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ANNUAL MEETING REGISTRATION PACKET see inside
www.aarweb.org/annualmeet

Spotlight on Teaching
Embracing Disability in Teaching Religion
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Religious Studies News—AAR Edition is published quarterly by the American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, GA. It 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, ISSN 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 bimonthly Spotlight series, 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.

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

Annual Meeting 2005 Important Dates

May 16
Registration and Housing opens for the 2005 Annual Meeting. You must be registered to secure housing!

EIS Center registration opens.

June 14
All AAR Annual Meeting participants must be current members and registered for the Annual Meeting, or else their names will be dropped from the Program Book.

August 1
Membership dues for 2005 must be paid and address changes must be noted with AAR Member Services in order to receive an advance copy of the Annual Meeting Program Book.

September 14
Second-tier preregistration meeting rates go into effect.

September 16
Pre-registration packets mailed to those who registered from May through September 15.

October 11
EIS candidate resumes due for inclusion in binders. After October 11, CRFs may be filed onsite by candidate’s last name.

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

October 21
EIS Center preregistration deadlines.

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

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

November 18
Online preregistration registration ends at 5 p.m EST. All registrations received after this date will be processed and the materials will be available in Philadelphia at the Pennsylvania Convention Center.

November 19-22
Annual Meetings of AAR and SBL, Philadelphia, PA.

2 May 2005 AAR RSN
Philadelphia History

**Sacred Sites of Philadelphia**
Monday, November 22, 1:00 pm

The annual tour of religious sites will include, among others, Christ Church, St. George's Methodist Church, and the Arch Street Meetinghouse, associated with the early histories respectively of Anglicans, Methodists, and the Society of Friends. Rain or shine. Tickets are $10. Registration for the tour will be available through the annual meeting registration system. Alternatively, you may submit the form below.

**Effretts's Alley, 126 Effretts's Alley**

This is the oldest continuously occupied residential street in the nation and a National Historic Landmark. The streetscape of 33 Colonial- and Federal-style homes was once occupied by artisans. Two homes are open to the public.

**Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 118 N. Broad ST**

Founded in 1805, the Pennsylvania Academy has been home to America’s artists for 200 years. The Academy collects and exhibits the work of distinguished American artists, and is renowned for training fine artists. Opened in 1876 to celebrate the centennial, the museum building is a National Historic Landmark.

**Liberty Bell Center, 6th and Market STs**

Visitors are able to see an exhibit about the Liberty Bell that focuses on its origins and its modern-day role as an international icon of freedom. The exhibit illuminates the bell's storied past, with an emphasis on both liberty attained and liberty not yet realized. There are special rooms for foreign visitors to hear tapes in a dozen languages, and a new film on the Liberty Bell produced for the National Park Service by the History Channel.

**Independence Hall, 5th and Chestnut STs**

This historic site was originally built as the Pennsylvania State House, and it is where the Declaration of Independence was first adopted and where the U.S. Constitution was written.


**Eating**

Amazon Cafe, 1101 Market ST

Amazon Cafe offers a healthy alternative to fast food for Philadelphia’s visitors and tourists alike. It features a variety of soups, salads, coffee, fresh-baked goods, gourmet sandwiches and wraps, and all-natural sodas. $$$

Brasserie Perrier, 1619 Walnut ST

Owned and operated by the city’s celebrated restaurateur Georges Perrier, this is a first-rate American brasserie. The stylish restaurant and bar offers modern French cuisine with Italian and Asian influences. Zagat Survey lists Brasserie Perrier as one of the top five restaurants in Philadelphia. $$$

Corner Bakery Cafe, 1201 Filbert ST

This European-style restaurant specializes in gourmet sandwiches, salads, pasta, soups, and pastries. Sandwiches are prepared with hand-made artisan bread that is baked fresh daily. $$

Davio’s Northern Italian Steakhouse, 111 S. 17th ST

This stylish, upscale steakhouse is located in the historic Provident Bank Building just off the fashionable Rittenhouse Row shopping district. Serving Prime dry-aged steaks, it is a two-time “Best of Philly” winner, seafood and pasta, and features a four-time “Award of Excellence” wine list. $$$

El Ver, 121 S. 13th ST

This widely popular restaurant and bar offers customers a taste of modern Mexican cuisine in surroundings that incorporate everything from “Day of the Dead” motifs and assorted kirsch Mexican accents, to an homage to “70s Latin cha-cha sensation Charo, to the authentic Chicano low-rider bicycle rotating above the bar. $$

House of Chen, 932 Race ST

This Chinatown Chinatown restaurant, established in 1973, serves lunch, dinner, and late-night dinner until 5 a.m. It loves students, families, and business people. $-

Imperial Inn, 142 N. 10th ST

Celebrating its 25th anniversary as one of the best in the heart of Chinatown, this restaurant offers consistent quality, authentic Chinese food, and dim sum daily, plus wines and liquors. $$

Independence Brew Pub, 1150 Filbert ST

Widely known as Philadelphia’s oldest and most famous all-American neighborhood bar. It features an inviting neighborhood spot only one block from the Avenue of the Arts. Relaxes in their hip yet cozy interior for dinner or grab a seat outside, sip on cocktails, and people watch. R. Evan Turney, executive chef, specializes in all-American fare with an emphasis on creative, seasonal and local flavor, as well as freshly baked breads. $$$

Valani, 1291 Spruce ST

Varalli offers distinctive Mediterranean cuisine and expertly crafted cocktails in an inviting neighborhood spot only one block from the Avenue of the Arts. Relaxes in their hip yet cozy interior for dinner or grab a seat outside, sip on cocktails, and people watch. R. Evan Turney, executive chef, specializes in all-American fare with an emphasis on creative, seasonal and local flavor, as well as freshly baked breads. $$$

