired, but only as rewired! I have more time to do what I want to do, but I am just as busy as ever. I continue to be connected to my colleagues at Yale because I am active in the YDS Women’s Initiative on Gender, Faith, and Responses to HIV/AIDS in Africa. I also teach a course each year in the area of feminist theologies in postcolonial perspective. A great deal of my time is devoted to teaching and co-coordinating the International Feminist DMin program at San Francisco Theological Seminary. She is currently working with the TYS Women’s Initiative on Gender, Faith, and Responses to HIV/AIDS in Africa. Russell holds a PhD and a STM from Union Theological Seminary and a STB from Harvard Divinity School. She graduated from Wellesley College in 1957, taught for 13 years in the East Harlem Protestant Parish in New York City as an educator and pastor, having been ordained as a Presbyterian minister in 1958. She taught at Manhattan College (1969–74) and Yale Divinity School (1974–2001). Russell has published 18 books, many of which are in translation. Her book Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church and her co-edited work Dictionary of Feminist Theologies characterize her commitment to feminist studies and to the renewal of the church.

What type of reading or research are you doing in retirement?

Russell: Besides reading novels, both at YDS and in the many countries where our DMin course is taught. I find that teaching helps the continuing process of action/reflection and pushes me into new areas of feminist and liberation theologies. I also enjoy studying and writing, although my schedule makes it difficult to do as much of this as I would like. My favorite forms of recreation are still sailing and swimming, along with sharing long conversations with friends over dinner!

What has given you the greatest satisfaction?

Russell: My academic career was built on a certain productive metaphor that seemed like a tremendous paradox. For me, it was being able to retire as a professor. Unlike many people, I have an infinite variety of ways to continue to serve others through our writing, research, and teaching, and we usually have the pension and health care that make this possible. I continue to share a home close to Long Island Sound with my partner, Shannon Clarkson, and can enjoy quiet hours appreciating the natural world around me.

It is a great gift to be able to retire as a professor.

What is your most enjoyable activity?

Russell: What has been the most significant change in your life since you retired?

Russell: Probably the most significant change is that I can devote much more of my attention to building networks of support with women in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This has always been an interest of mine because of my participation in advocacy work for women through the World Council of Churches. Now it includes mentoring women theologians who come to YDS and the Yale Center for Interdisciplinary Research on HIV/AIDS. These “faith fellows,” who are recommended by the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians, do postgraduate study for a year and return to their countries to work on projects that help transform attitudes and theologies regarding sex, HIV/AIDS. The mentoring extends to many continents, as I focus more on teaching and co-coordinating the International Feminist DMin program. The other change is that my quality of life at home has improved, with more time to read the newspaper, spend time around the house, and participate in church and community activities.

What would it be?

Russell: If you could design your perfect retirement, what would it look like?

Russell: A perfect retirement for me would always have lots of people, books, and projects! The one I have is really quite perfect for me, except that I would like to have the full energy and health that I had when I began teaching at age 40!

Russell: Knowing what you know now, what might you have done differently during your academic career?

Russell: My academic career was built by going around roadblocks to the full participation of women as clergy in the church and as professors in theological schools. I think my early work in East Harlem in New York taught me the importance of the struggle for justice and of partnership with others in that struggle. I, of course, am glad that some of those barriers have been removed and would like to see what it would be like to have an academic career when issues of class, race, gender, sexual orientation, and physical ability were eliminated. However, I can truly say that I would not have done it differently! I would still value the experience of working in a cross-cultural community before beginning to teach, along with a commitment to continue to struggle for justice, and to build community and networks of support through one’s teaching and example.

What would it be?

Russell: If you could give advice to your younger colleagues who are still teaching, what would it be?

Russell: The most important thing is to teach and live at every stage of your life in a way that is faithful to what you value most in your religious, social, and personal life. It does no good to say that you will support your colleagues, speak out for needed changes, and believe in your own ability after you have tenure! Your way of life is learned by practice and not a reward when you “arrive.” Then, whether or not you “arrive,” you will enjoy living with yourself and working with others. You will have more courage to face the difficulties that every life including the academic life, brings, and to find joy in your teaching.
Expanding the Academy beyond the University

Richard Amesbury, Valdosta State University

Richard Amesbury concluded a two-year term as Student Director on the AAR Board last November. He received his PhD from Claremont Graduate University in January 2003 and is now an assistant professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Valdosta State University. He can be contacted at tamesbury@valdosta.edu.

It is a full-time job in itself to be a full-time job, and, as many PhD graduates know, the effort doesn’t always pay off as planned. According to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), 44.5 percent of all American faculty are employed on a part-time basis, and more than 60 percent of all faculty appointments are non-tenure-track positions.

I recall that around the time I was elected student director in 2001, there was some discussion among the AAR’s Board of Directors of a letter from a recent graduate who had been unable to find full-time employment, and who felt betrayed by a system of graduate education that he characterized as a kind of pyramid scheme. His point was that there simply are not enough teaching jobs to go around. Indeed, the same economic pressures that lead administrators to curtail tenure-track appointments also drive increasing numbers of potential students into graduate programs—a process facilitated in the short run, but complicated in the long run, by student loans.

Such concerns are difficult to know how to address, given the structural nature of the problem. Nevertheless, they are too pressing to ignore. It seems to me that for such a multifaceted problem, a multilateral approach is required. To that end, I would like to offer two observations.