National Liberty Museum, 22 Chestnut ST

As Philadelphia’s oldest and most famous all-American neighborhood bar. It features an inviting neighborhood spot only one block from the Avenue of the Arts. Relaxes in their hip yet cozy interior for dinner or grab a seat outside, sip on cocktails, and people watch. R. Evan Turney, executive chef, specializes in all-American fare with an emphasis on creative, seasonal and local flavor, as well as freshly baked breads. $$$

Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2600 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy

Established in 1927, the Philadelphia Museum of Art is the only museum in the nation dedicated exclusively to collecting, preserving, and interpreting artifacts pertaining to the American Jewish experience. It serves as an important resource for information about Jewish life and culture, excluding visitors to American Jewish history through its changing exhibitions and complementary programming. The museum’s collection, numbering only 40 objects in its first year, has grown to more than 10,000 artifacts which resonate with the history of more than 300 years of American Jewish life. Closed Saturdays.

Pop's Deli, 1130 Cherry ST

With its hand-painted sign and facade, Pop’s Deli is an institution on the city. It serves up classic sandwiches and wraps, plus soups, salads, coffee, fresh-baked goods, and all-natural sodas. $$$-

Seven galleries of exhibits, interactive displays, and videos include Dale Chihuly’s 30-foot glass “Flames of Liberty,” a White House china display, and much more. Closed Mondays.

**Drinking**

Irish Pub, 1123 Walnut ST

A Philadelphia institution, the Irish Pub is a combination of Dublin saloon and all-American neighborhood bar. It features turn-of-the-century hand-crafted fireplace-wood bars surrounded by period tile. Booths line the walls, which are adorned with sports, theater, and political memorabilia.

McGillin’s Olde Ale House, 1310 Drury ST

As Philadelphia’s oldest and most famous Irish pub, this historic tavern features a roaring fireplace, high-beamed ceilings, and a unique collection of innkeeper licenses from 1860, all displayed above an antique mahogany bar. Philadelphia’s friendliest staff serves fresh regional cuisine and 22 draft beers.

**Thinking**

African-American Museum in Philadelphia, 701 Arch ST

One of the finest museums in the country and an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, it is dedicated to collecting, preserving, and interpreting the material and intellectual culture of African Americans. Closed Mondays.

National Constitution Center, 525 Arch ST

The National Constitution Center is an independent, nonprofit, and nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of, and appreciation for, the Constitution, its history, and its contemporary relevance. Through an interactive, experiential facility within the Independence National Historical Park and a program of national outreach, it ensures that “We the People” may better secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.

National Liberty Museum, 321 Chestnut ST

A new “home for heroes” on the Liberty Trail celebrates America’s ideals of freedom by honoring more than 350 outstanding individuals of all ethnic backgrounds. Seven galleries of exhibits, interactive plays, and videos include Dale Chihuly’s 30-foot glass “Flames of Liberty,” a White House china display, and much more. Closed Mondays.

**Future Annual Meeting Dates and Sites**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>November 18–21</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>November 17–20</td>
<td>San Diego, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>October 25–28</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>November 7–10</td>
<td>Montreal, QC</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>October 30–November 2</td>
<td>Atlanta, GA</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>November 18–21</td>
<td>San Francisco, CA</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Shopping**

Antique Row, Pine ST

Between 9th and 11th Streets on Pine Street is Philadelphia’s Antique Row. Collectors and casual shoppers alike find a world of treasures here, such as Colonial-era furniture, custom-designed glass, rare books, and vintage clothing.

The Gallery, Corner of 9th and 12th ST

This one-level mall is Center City’s largest shopping center, located next to the Pennsylvania Convention Center. Anchored by Strawbridge’s and Big K-Mart, it offers over 130 stores and eateries, and a unique collection of innkeeper licenses from 1860, all displayed above an antique mahogany bar. Philadelphia’s friendliest staff serves fresh regional cuisine and 22 draft beers.

Liberty Place, 1625 Chestnut ST

This landmark Center City location under an inviting glass dome features 70 high-end stores including The Coach Store, The Cartier, Tiffany, Abercrombie, and the European-inspired Parfumerie Douglas.
Where to Stay in Philadelphia

**Boutique Hotels**

Sofitel Philadelphia, 120 S. 17th ST
On the renovated site of the former Philadelphia Stock Exchange at the corner of 17th and Sansom Streets, this hotel is located in the heart of the business district, close to the historic center. It has many distinctive French touches: a fresh-cut rose at room service, perfumed baths, and impeccable service. Amenities: fitness center, on-site restaurant, dataport, and iron/board. $128 single/$154 double/$169 triple/$185 quadruple.

Latham Hotel Center City, 135 S. 17th ST
This is a classic boutique hotel that measures up to the finest European tradition of small, elegant, professionally staffed hotels. Built in 1907, it offers the latest amenities, while the hotel’s wood paneling and marble lobby continue to evoke the elegance of a simpler age. Amenities: fitness center, business center, coffeemaker, hair dryer, iron/board, free wireless Internet access, and complimentary newspaper. $128 single/$154 double/$169 triple/$185 quadruple.

**Luxury Hotels**

Crowne Plaza Philadelphia Center City, 1800 Market ST
The 25-story Crowne Plaza Philadelphia Center City is a first-class, full-service hotel set in the heart of the Philadelphia downtown business district, and is just seven miles from Philadelphia Airport. One of the city’s leading hotels, it harmoniously blends efficiency with comfort and elegance, and is committed to guest satisfaction at every level. Amenities: airport shuttle, iron/board, business center, fitness center, coffeemaker, dataport, hair dryer, newspaper, and dry-cleaning/laundry. $125 single/$151 double/$164 triple/$174 quadruple.