The first is that students are often the first to experience—in rather acute and direct ways—the pressures that shape this field for better or worse: what is bad for them, usually turns out to be bad for everyone else. While the increasing use of adjunct faculty is of particular concern to those preparing to enter the job market, it has profound and disturbing implications for the academy as a whole. For instance, it narrows the scope of academic freedom, jeopardizes the quality of education, and takes a toll—difficult to quantify but real nonetheless—on faculty governance and collegiality. It also is telling that women are far less represented in the adjunct ranks than they are among tenured faculty. The upshot is that, whether they realize it or not, students, professors, and administrators all share a common long-term interest in preventing the erosion of our collective profession.

Although non-tenure-track appointments are continuing to increase, it is encouraging to note that the implications of this trend are beginning to receive the attention they deserve. The governing council of the AAUP recently adopted a policy statement on “Contingent Appointments and the Academic Profession” (www.aaup.org/statements/policySTATEments.html), which makes a number of recommendations and offers practical advice to institutions concerning the conversion of contingent positions into tenure-track appointments. At some campuses and in some disciplines, adjuncts are beginning to unionize. Even if accrediting bodies fail to get involved, it may eventually come to the attention of administrators that a stable and tenured faculty is a competitive advantage when it comes to attracting students.

Moreover, it seems to me that the AAR has a constructive role to play here as the professional guild in our field. I think that responsibility cannot simply be delegated to the level of individual institutions, and that it is in fact consistent with the aims of the Academy to encourage students to seek employment outside the field, rather than to help students reframe it in the field by reconceiving the field’s borders. Thus, these efforts seem to me to be fully consistent with the AAR’s commitment to promoting and advancing the field, and I hope that they will continue with the support of the Board.

Ours is an exciting time in the study of religion, and the task of reconceptualizing the contours of our field will require input from all different quarters. In the long run, I think that what is good for the field will turn out to be good for each of us individually.

Editor’s Note:
During the Annual Meeting there will be a Special Topics Forum entitled “Alternative Careers for Religious Doctoral Students” (A2—A2).

Research Briefing

Advent/Christmas/Epiphany: Text, Message, and Seasonal Experience among Lutherans and Roman Catholics in 16th-century Germany

Mary Jane Haemmig, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota

I RESEARCHED at the Herzog-August-Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, Germany, from September 13, 2002, until December 13, 2002. I also used the state library of Lower Saxony in Göttingen.

The primary focus of my research was printed Lutheran and Roman Catholic vernacular sermons. The breadth of the available material and the limited time led me to focus almost exclusively on Advent materials. I read many

Editor’s Note:
Recipients of AAR’s research grants are asked to submit a brief report. Mary Jane Haemmig was a 2002 recipient of an Individual Research Grant. Her report is below.


Were Lutheran and Roman Catholic sermons in some way in conversation with each other? Does it appear that preachers took up concerns, arguments, or proposals in the other group’s sermons and directly responded to them? Particularly in the latter half of the 16th century, Lutherans and Roman Catholic preachers were reading each other’s materials and sometimes explicitly but more often implicitly responding to them. Clearly, preachers assumed their listeners were hearing other interpretations of the text and other theological arguments. They sought to counter those and to give their listeners the tools to counter them. Lay listeners became the focus of interest among preachers and the field of interest between Lutheran and Roman Catholic preachers.

Future Plans: I have outlined a book on Advent in the 16th century and intend to continue work on it.
The AAR is grateful for these loyal contributors whose gifts support our goals.

This list reflects donations received from July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004.
When you are making your will and are thinking about charitable bequests, have you ever considered the AAR? This would help us immensely in the future to provide for the ongoing needs of the field.

Our legal title is American Academy of Religion, Inc. 825 Houston Mill Road, Suite 300 Atlanta, GA 30293-4246
Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual Harassment Policy for the American Academy of Religion

Introduction

The American Academy of Religion is committed to fostering and maintaining an environment of rigorous learning, research, and teaching in the field of religion. This environment must be free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a discriminatory practice which is unethical, unprofessional, and threatening to intellectual freedom. It usually involves persons of unequal power, authority, or influence but can occur between persons of the same status.

Sexual harassment is illegal under Title VII of the 1972 Civil Rights Act and Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments. Sexual harassment is a gross violation of professional ethics comparable to plagiarism or falsification of research. It should be regarded and treated as such by members of the Academy. The policy of the American Academy of Religion is to condemn sexual harassment. Members of the Academy are encouraged to file complaints about sexual harassment with the appropriate administrative office of the institution where the harasser is employed or where he or she is enrolled, or with appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Background

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) of the United States government defines sexual harassment in the workplace or in the academic setting as "the use of one's authority or power, either explicitly or implicitly, to coerce another into unwanted sexual relations or to punish another for his or her refusal; or the creation of an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment through verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature."

Having friendships with students is common for teachers. It is also possible that teachers will experience attraction to students and experience students' sexual attraction to them. This cuts across gender and sexual orientation. Because of the inherent power differential between teacher and student, it is imperative that members of the Academy maintain the integrity of an environment which is not coercive, intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

The work of the Academy is best carried out in an atmosphere that fosters collegiality and mentoring. Sexual harassment can destroy or undermine this relationship.