Hilton Garden Inn Center City, 1100 Arch ST
Located 25 steps from the Pennsylvania Convention Center and adjacent to the historic Reading Terminal Market, the Hilton Garden is a short walk from the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall. Amenities: fitness center, indoor pool, in-room refrigerator, microwave, coffeemaker, and iron/board. $119 single/$119 double/$129 triple/$129 quadruple.

Loews Philadelphia Hotel, 1200 Market ST
This luxury hotel is located in the landmark historic PSFS bank building across from the convention center. Built in the early 1930s, its Art Deco design is highlighted by architectural features from its days as a bank. For guests who can’t bear to leave their pets at home, Loews loves pets and there is no charge for bringing one. Amenities: spa, fitness center, business center, safe, in-room printer/fax/copier, coffeemaker, and iron/board. $135 single/$165 double/$180 triple/$195 quadruple.

**Headquarters Hotels**

Philadelphia Marriott Downtown Hotel, 1201 Market ST
The headquarters hotel is a world-class facility designed to exceed the expectations of guests. Commanding a towering presence at the hub of Philadelphia’s business and historic districts, it is connected to the Pennsylvania Convention Center. Amenities: coffee/tea in-room, business center, newspaper, toll-free local phone calls, laundry service, room service, dry-cleaning, fitness center, hair dryer, and high-speed Internet access. $132 single/$162 double/$177 triple/$190 quadruple.

Radisson Plaza-Warwick Hotel, 1701 Locust ST
Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Radisson Plaza-Warwick Hotel was constructed in 1926 and features fashionable English Renaissance architecture. It is located just off Rittenhouse Square, the city’s most prestigious residential, commercial, and business district. Amenities: high-speed Internet access, fitness center, business center, dataport, coffeemaker, iron/board, and complimentary newspaper. $123 single/$144 double/$164 triple/$184 quadruple.

**Economy Hotels**

These hotels are known best for providing good, clean, basic rooms at reasonable rates. The AAR has negotiated some special low prices for the Annual Meeting.

Doubletree Hotel Philadelphia, 237 S. Broad ST
This high-rise hotel occupies an ideal location on the Avenue of the Arts, with a spectacular view of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. Amenities: airport shuttle, fitness center, indoor pool, dataport, iron/board, and coffeemaker. $123 single/$144 double/$164 triple/$174 quadruple.

Embassy Suites Hotel Center City, 1776 Ben Franklin PKWY
This premier all-suite, full-service hotel is located just off historic Logan Square in the heart of downtown Center City. It is just a few blocks to the business district and City Hall. Also enjoy its close proximity to the Franklin Institute Science Museum, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Academy of Natural Sciences, and the Rodin Museum. Amenities: fitness center, dataport, complimentary breakfast, in-room refrigerator, microwave, coffeemaker, and iron/board. $123 single/$154 double/$164 triple/$174 quadruple.

Holiday Inn Express Midtown, 1305 Walnut ST
The hotel is in walking distance of Philadelphia’s historic, shopping, theater, business, and government districts. Amenities: complimentary breakfast, high-speed Internet access, free local calls, and passes to Bally Total Fitness. $118 single/$138 double/$138 triple/$138 quadruple.

Hotel Windsor, 1700 Ben Franklin PKWY
This all-suite hotel offers spacious studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom suites. Amenities: 24-hour fitness center, kitchens, free high-speed Internet access, complimentary continental breakfast, and iron/board. $123 single/$144 double/$164 triple/$184 quadruple.

Wyndham at Franklin Plaza Hotel, 17th and Race STs
Located just four blocks from the Pennsylvania Convention Center, the Wyndham is close to everything you need. Each room features pillow-top mattresses with luxurious bedding, high-speed Internet access, and ergonomic chairs. Amenities: fitness center, indoor pool, coffeemaker, iron/board, and dataport. $113 single/$138 double/$159 triple/$159 quadruple.

CONSTRUCTIVE THEOLOGY
A Contemporary Approach to Classical Themes, with CD-ROM
Edited by SERENE JONES and PAUL LAKELAND
“Constructive Theology celebrates a rich, kaleidoscopic variety of theological structures, genres, arguments, and insights. The authors are committed to retrieving the deep insights of the classical tradition by bringing contemporary problems and experiences to bear on the work of theological construction.... A fresh engagement with Christian faith.”

—PETER C. HODGSON, Vanderbilt Divinity School

The CD-ROM with Libronix Digital Library System contains the fully searchable text, chapter summaries, discussion questions, a glossary, weblinks, and a guide to writing research papers in theology.

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1-800-328-4648
fortresspress.com

The Pennsylvania Convention Center combines contemporary architecture with the renovation of one of the city’s important historical buildings, the Reading Terminal Headhouse.
Employment Information Services Center

At every Annual Meeting, the AAR and the SBL jointly host the Employment Information Services Center (EIS). The EIS Center is designed to help ease the communication process between candidates looking for jobs in the field of religion, and employers who have jobs to offer. To accomplish this, we offer services such as job postings, candidate credentials for review, a message center through which registrants communicate, and an interview facility.

This year, the EIS Center will be held in Franklin Hall at the Marriott Philadelphia Downtown Hotel, the headquarters hotel of this year’s Annual Meeting. We will open on Friday night at 7:00 pm with a short orientation session. Come and receive your Annual Meetings special edition of Openings, and learn how you can best utilize EIS. Immediately after the orientation, the message center will be open for use. We will be fully operational all day Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, and a half day on Tuesday.