The impact of this on the life and future of the Academy cannot be belittled or ignored. When our actions are in violation of the dignity and integrity of another person, these actions are a profound violation of professional and human relationships. These are violations because they are exploitative and abusive.

Descriptions

Sexual harassment includes all behavior that prevents or impairs an individual's full enjoyment of educational or workplace rights, benefits, environments, or opportunities. These behaviors include but are not limited to:

1. sexists remarks, jokes, or behavior
2. unwelcome sexual advances, including unwanted touching
3. requests for sexual favors
4. sexual assault, including attempted or completed physical sexual assault
5. the use of professional authority to inappropriately draw attention to the gender, sexuality, or sexual orientation of an employee, colleague, or student
6. insults, including lewd remarks or conduct
7. visual displays of degrading sexual images or pornography
8. pressure to accept unwelcome social invitations

Sexual harassment occurs from these behaviors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when any or all of the following conditions apply:

1. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used, implicitly or explicitly, as a basis for employment decisions or academic decisions affecting such individuals;
2. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment.

Such an atmosphere cannot and does not foster intellectual rigor or valuable, trusting human relationships. Both are necessary ingredients for good scholarship and professional excellence. The impact on the victim of sexual harassment can be profound. Studies on the effect of sexual harassment reveal disturbing consequences, decline in academic performance, and inhibited forms of professional interaction.

Sexual harassment has no place in the American Academy of Religion at any organizational level — formal or informal. It is behavior that we must seek to identify and eradicate.

For information on AAR's Grievance and Complaint Procedure, please go to: www.aarweb.org/about/board/resolutions/shg.asp.

Maldonado-Torres, from p.7

Editor's Note:

At the request of the Status of Women in the Profession Committee, RSN publishes the AAR's Sexual Harassment Policy every year to ensure that each member has an opportunity to read it. This same statement is always available online at www.aarweb.org/about/board/resolutions/shg.asp.
LOVELACE, from p 21

Fortunately, my feelings of isolation eventually abated. Helping to diminish those feelings was the entrance of two more African-American women into the program. I was already acquainted with one and knew of the other. We bonded immediately and they became a great source of support. We met after class each week to study together and provided one another feedback on our papers. We also met occasionally to brainstorm with each other on our areas of focus, and offer each other any other assistance needed.

Attending my first AAR/BFL Annual Meetings in Atlanta last year also tremendously helped to decrease the feeling of isolation. The opportunity to attend presentations in the African-American Biblical Hermeneutics section, Afro-American Religious History; Black Theology; and Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society groups, and to hear brilliant African diasporan scholars, male and female, was an awesome experience. I also attended the Black Presence reception and the Committee on Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession luncheon, where I had the opportunity to meet other African-American women who were either faculty members or graduate students in the Old and New Testaments. The impending separation of the Annual Meetings will most likely impact the ability of minority students like myself to meet fellow students and potential mentors since it will divide attendance of people from underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities between the two meetings.

I have also found that the Fund for Theological Education (FTE) Doctoral Fellows Program is another opportunity for African-Americans in theology and biblical studies to network with other students and faculty members in the field. In addition to receiving financial support, FTE fellows are able to participate in the Expanding Horizons Summer Conference, where they can reflect with their peers on contemporary issues confronting theological, education, scholarship, and teaching.

I have been invigorated by the experiences of the past year, both within and without the classroom. I have benefited from the readings, class discussions, lectures, study sessions, panel discussions, networking, etc. Each of these experiences has helped me become more focused and more committed to my studies as I begin my second year. I have come a long way from just having an affinity for the stories in the Old Testament to reading the Hebrew texts and developing a deeper understanding of the world from which they come. I also have gained new insights about myself, as I went from feeling isolated to feeling a part of something bigger than myself in the African diasporan commitment to biblical studies from the experiences of African people.
CALL FOR PAPERS. FROM: P.9

be sent to Professor Ann Wetherilt at wetherilt@wheatonma.edu, and should include a conference title, abstract, list of projected speakers, schedule, contact person, and a budget that indicates how the NEMAAR grant will be used. The deadline for AAR regional grants is each August; the deadlines for NEMAAR grants are October 15 and March 15. NEMAAR awards will be decided by November 15 and April 15, respectively.

2. Teaching Workshops: The topics of greatest interest to our members include course development and teaching skills. If you would like to organize a teaching workshop, NEMAAR will provide a) assistance in developing regional grants to help with funding of such conferences; b) NEMAAR grants of up to $500 to help support conference-related costs; c) assistance with resources to facilitate conference planning, including best-practice planning schedules, and access to regional e-mailings to locate presenters and/or to publicize the event; and d) inclusion in the regional Web site calendar. Proposals should be sent to Professor Barbara Darfling Smith at barbara@westmontwma.edu, and should include a workshop title, abstract, list of projected speakers and/or facilitators, schedule, contact person, and a budget that indicates how the NEMAAR grant will be used. The deadline for AAR regional grants is August 1; the deadlines for NEMAAR grants are October 15 and March 15. NEMAAR awards will be decided by November 15 and April 15, respectively.

3. Salon Series: Lunch and/or dinner series, held in different parts of the region, focusing on the work of regional scholars (these can be works-in-progress). NEMAAR will provide a) assistance in developing regional grants to help with funding of such series; b) NEMAAR grants of up to $250 to help support related costs; c) access to regional e-mailings to publicize the series; and d) inclusion in the regional Web site calendar. Proposals should be sent to Professor Michael Hartwig at PortailMFF@comcast.com, and should include a title, abstract, list of authors and/or facilitators, schedule, contact person, and a budget that indicates how the NEMAAR grant will be used. The deadline for AAR regional grants is August 1; the deadlines for NEMAAR grants are October 15 and March 15. NEMAAR awards will be decided by November 15 and April 15, respectively.