EIS preregistration opens on May 16, 2005, and closes on October 21, 2005. Please see www.aarweb.org/emploi for other important information, including deadlines and registration information.

New this year

Job advertisements registered for the EIS Center will be given a special icon on the Upcoming Unions Web site. Candidates will be able to find out which jobs are interviewing at the Annual Meeting, and whether those interviews will be open or pre-arranged. See the EIS Web site for details.

Volunteering for Committee Service in the Academy

Much of the work of the Academy outside of the Annual Meeting is accomplished through its committees. These groups are composed of individuals who contribute their time and talents to the AAR’s mission of fostering excellence in teaching and scholarship in religion. For the ongoing vitality of the Academy’s work, it is important to continually welcome new voices into the conversation and to achieve a broad and diverse range of member participation in these leadership positions. The Academy encourages letters of nomination for committee appointments, including self-nomination. These appointments are made by the president in consultation with the executive director. For more information about AAR’s committees, task forces, and juries, visit this link from our Web site: www.aarweb.org/aboutboard.asp. Please send nominations, including a curriculum vitae or resume, to Myesha D. Jenkins at mjenkins@aarweb.org.

Annual Meeting Chairs Workshop

Enlarging the Pie: Strategies for Managing and Growing Departmental Resources

The Academic Relations Committee and the Academic Relations Program are pleased to offer a Chairs Workshop during the Annual Meetings of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on Friday, November 18, 2005, from 9 AM to 4 PM.

The daylong workshop, “Enlarging the Pie: Strategies for Managing and Growing Departmental Resources,” will deal with the increasing demands of scarce resources facing departments today. The challenges of finding, maintaining, and securing resources — economic, physical, and human — make department chair duties even more stressful. This interactive workshop, featuring breakout and question-and-answer sessions, will help participants identify and define resources, and how to use them wisely.

Through the guidance of workshop leaders, chairs can exchange personal narratives and strategies for addressing key challenges: fundraising, increasing a department’s visibility, developing faculty and personnel; growing students; budgeting and financial management; growing links to other departments; and identifying, procuring, and utilizing physical space. Additionally, chairs will be taught the value of assessing the credibility of their institutions, and how that knowledge can be used when targeting valuable resources. Discussion leaders are all experienced chairs who have dealt with the demands of leading religious studies departments. Lunch is included and participants can choose afternoon sessions that will benefit each individual.

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.

The topics for past Chairs Workshops have been:

2004 Annual Meeting - Being a Chair in Today’s Consumer Culture: Navigating in the Knowledge Factory

2003 Annual Meeting - Scholarship, Service, and Stress: the Tension of Being a Chair

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

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

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

2000 Annual Meeting - Assessing and Advancing the Religious Studies Department

We look forward to seeing you in Philadelphia!

The Academic Relations Committee: Fred Glennon, Chair; Richard M. Carp, Chester Gillis, Laurie L. Patton, and Chung-Fang Yu

For more information, contact Kyle Cole, Director of College Programs, at kc@aarweb.org, or by phone at 404-727-4725.

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

Register by Fax: 404-727-7959
Register by surface mail: Chairs Workshop
American Academy of Religion
825 Houston Mill Road NE
Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30329

For information on enrolling your department, see www.aarweb.org/department.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

• Fundraising
• Chair/personnel development
• Growing students

• Budgeting and financial management
• Growing links to other departments
• Increasing your department’s visibility
• Institutional credibility

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

CONTACT INFORMATION

You may check your membership information at www.aarweb.org/)

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, 2005 ($100.00 on site).

PAYMENT INFORMATION

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

☐ Credit Card (Check one):

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover

Credit Card Number

Expiration Date

☐ CE

Cardholder Signature

Name on Card (Please Print)

For more information, contact Kyle Cole, Director of College Programs, at kc@aarweb.org, or by phone at 404-727-4725.

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The International Focus of the Annual Meeting

Reflections on San Antonio
Elias K. Bongmba, Rice University

Each Annual Meeting of the AAR now includes a focus on a specific international region. Initiated by AAR’s International Connections Committee (ICC), the purpose is to engage members of the academy with scholarship on religion by scholars in different regions of the world. The international focus is an important part of the AAR, which has included the enhancement of the international dimension of the academy as one of its strategic objectives during the next four years leading up to its centennial. AAR has over 9,000 members, of which 13 percent are international members. More than 700 international scholars registered to attend the Annual Meeting in San Antonio last year, and when the AAR convenes in Washington, D.C., in 2006, we expect that number to be even larger.

The international focus has added a new dimension to my experience of the Annual Meeting by helping me focus on the worldwide community of scholars of religion who come to the meetings every year. As a member of the ICC, I have enjoyed going to the annual breakfast honoring our international colleagues, attending the special sessions on the program, and building valuable contacts. Participating in these events in San Antonio last November was very meaningful for me. In addition to the breakfast, I attended a session organized by the Religion in Latin America title, and the Caribbean Group titled “Transmodern Dialogues: A Panel in Celebration of Enrique Dussel’s 70th Birthday.” I went to this session for two reasons. One was to hear the panelists: Ta’rir Ramadan (although I knew he would not be there); Marc Ellis of Baylor University; Eduardo Mendietta of SUNY; Stony Brook; Lewis Godden of Temple University; Walter Mignolo of Duke University; Valera Perez of UC–Berkeley; and Enrique Dussel himself. My second reason was to meet Enrique Dussel. I thanked him for his contribution to the study of religion.

The panelists highlighted Dussel’s engagement with the crisis of modernity and its civilization of conquest through historical, philosophical, and theological analysis. He has done this with an interdisciplinary focus that has challenged scholars from a variety of disciplines to rethink the project of modernity and its capitalist logic through a conceptual framework animated by the philosophies of Heidegger and Levinas and sharpened by his own conceptual formation. This method shields the pretensions behind universalisms that have submerged the discourse of “the other” for a long time. Dussel, a key figure in liberation theology and philosophy, has carried on an ongoing dialogue with major philosophical thinkers and theologians by helping to create the “other” among us. Writing a Latin American perspective of the human face to which we are called to responsibility, the speakers from different disciplines celebrated Dussel’s remarkable contribution to the question of “the other” because it has opened the doors for many to think of the human other in politics, history, literature, the arts, religion, theology, and critical theory.

As things often happen, I left that session to attend another meeting about a future international focus before Dussel himself responded to the presentations. Although I did not hear him respond, I was fortunate to meet him and some of his friends at a dinner celebrating his 70th birthday hosted by Professor Lewis Godden. It is at these dinners that I talked with him about his approach to the ethics of liberation, democratic theory, the fate of democracy in different parts of the world, academic freedom, and the loss of freedoms around the world, even in the U.S., after the events of September 11th. It was an opportunity for me to share my stories, to hear Dussel’s stories, and to realize that his own life reflects the “underside of modernity” even in his own country. This informal gathering gave me an opportunity to learn from scholars such as Walter Mignolo and Laura Pérez, who work in different fields but who came to the Annual Meeting to celebrate Dussel because his work has influenced their own research, teaching, and writing. During a discussion about one of his texts that I have used in class, I pointed out to him that I was very sad when I learned that book is out of print.

With an infectious smile on his face, he reached into his briefcase and handed me a CD-ROM. When I looked at it, I realized that it contained nearly all of his publications. I hesitated because I thought he should keep his life work, but he told me to accept it as a gift for the materials for my classes as needed.

I know we all have different agendas when we attend the Annual Meeting, but I invite you to attend at least one international focus event while at the Philadelphia meeting. Make an effort to meet a colleague from a different part of the world who got acquainted with him or her, share stories, and discuss his or her work. These events are an opportunity for us to foster the AAR’s commitment to strengthen ties with our international colleagues who provide us with a window on the world, sometimes in difficult circumstances.

For more information about the international focus on Africa and African scholarship for the 2006 Annual Meeting, please contact Elias K. Bongmba, Rice University (bongmba@rice.edu), and Kip Elolia, Emmanuel School of Religion (elolia@cmc.edu), or the Chair of ICC, Mary McGee, Columbia University (mcm3@cumcolumbia.edu). We welcome your suggestions.
Controversy over Mel Gibson’s movie The Passion of the Christ and Bush reelection among top religion stories of 2004

No. 1 (tie): Religion and politics play a major role in the presidential campaign and the election; some studies credit evangelicals with providing George Bush with his margin of victory. The faith commitments of both Bush and John Kerry stir many arguments pro and con, as do registration efforts by some churches.

No. 1 (tie): The movie The Passion of the Christ draws record crowds, spurs many discussions about its possible anti-Semitism, violence, faithfulness to scripture, and interpretation of the atonement. DVD sales also soar.

No. 3: Gay marriages are performed for the first time in Massachusetts, following the state supreme court ruling. Municipalities in other states try to do the same, but the ceremonies are invalidated. Religious groups are mobilized on both sides of the issue. The Federal Marriage Act fails to clear the Senate, but 13 states pass amendments on election day against gay marriage.

No. 4: Several Catholic archbishops and bishops say they will deny communion to pro-choice politicians, a move believed inspired by the nomination of the first Roman Catholic in 44 years to the presidency, John Kerry. A Catholic task force leaves the decision up to the individual bishops.

No. 5: The Anglican Lambeth Commission criticizes both liberals and conservatives, pleases neither, and apparently does nothing to heal the rift caused by last year’s installation of a gay bishop in New Hampshire. Churches in a number of states leave the Episcopal Church and some affiliates with third-world disciples. A new network of dissenting churches forms.

No. 6: The Supreme Court upholds “under God” in the Pledge of Allegiance on technical grounds; it earlier upholds by 7-2 the right of Washington State to rescind a scholarship to be used for ministry study. The court also blocks the implementation of the Child Online Protection Act; agrees to hear a case on Ten Commandments displays; and declines to hear a Catholic Charities appeal from California on being forced to pay for employees’ contraceptives.

No. 7: Debate continues over the role of the United States in Iraq; some religious groups call for withdrawal, others step up support for the troops. In Iraq, Muslim clerics play various roles in regard to the country’s future. Some leaders in American mosques are arrested under the Patriot Act.

No. 8: Two lesbian preachers are tried in the United Methodist Church. Karen Dammann is acquitted in Washington State, and Beth Stroud is found guilty in Pennsylvania, symbolizing the church’s serious rift. Some leaders call it a struggle about a possible amicable split. Meanwhile, the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. General Assembly upholds by just four votes a ban about “unrepentant homosexual practice” by its officers; the Reverend Stephen Van Kuiken of Ohio earlier has his conviction for performing gay marriages overturned on appeal because of a wording interpretation.

No. 9: The largest settlement in the Catholic sex-abuse cases is reported in Orange County, California. The dioceses of Portland and Tucson go into bankruptcy because of such settlements and the diocese of Spokane is considering that option. Lawsuits continue in other states. Meanwhile, former Springfield (Mass.) Bishop Thomas Dupre becomes the first bishop indicted in a child abuse case, but escapes prosecution because of the statute of limitations.

No. 10: High tensions continue in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, though there is a decrease in violence compared to the previous year. Psychiatrists call for withdrawing investments from companies that profit from Israel’s occupation of Gaza and the West Bank, triggering some Jewish groups to complain.