Submit a 150-word abstract for each proposed paper. By January 18, 2005, to the appropriate program unit chair listed below. Participants in the Pacific Northwest AAR Regional Meeting may present only one paper and must be registered for the meeting to participate. Papers not fitting into any of the categories below should be sent directly to Mark Lloyd Taylor, School of Theology and Ministry, Seattle University, 910 12th Ave, PO. Box 22000, Seattle, WA 98112-1090, USA; mlloyd@seattleu.edu. Panels and special topics sessions are welcome!

Theology and Philosophy of Religion: Norm Metzler, Concordia University, 2811 NE Holman, Portland, OR 97211, USA; norm.metz@csu-portland.edu.

History of Christianity and North American Religions: Papers are welcomed in any area of History of Christianity and North American Religions. Robert Haack, Religious Studies Department, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA 99258-0001, USA; hauck@gonzaga.edu.

Women and Religion: This section is co-chaired by Andy Basi, Religious Studies Department, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA 99258-0001, USA; basi@gonzaga.edu; and Kathryn Beazeale, Department of Religion, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA 98447-0003, USA; kbeazeale@plu.edu.

Asian and Comparative Studies: Nicholas F. Gier, Philosophy Department, University of Idaho, Moscow, ID 83844-3016, USA; ngier@uidaho.edu.

Religion and Society: Gary Chamberlain, Department of Theology & Religious Studies, Seattle University, 910 12th Ave, PO. Box 222000, Seattle, WA 98122-1090, USA; GCChamber@seattleu.edu.

Interreligious Dialogue with the Natural Sciences: Papers for this section should focus on conceptual dialogue with the natural sciences from the perspective of the traditions normally included under the academic discipline “history of religions.” Accordingly, papers written from Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Islamic, and Chinese religious perspectives in dialogue with the natural on such broad topics as cosmology, evolution, stem cell research, ecosmism, the relation between mind and body, the problem of suffering in light of the theory of evolution, the anthropic principle, and the problem of consciousness are especially welcome. This section is co-chaired by Paul Ingram, Department of Religion, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA 98447-0003, USA; ingram@plu.edu; and Mark Ureno, Department of Religious Studies, 1294 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403-1294, USA; mureno@doeit.uoregon.edu.

The Regional Program Committee cordially invites you to submit proposals for papers and panels for the 2005 Regional Meeting. The deadline for submissions is Monday, November 1, 2004. Each proposal should consist of a one-page abstract describing the nature of the paper or panel. Proposals are welcome in all areas of religious and biblical studies. The Program Committee also is interested in panel proposals and thematic sessions in the following areas:

1) Religion in the American West
2) Religious Thought and Theories of Religion
3) Teaching Methods and Technologies
4) Specific Religious Traditions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Native Americans, etc.).

Only those proposals received by the deadline will be considered for inclusion in the program. Presentations are limited to 20 minutes.

Student Paper Awards: Graduate students are encouraged to submit proposals. There will be awards for the best AAR and SBL student papers. The awards, which are presented during the luncheon/business meeting on Saturday, carry a stipend of $100 each. To be considered for this award, students should submit a copy of the completed paper, along with an abstract, by October 15, 2004 (papers not chosen for an award will be considered for the program). A student’s name should appear only on the cover page of the paper; student papers will be judged anonymously. Completed papers should be no longer than 15 pages double-spaced (or a 20-minute presentation). Please submit the paper as an e-mail attachment in MS Word format to nan.metz@csu-portland.edu. In addition, please submit a backup copy of your proposal by fax or regular mail. Finally, if you require any technology (Internet, projection equipment, overhead projectors, etc.) to support your presentation, you MUST request it with your proposal or it will not be provided.

The Program Committee is also pleased to invite undergraduate papers for a “Thetas Alpha Kappa National Honors Society Undergraduate Panel” on one of the topics listed above or on a topic of interest to students. There will also be awards for the best paper in the panel. Please submit completed papers, as in the graduate competition, to nan.metz@csu-portland.edu by October 15, 2004.

Program Committee Meeting: The Program Committee will meet during the AAR/SBL Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas, on Saturday, November 20, 2004, from 9–11:30 (place TBA) to determine the final program. All regular members of the AAR/SBL Rocky Mountain–Great Plains Region who are willing to serve on the Program Committee and review proposals are asked to notify Carl Raschke, Regional Vice President and Program Chair, by November 1, 2004. Proposals and student papers will be e-mailed as attachments to Program Committee members for their evaluation in early November. It is hoped that at least one faculty person from each of the participating schools in the region will serve on the Program Committee.

NB: Please send all proposals [by both e-mail MS Word attachment and by fax or U.S. mail (in case the e-mail is deleted by anti-spam software)] and inquiries to:

Carl A. Raschke
Department of Religious Studies

Pacific Northwest
Pacific Northwest Regional Meeting
April 29-May 1, 2005
Seattle University
Seattle, Washington

Rocky Mountains–Great Plains
Rocky Mountains–Great Plains Regional Meeting
April 8–9, 2005
University of Denver
Denver, Colorado
Southwest
Southwestern Regional Meeting
March 12–13, 2005
Harvey Hotel, DFW Airport
Dallas, Texas

The following is a listing of the chairs of the general overview of the paper and some program specifics. Submit proposals to the person designated in each section. Indicate if the proposal is being submitted to more than one section. The deadline for proposals is November 1, 2004.