The online survey was conducted December 10–14, 2004. Of the 260 eligible RNA members, 41 percent, or 108 journalists, responded. Members were required to rank their top 20 choices, with no tie votes allowed.

The Religion Newswriters Association is the nation’s only association for people who write about religion in the nonreligious news media. RNA has conducted this annual end-of-year survey for more than 30 years.
The American Academy of Religion announces a new major new program initiative aimed at serving the scholarly and professional needs of faculty in theological education and theological education. The purpose of the Theological Programs Initiative is to address the need to adequately support the scholarly and professional needs of our members in theology and theological education.

Executive Director Barbara DeConcini recently appointed Carey J. Gifford to this new position. Gifford previously served as Director of Academic Relations.

There is a general perception among many theological educators that the Academy, like other scholarly guilds: (1) often under-values, and may even regard as suspect, the scholarly project of faculty in theological education; (2) considers confessionally-based theology schools academically inferior to theology schools that are not so; (3) claims a mission inclusive of theology and theological education but does not devote adequately to this mission in its current range of programs, services, and resources. The Theological Programs Initiative is being launched to address these issues.

A critical issue for theological education faculty is how to be good scholars and good educators of future clergy. Their educational task is different from that of the graduate school professor who is training future researchers and the undergraduate professor who is largely providing general liberal education. Since the AAR includes teaching for religious leadership within its understanding of the scholarly and professional vocation in the field, it can fill a helpful role by promoting the value of theological education at a time when many churches are calling into question the need for a classical theological education for all of its members.

“I applaud the Board for initiating this program. I think this is one of the most significant developments in the Academy in the past fifteen years — and one very dear to my own heart. We are working closely with our colleagues in the Association of Theological Schools and with other groups to identify ways in which we can support and contribute to the theological education enterprise through this new program,” commented DeConcini.

Guiding Students into the Graduate Study of Religion and Theology

Every professor has at one time or another received this question: “I am thinking of going on to graduate school in religion or theology and want to know where I should go to study (you fill in the subfield here).” In many cases we have given the student the names of those institutions that we were familiar with, either from our own direct experience or from reading articles by our colleagues or attending meetings, seminars, etc. With the intention of helping faculty give students useful information on where to do their graduate education, the AAR has created a searchable database of programmatic information on all fully accredited universities, theological schools, and seminaries in the U.S. and Canada where academic doctoral degrees are offered in religious studies or theology are offered.

Some background information may be helpful. In the fall of 2002, the Academy conducted a survey of such institutions. We defined academic doctoral programs as those in which students earn a doctorate with the intent and purpose of becoming scholars, researchers, or professors. The purpose and nature of such a doctoral degree would be to prepare individuals for research and teaching in religion and theology. Typically the resultant degree would be the PhD, ThD, STD, DHL, DLS, or DTh. We were not soliciting information on professional doctoral degrees (such as the DMin), where the resultant degree would be the DMin.

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As a scholar of religion, the AAR proclaims, first of all, certain standards: it is committed to the advancement of learning. While membership in the AAR is, of course, open to all, the assumption is that all members of the AAR share a commitment to the pursuit of scholarship, teaching, and learning in the academic field of religion. We do so, as do our colleagues in other fields, with a commitment to strict canons of scholarship. As a learned society, the AAR has two foci — the scholarly and the professional aspects of our vocation. The reality that a learned society has both a scholarly and a professional dimension is not always appreciated.

As a scholarly society, the AAR supports our scholarship and our pursuit of new avenues of understanding the phenomenon of religion in all of its facets. We expect the AAR to provide a forum of our voices, our teachers and scholars. This support happens at our Annual Meetings, in our journal JAAR, in our publication series, and in our grants programs. While as individual members we may not always remember all the areas of AAR involvement and activity, we do know of its commitment to serve us as individual members and to our field as a whole. The AAR commitment in this area is rather self-evident, I would like to think, and should generate little discussion.

Still, there are occasional disagreements. The AAR board decision about the Annual Meeting was controversial, although it was made, in good conscience, with the objective of enhancing the Academy's scholarly service to its almost 10,000 members. Periodically, someone calls into question the parameters of what should be included in the academic study of religion and, therefore, what should be part of the AAR. The focus tends to be on specific panels at our Annual Meetings and the description by outsiders of the AAR as “out of control” or “wild” or “dominated by liberals” (whatever those descriptions mean!). Such charges not only ignore our legacy of having our Annual Meetings formed by dozens and dozens of steering committees in the various groups, consultations, etc., but they also seem to fail to identify the vitality that characterizes our field. Most of the papers at our Annual Meetings are on theological topics! The AAR has no predetermined notion of what comprises the academic study of religion, but is open to all explorations. As our mission statement puts it, we welcome into our conversation all perspectives pertaining to the study of religion. The AAR is not a single, mega-ship setting out for a predetermined harbor, but a flotilla of vessels, large and small, seeking to head into the same direction.

Having said all this, it is important to add that the AAR is also something else. It is also a professional society, and that notion might also trigger discussion among us. The concerns of a professional society go beyond the immediate scholarly and pedagogical boundaries of academic work; they also focus on the setting and context of the scholarly and pedagogical efforts. These efforts are taken for granted, and broader and more “professional” topics, such as faculty compensation, the use of adjunct teachers, academic freedom, plagiarism, departmental governance, and underrepresented groups, become important. None of these topics may have a direct bearing on our teaching or scholarship; indirectly, however, they crucially influence and even determine our work as scholars and teachers since virtually all of us are related to institutions, where such issues confront us almost daily. We are not only scholars; we are also professionals, mistakenly often labeled “employees.” Once you think about it, our scholarly work cannot be separated from our professional agenda.