Arts, Literature, and Religion: This year our section will intersect on the reflection of traditional religious and cultural themes. These themes might include, for instance, suffering, sacrifice, sin and redemption, apocalyptic, biblical narrative, evangelism, charity, forgiveness, prayer and meditation, mysticism, and spiritual desire, as expressed in such contemporary media as anime, hip hop, Broadway, Hollywood, fiction, TV evangelism, talk radio, the Internet, kites, the stage, and dance. Papers that consider the reverse phenomenon, the incorporation of popular media into worship, are also of interest. Panels will be constructed from submitted abstracts around similar media or themes. Alternatives to the standard reading of papers are strongly preferred. Please submit abstracts that provide both a general overview of the paper and some specific information about its presentation, and please indicate if you will require special equipment or media services. Send proposals to:

Katherine Brown Downey
School of Arts and Humanities
University of Texas at Dallas
P.O. Box 806088, MS J031
Richardson, TX 75083-0688, USA
(972) 883-8785 (office)
E-MAIL: Katherine.Downey@utdallas.edu

Comparative and Asian Studies in Religion:
The Comparative and Asian Studies in Religion section has an open call for papers. Papers and proposals in relation to all aspects of Asian religious practice and thought, both historical and contemporary, are invited. However, papers in the areas of "Healing Traditions of Asia in the Classroom” and “Jihad and progressive Islam” are of special interest. Papers related to religious art in Asia and those that employ audiovisual equipment are also welcome. These papers will be placed in one of the sessions on Asian Religions or in a joint program with the Arts, Literature, and Religion section. (Some overhead projectors and slide projectors may be available; if using a PowerPoint presentation, please make your own argument for a data project). Send proposals to:

M. Alejandro Chauel
Department of Religious Studies, M.S. 15
Rice University
6100 S. Main ST
Houston, TX 77005, USA
E-MAIL: alicex@rice.edu

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Sturm Hall 166
University of Denver
Denver, CO 80208
TEL 303-871-2306; FAX 720-528-7718
cruchelle@du.edu.


Submit two copies of proposal to Toddie Peters, Elon University, Campus Box 2260, Elon, NC 27244, USA; or e-mail proposal to tpeters@elon.edu and livemys@ Elon.edu.

(NAAA) Religion in America in (2 sessions): (2) Open call for papers on any topic on women and religion.

Open sessions in New Testament and Biblical women filmmakers. (3) Joint session with History of Religions on “New Religious Configurations in the South.” Send proposal to members of the interim steering committee: Heather Nicholson (heanst35@fiu.edu) and Monica Coleman (revaicon@law.east.net).

Session for Undergraduate Students
Undergraduate students at institutions in the Southeast Region are invited to submit papers for a special session. Open to all students, the session will feature the papers considered the best submissions by an interdisciplinary committee. Students should submit completed papers that reflect original student research of an appropriate length for presentation (approximately 12 double-spaced pages). Please submit abstracts online on a cover page providing information for the student and the faculty sponsor. Electronic submission preferred. Send submissions by December 15, 2004 to Bernadette McNary-Zak, Rhodes College (mcnary_zak@rhodes.edu). Note: Undergraduates may still submit proposals to other sessions as well.


Please use the proposal submission form available on the SECTOR Web site (www.utc.edu/sector). Proposals for joint sessions should be sent to all chairs.

Please note that, unless otherwise indicated, papers must be of such a length as can be presented and discussed within 45 minutes. Needs for audiovisual equipment must be noted on the submission form. Because of the very high cost of renting digital video projection equipment, presenters who wish to use such equipment must provide it themselves. The copying of teaching materials is also subject to the religion of the person(s) presenting the material. All program participants must be preregistered for the meeting.

Suggestions for new program units or special speakers should be sent to SECTOR’s Executive Director or to the Vice President/Program Chair of the respective society (see list of regional officers below).

AAR Academic Study of Religion and Pedagogy (2 sessions; 1 joint session): (1) Joint session with Religion, Ethics, and Society and American Biblical Hermeneutics: Teaching Environmental Ethics. (2) Teaching World Religions in the Southern United States. (3) Best practices in teaching religion and/or theology: Chair: Jennifer Manlove, jmanlove@westga.edu.

(SBL) Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament (3 or 4 sessions): (1) An invited panel of authors of recent introductions to the Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament will discuss the process of construction and introduction and the challenges faced. (2) An invited panel will review the introductory texts. (3) Roundtable: Interdisciplinary panel. (4) Open sessions. Please send proposals (or completed papers if you have never presented before) to Alice W.Hunter@vanderbilt.edu; Bryan Bibb, Department of Religion, Furman University, 3800 Poinsett HWY, Greenville, SC 29613, USA; bryan.bibb@furman.edu.