This professional aspect seems particularly relevant for us in the academic study of religion. Our field is particularly vulnerable to the whims of college or university administrations who question the utility of what we are doing and find priorities in seemingly flotilla of departments, for example, tourism science administration, over such a mundanely traditional field as religion. To be a professional society means not only being concerned about the topics mentioned; it also means taking positions that might not be universally shared. Not all AAR members will have supported the intervention of the executive committee of the AAR in protesting the refusal of the State Department to issue a visa to Tarig Rama- dan, one of our planned plenary speakers at San Antonio. I trust, however, that all of us will agree that particularly in the field of religion, the AAR must be sensitive to issues of academic freedom.

I hope that all of us will acknowledge that forces affect our teaching and scholarship quite apart from what happens in our classrooms and our studies. The AAR should have a role in fighting for academic freedom. To be sure, some will see this as an intrusion into areas where we as scholars have neither competence nor experience. This is true enough, and my understanding of a professional society does not at all mean that the AAR should take a position on every public policy issue that comes along. That would be politics, not professional concern. There is a simple way of determining the parameters of involvement: does a particular issue or topic have a bearing on the academic and professional lives of those who teach religion?

I would like us all to offer our commitment to those two foci of the American Academy of Religion, even as I welcome hearing your views of the matter!
1999–2000 Undergraduate Religion Course Offerings in the United States and Canada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart A. Undergraduate courses offered in 1999–2000</th>
<th>Chart B. Courses required for a major in a department or program in 1999–2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses Taught</td>
<td>Number of Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Bible</td>
<td>541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity – New Testament</td>
<td>693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity – Theological</td>
<td>525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Religion</td>
<td>423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity – Old Testament</td>
<td>653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to World Religions</td>
<td>539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity – Historical</td>
<td>579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Miscellaneous)</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian – Ethics</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Western Religions</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judaism</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Eastern Religions</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Religions</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Literature, and Religion</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Religion</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian – Cultural</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy of Religion</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Sacred Texts</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Studies</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender and Sexuality</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinduism/Jainism/Sikhism</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Scientific Study</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial and Ethnic Studies</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confucianism/Taoism</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Religions</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Sacred Texts</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judaism</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Religions</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian – Cultural</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Studies</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender and Sexuality</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritual and Performance</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial and Ethnic Studies</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Religious Movements</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Sacred Texts</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Sacred Texts</td>
<td>66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction to Sacred Texts</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judaism</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Chart C. Number of departments that offered courses in 1999–2000 | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Course | # of Institutions teaching course | % of Responding Institutions |
| Christianity – New Testament | 750 | 83.6% |
| Christianity – Old Testament | 704 | 78.5% |
| Christianity – Theological | 638 | 71.1% |
| Introduction to Bible | 619 | 69.0% |
| Introduction to World Religions | 613 | 68.3% |
| Christianity – Theological | 582 | 64.9% |
| Introduction to Religion | 500 | 55.7% |
| Christian – Ethics | 481 | 53.6% |
| Philosophy of Religion | 418 | 46.6% |
| Ethics | 417 | 46.5% |
| Comparative Religions | 414 | 46.2% |
| American Religion | 380 | 42.4% |
| Judaism | 362 | 46.4% |
| Introduction to Eastern Religions | 352 | 39.2% |
| Introduction to Western Religions | 322 | 35.9% |
| Other (miscellaneous) | 304 | 33.9% |
| Women’s Studies | 294 | 32.8% |
| Buddhism | 291 | 32.4% |
| Islam | 290 | 32.3% |
| Christian – Cultural | 287 | 32.0% |
| Arts, Literature, and Religion | 278 | 31.0% |
| Gender and Sexuality | 263 | 29.3% |
| Hinduism/Jainism/Sikhism | 245 | 27.3% |
| Introduction to Sacred Texts | 241 | 26.9% |
| Social Scientific Study | 210 | 23.4% |
| Racial and Ethnic Studies | 186 | 20.7% |
| Confucianism/Taoism | 183 | 20.4% |
| Indigenous Religions | 166 | 18.5% |
| New Religious Movements | 164 | 18.3% |
| Ritual and Performance | 146 | 16.3% |

Note: 897 institutions responded to the survey. Source: AAR Survey of Undergraduate Religion and Theology Programs in the United States and Canada. Further Data Analysis: Summary of Results. The full survey and analysis is available at www.aarweb.org/department/census/undergraduate.

Watch for the International Focus at the Annual Meeting

2002 Canadian
2003 Japanese
2004 Latin American
2005 Eastern and Central European
2006 African
2007 Chinese

... contributions to the study of religion

Special Topics Forum, Distinguished Visitors, Panels, Films, and more...

For more information: International Connections Committee

www.aarweb.org/icc

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Beyond the Annual Meeting

Status of Women in the Profession Committee

Status of Women in the Profession Committee

RSN: What does your committee do?

SWP: The Status of Women in the Profession Committee recommends policies and good practices to assure the full access and academic freedom of women within the Academy and develops programs to enhance the status of women in the profession. It is committed to supporting women at every stage of their studies or employment in the academy in the field of religion. The committee (SWP — known as “swp” to insiders) was formed in 1991, and Rebecca T. Alpert has been the chair for the past six years.

RSN: What makes the work of the committee important for the Academy?

SWP: The Status of Women in the Profession Committee is important to the Academy because through its conversations with members of the AAR, with planning groups such as the Women’s Caucus and the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession Committee, and with program units including Women and Religion, Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection, Lesbian-Feminist Issues in Religion, and Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society, it creates and supports a viable space for women to explore scholarly issues, to discuss their experiences in the academy, and to network with each other.