AAR (AAR) History of Christianity (2 sessions): (1) Open Topics. Any area dealing with the history of Christianity. (2) Body, Matter, Place: Possible topics include Constantinople, Manichaeism, Jansenism, Docetism, the medieval understanding of the corpus Christi, the role of the Church, the fear of Christus Corpore, the world as God's body, material culture, religious bodies in different political/cultural places such as Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and women and their bodies. Chair: Richard Pesicka, Department of Philosophy, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT 06459-3120, USA; pesicka@wesleyan.edu. Please send a hard copy of proposals.

AAR History of Judaism (2 sessions): (1) Open call: Second-Temple Judaism and Beyond. (2) Open call: Anthropology of Jewish Religious Life. Chair: Gila Gerda Schmidt, Department of Religious Studies, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996, USA; gschmidt@utk.edu.

AAR History of Religions (5 sessions, including 2 joint sessions): Any topics related to the conference theme “Body, Matter, Place” will be considered. (2) Joint session with ASOR on Death and Burial. (3) Religion in Nepal. (4) Open session with Women and Religion: New Religious Configurations in the South. (5) Open call. Chair: Alice W. Hunt@vanderbilt.edu.

Please use the proposal submission form available on the SECTOR Web site (www.utc.edu/sector). Proposals for joint sessions should be sent to all chairs.

Please note that, unless otherwise indicated, papers must be of such a length as can be presented and discussed within 45 minutes. Needs for audiovisual equipment must be noted on the submission form. Because of the very high cost of renting digital video projection equipment, presenters who wish to use such equipment must provide it themselves. The copying of teaching materials is also subject to the religion of the person(s) presenting the material. All program participants must be preregistered for the meeting.

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Ethics, Society, and Cultural Analysis: Proposals for papers or panel discussions are invited on any topic in ethics and social analysis. Possible areas include, but are not limited to, special ethics, bioethics, theological ethics, topics in the history of ethics, ethical issues in church-state relations, and comparative ethics. For a joint session with the Philosophy of Religion and Theology section, we invite submissions on recent challenges to and modifications of just-war theory brought on by the predicament of global terrorism. Send proposals for this joint session to the chairs of both sections. Other special topics of interest are reflection on retrieving tradition in ethics, teaching ethics, and the Evangelium Vitae after ten years. Send proposals to:

Tracy Mark Stout
Bluefield College
3000 College DR
Box 53
Bluefield, VA 24605, USA
E-MAIL: tmsout@bluefield.edu.

Jerry L. Faught II
Department of Religion
Oklahoma Baptist University
Box 61261
Oklahoma City, OK 73199, USA
E-MAIL: jfaught@okbu.edu.

Philosophy of Religion and Theology: Proposals are invited in all areas in philosophy of religion or in theology. Possible topics include (but are not limited to) the following: tradition as a theological resource, the interaction between philosophy of religion and philosophy of science, and issues in race and ethnicity. To mark the 50th anniversary of Soren Kierkegaard’s death (1813–1855), we invite papers exploring his theological significance for the 21st century. For a joint session with the Ethics, Society, and Cultural Analysis section, we invite submissions on recent challenges to and modifications of just-war theory brought on by the predicament of global terrorism. Send proposals for this joint session to the chairs of both sections. Proposals involving multiple presentations or panel discussions (no more than three participants) focused upon a single topic, figure, or publication will be especially welcome (other than each panelist provide an abstract, which is preferred, or supply credentials of panelists). Proposals that feature interdisciplinary or interinstitutional participation, and that promise to stimulate productive discussion, will be favored. Proposals should be no more than two pages, with the title of presentation and some sense of the argument. Include a return address, contact number, and e-mail address. Please do not submit proposals as e-mail attachments; paste them into the body of the e-mail. Submit proposals to:

Steve Oldham
University of Mary Hardin-Baylor
Box 8422 UMBH Station
900 College ST
Belton, TX 76513, USA

John Baumann
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh
Oshkosh, WI

Religion, Art, and Culture: Proposals are invited on any aspect of religion and art, including, but not limited to, music, literature, and all forms of art, as well as the ways in which religion shapes and is shaped by culture. Send proposals to:

Larry Harwood
Viterbo University, La Crosse
WI

Religion, Gender, and Sexuality (revised section): Submissions are welcome on all topics that explore the intersections between religious ideas and constructions of gender and/or sexuality. This section consolidates the Women & Religion and Religion & Sexuality sections. Send proposals to:

C. Neal Keye
College of St. Scholastica
Duluth, MN

Philosophy of Religion: Open to all topics. For information, contact Claire L. Sahlin
Texas Woman’s University
P.O. Box 425557
Denton, TX 76204-5557, USA
E-MAIL: csahlin@tawu.edu.

Religious Studies News — AAR Edition

Upper Midwest

Upper Midwest Regional Meeting (AAR/SBL)
April 1–2, 2005
Luther Seminary
Saint Paul, Minnesota

The program committee invites members of the AAR and the SBL to submit proposals for papers to be read at the regional meeting. To submit a proposal, complete the Web-based form at umw-aarsbl.org/proposal.htm by December 15, 2004. Proposals of undergraduates are made by members of the society on behalf of their students by completing the form at umw-aarsbl.org/proposal/undergrad.htm.

John Baumann
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh
Oshkosh, WI

Religion, Art, and Culture (revised section): Submissions are welcome on all topics that examine the relationships between religious ideas, including, but not limited to, music, literature, and all forms of art, as well as the ways in which religion shapes and is shaped by culture. Send proposals to:

Larry Harwood
Viterbo University, La Crosse
WI

Religion, Gender, and Sexuality (revised section): Submissions are welcome on all topics that explore the intersections between religious ideas and constructions of gender and/or sexuality. This section consolidates the Women & Religion and Religion & Sexuality sections. Send proposals to:

C. Neal Keye
College of St. Scholastica
Duluth, MN

Philosophy of Religion: Open to all topics. For information, contact Claire L. Sahlin
Texas Woman’s University
P.O. Box 425557
Denton, TX 76204-5557, USA
E-MAIL: csahlin@tawu.edu.

Multicultural Perspectives on Theology and Religion (revised section): This section seeks papers that address theology and religion from diverse racial, sexual, ethnic, and demographic perspectives. Other special topics of interest are reflection on retrieving tradition in ethics, teaching ethics, and the Evangelium Vitae after ten years. Send proposals to:

Debra Mushabir Majeed
Beloit College
Beloit, WI
E-MAIL: phil@beloit.edu

Ethics: Phillip Rolnick and Paul Wyoda
University of Saint Thomas
Saint Paul, MN

Historical Perspectives on Religion: This section seeks papers dealing with the social, cultural, intellectual, and institutional history of all religious traditions. Submissions using traditional historical or interdisciplinary methods are equally welcome.

Sherry Jordan
University of Saint Thomas
Saint Paul, MN

Religions in North America: This section seeks proposals analyzing religious traditions, practices, and communities in North America from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives. Send proposals to:

Mary Sawyer
Iowa State University
Ames, IA

Religion and Science: Greg Peterson
South Dakota State University
Brookings, SD

Religion and Ecology (new section): Submissions are welcome on any aspect of religion and ecology study, including, but not limited to, the ways in which religion shapes and is shaped by culture. Send proposals to:

John Baumann
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh
Oshkosh, WI

Religion, Art, and Culture: Proposals are invited on any aspect that explore the intersections between religious ideas and constructions of gender and/or sexuality. This section consolidates the Women & Religion and Religion & Sexuality sections. Send proposals to:

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New Testament: Exegetical studies of specific texts, theological or thematic examinations, and methodological proposals are welcome.

Jeanine Brown
Bethel Seminary
Saint Paul, MN

Jesus in Galilee (trial section): Application of recent archaeological data to the interpretation of texts and traditions about Jesus in Galilee.

Mark Schuler
Concordia University
Saint Paul, MN

Biblical Interpretation from Liberation and Multicultural Perspectives (revised section): Paper proposals should bring liberation or multicultural perspectives — for example, Latin American, Palestinian, Asian, black, feminist — to bear on the exegesis of specific bibli- cal texts (Hebrew Bible or New Testament); papers on noncanonical texts will also be considered.

Elizabeth G. Burr
University of Saint Thomas
Saint Paul, MN

Religion in the Ancient World: General or specific studies of the practice of religion in the Levant from Canaanite through the Byzantine periods.

Glen Mears
North Central University
Minneapolis, MN

Greco-Roman Religion (new section): Proposals for papers on any aspect of the history of religions in Greek and Roman antiquity are welcome.

Philip Sellow
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, MN

Early Judaism and Judaic Studies: Michael Wise
Northwestern College
Saint Paul, MN

Archaeology and Excavation Reports (sessions co-sponsored by ASOR): All topics pertaining to the archaeology of the ancient Near East.

Mark W. Chavalas
University of Wisconsin–La Crosse
La Crosse, WI

Undergraduate Research (Joint AAR/SBL)

The Upper Midwest regional meeting includes undergraduate papers, reflecting the preponderance of undergraduate institutions in the region. Members nominate outstanding papers (maximum of two from each institution).

Tom Reynolds
St. Norbert College
De Pere, WI

Revisions of Sections

In an attempt to reflect trends in the modern scholarship of religion, the regional officers have revised a number of the titles for sections. The officers intend to welcome a broader range of papers through this revision. Member comments are welcome.

Multiple Submissions

It is the policy of the region that no member presents more than one paper at a given meet- ing. Should a member submit more than one proposal, it is the responsibility of the member to so inform the conveners.

Questions and Other Topics

Questions about the upcoming meeting or the appropriate section for proposals should be directed to Deanna A. Thompson, Hamline University, 1536 Hewitt AVE, St. Paul, MN 55104, USA; dthompson@gw.hamline.edu. Proposals for papers or topics not listed in the call for papers are to be brought to her attention.

Western

Western Regional Meeting
March 12–14, 2005
Arizona State University
Tempe, Arizona

The theme of the 2005 AAR/WR Conference is “Justice and Love.”

The program committee of the AAR/WR invites members of the AAR to submit pro- posals to their various section chairs, possibly dealing with the intersection of justice and love. With the rise of interest in religion and the public expression of religious beliefs as a justification for behavior (national, regional, communal, and individual), members are invited to submit proposals that deal with the practical as well as theoretical notions of jus- tice and love. Examples include, but are not limited to, 1) a discussion of the different understandings of justice and love; 2) the ten- sions between fundamentalist and progressive notions; 3) historical/figures cases; 4) inter- faith dialogue; and 5) educational endeavors of peace and justice, sacred writings, etc. The intention of the 2005 theme is to stimulate scholarship and dialogue among faith tradi- tions and to promote the examination of the theme in each area of religious studies in order to better understand how religious per- ceptions of justice and love become operative in a rapidly changing world.

Please send proposals to specific sections listed on the AAR/WR Web site. For more infor- mation and updates, visit the Western Regional Web site at www2.sjsu.edu/wescor/ and click on the Call for Papers. If you have questions about the program, please e-mail msmalloney@earthlink.net.

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Ann Taves, Claremont Graduate University & the Claremont School of Theology

Grant Underwood, Brigham Young University

For a complete schedule, including lecture titles and participants, please visit http://religion.cgu.edu/positioningmormonism.htm or contact us at religionculture@cgu.edu, or 909-607-9592.
To their credit, social scientists who study religion today are much more likely to insist on in-depth analysis of specific traditions than to settle for superficial generalizations. Investigations of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism have all moved in this direction, paying closer attention to distinct practices and illuminating the internal diversity of each tradition. For instance, in the series of books on religious practices being edited by the University of Michigan Buddhism scholar Donald Lopez, the emphasis has shifted decidedly toward the variability of religious experience and away from seeking grand generalizations.

In sociology, the concern for detail is evident in in-depth studies of the beliefs and practices of new immigrant religious communities. In Houston, Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Miami, and several other cities, research is now being conducted on how such communities are adapting religiously and culturally to their urban environments. For instance, the University of Houston sociologists Helen Rose Ebaugh and Janet Saltman Chafetz have edited an illuminating collection of essays (Religion and the New Immigrants, AltaMira Press, 2000) that describes in detail how Asian Christians, Hispanic Christians, Hindus, and other groups are coming to terms with life in suburban Houston.

To be sure, the boundary here between social science and investigative journalism is sometimes blurred. But scholars have opportunities that journalists don’t, both in asking questions about topics that may not be newsworthy and in taking the months and years that may be required to conduct in-depth research. I think especially of the book Terror in the Mind of God (University of California Press, 2000), by Mark Juergensmeyer, a sociologist at the University of California at Santa Barbara. It is a masterful study of the relationship between religion and violence that became an instant sensation after September 11, 2001, but which was based on nearly a decade of research with accused and convicted terrorists, survivalists, and vigilante groups.

Another challenge is to harness the vast resources currently available to scholars interested in religion (especially from private foundations, and from colleges and universities) for studies having strong normative concerns. I’ve worked for many years with students in various disciplines who are interested in religion. My biggest complaint about these students isn’t that their studies lack rigor, but that they lack purpose. All too often studies are initiated because data are there, or because nobody has looked at a particular topic before, rather than because the research explores a larger concern. That is the fault of faculty members more than of students. We have done a better job of teaching methods than we have of instilling purpose.

We need studies that investigate more pointedly the great human concerns that redound in special ways to each generation, whether those are framed in terms of such problems as violence and injustice or in the language of virtue and hope. Certainly, the possible connections between terrorism and particular interpretations of religious teachings have come to be of concern, as the response to Juergensmeyer’s research shows. Recent research examining the role of religion in encouraging forgiveness, or in promoting acts of unconditional love, also fits the bill.

If the study of religion were more consistently deliberate in bringing together the realm of facts with the world of values, then it would be harder to imagine where the objections to scientific studies would lie. Of course, humanistically-oriented scholars and many in the social sciences would probably be put off by studies seeking to reduce religious impulses to hard-wired biological or economic concerns. But such studies differ from the looser and more practical ways in which most social scientists currently approach scholarship on religion.

It is in relating fact and values that scientific studies of religion can illuminate issues such as Islamist terrorist attacks, or the relative merits of faith-based service organizations. Besides reading religious texts, students should explore research on Americans’ responses to September 11, 2001, examining the roots of religious prejudice or the extent of contact between Christians and Muslims.

Beyond discussing the separation between church and state, students should do more — as exemplified by the work of the University of Pennsylvania sociologist Byron Johnson, or the team of scholars at the State University of New York at Albany under the direction of Richard Nishtar — to compare the effectiveness of faith-based and nonsectarian service organizations.

There is also a continuing role for the kind of science that William James had in mind if we consider a point that is often neglected in discussions of his argument. James recognized that we have a natural tendency to concentrate on the “local” and the “accidental,” and that these should be the starting point for any scientific inquiries. In the same spirit as James, Clifford Geertz has observed that “local knowledge” is of particular value, both in daily life and to the enterprise of the human sciences. We know ourselves only by comparing the local in which we live with the locales in which we do not. This quest for comparison and generalization probably inspired thecodad of social scientists. In the process of comparative investigation, the familiar does not become general; it becomes strange, and thus is experienced in new ways.

Scientific studies of religion need to be guided both by hubris (to venture hypotheses at all) and humility (to acknowledge when they are wrong). William James said it well: “The science of religions would forever have to confess, as every science confesses, that the subtilety of nature flies beyond it, and that its formulas are but approximations.” Those approximations, nevertheless, are valuable guides to understanding what it means to be human. And properly conceived, scientific studies of religion can contribute significantly to those approximations.

Terror in the Mind of God, page 13
Subjectivity, Universality, and the Event

The conference will bring together Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, and Slavoj Žižek with a distinguished body of internationally recognized Pauline scholars, historians of early Christianity and religious theorists to explore the question of whether St. Paul, one of the west's great anti-philosophers, is also in fact a rich resource for a philosophical conception of the engaged subject, political action, the universality of truth and the singularity of the event.