To make this space possible, SWP has strongly emphasized mentoring. A very successful event has been the Mentoring Roundtable at each AAR Annual Meeting. SWP, in cooperation with the Women’s Caucus, organizes the yearly brown-bag luncheon, which is open to all women in the Academy. Each year several midcareer and senior AAR scholars gather with newer and emerging scholars in the field to discuss pertinent issues such as choosing an adviser, getting published, contract negotiation, and the challenge of balancing work and personal commitments. Attendees are asked to bring questions and a lunch. Previous participants have included Katie Cannon, Elizabeth Castelli, Susan Henking, Judith Plaskow, and Emalie Townes. SWP has also played a unique role in the Academy by drafting the organization’s Sexual Harassment Policy, which was adopted in 1996, and by offering an online academic advice column, “Academic Abby,” which is accessible on SWP’s home page on the AAR Web site.

RSN: What contributions have different members made?

SWP: Everyone cheerfully pitches in!

RSN: What have been some of the major initiatives of the committee?

SWP: A key initiative is SWP’s Special Topics Forum at each AAR Annual Meeting, which SWP has designed to increase the visibility of feminist scholars of religion on issues of public concern. Recent topics that have been discussed by panels of international scholars include mapping the status of women in the field; women, religion, and global conflict; a dialogue on strategies for responding to militarism; and religion and politics in “faith-based initiatives.”

In her presentation at the 2004 AAR Annual Meeting Special Topics Forum, Judith Plaskow noted the many challenges facing women in the academy: “As a member of recent reports on the academy and family life have expressed it, women are coming up through a ‘leaky pipeline’ and are leaving or being pushed out of the academy at several points between receiving a doctorate and being promoted to full professor.” The newest initiative of SWP is a project that seeks to plug the leaks in the “leaky pipeline” of women’s career path from doctorate to full professor. Through bringing together diverse scholars in a public forum for critical discussion, the SWP Special Topics Forum “promotes research and scholarship in the field of religion, advances publication and scholarly communication in the field of religion, contributes to the public understanding of religion, and welcomes into our conversation the various voices in the field of religion, supporting and encouraging diversity within the American Academy of Religion.”

Through its emphasis on personalizing the experience of teaching and scholarship by creating a supportive network, SWP’s Mentoring Roundtable “supports and encourages members’ professional development, including fostering excellence in teaching in the field of religion, and helps to advance and secure the future of the academic study of religion.”

SWP’s contribution to Mary Hunt’s A Guide for Women in Religion “supports and encourages members’ professional development and advances publication and scholarly communication in the field of religion.”

RSN: Why does the work of the committee matter to you? How has your service affected your understanding of both the small “a” and capital “A” academy? Also, committee work can be demanding. What makes you willing to give so freely of your time and talent? (How has this work been fulfilling in scholarly or professional ways, for instance?)

SWP: The work of SWP humanizes the academy by encouraging sharing and cooperation among members of the AAR. Our need is diversity of voices to address critical issues in the study of religion, and to understand the public presence of religion in the world today. SWP helps create an environment in which many voices are encouraged, recognized, and valued.

The members of SWP are honored to work with each other, and to be part of the lineage of hard-working, committed women who have served on SWP in the past. We have benefited from the mentorship of many women and feel that our work with SWP is a way of giving back. It is demanding, yet rewarding, to be involved in critical discussions of how the academy works, and how we can influence its direction by implementing our values of diversity, academic freedom, and the creation of fair opportunities through our concrete work. Our members feel that this committee work is activism, as we build strategic alliances and counter individualism.

RSN: What would you say to someone interested in your committee?

SWP: Talk to us! We thrive on our conversations with members of the AAR.

The SWP home page is accessible on the AAR Web site, www.aarweb.org — click on “About the AAR” and then click on “Board & Committees.” “Academic Abby” is accessible on the SWP home page, and can also be jumped to immediately by searching “Academic Abby” (use the quotation marks).
Research Briefing

The Links between Roman-Trier “Speaking-cups” and Inscribed Speech on Early Christian Banquet Scenes

Janet H. Tulloch, Carleton University

My proposed project was to analyze and photograph tableware known as the “Triester Spruchbecherkeramik,” ceramic drinking vases and cups from the late third to mid-fourth century CE, made in and around the Mosel Valley with Roman Trier as its epicenter. My primary task was to compare their painted inscriptions with those found on similarly dated Christian banquet scenes found in the catacomb of SS. Marcellino and Pietro, Rome. Under investigation were the parallels in context and form between the words (interpreted as speech) common to both Roman drinking vessels and the selected early Christian meal scenes. Although classicist Katherine Dunbabin had made a minor reference to the resemblance between the two sources of inscriptions in her book The Roman Banquet (Cambridge, 2003: 179–180), no one, to my knowledge, had analyzed the similarities between the two in any depth. I was also intrigued by her suggestion that more research needed to be done to compare objects represented in late antique frescoes with actual surviving artifacts (an observation with which I now heartily agree). It seemed to me that such a comparison, in the case of my work, might yield information on possible relationships between material forms and text, such as the size and type of drinking vessel most consistently associated with a particular word or phrase. Such relationships might shed light not only on the meaning of words common to both ceramics and frescoes, but also on the meaning of the figures’ gestures in the various Christian meal scenes — especially those figures depicted as raising a drinking cup or holding a vase (jug). As I would only have three weeks in which to accomplish my task, I had to make judicious use of my time in Rome and Germany through extensive preplanning.

My first step in May 2004 was the decorative arts department of the Vatican Museums, where Dr. Umberto Utro had assembled all of the museums’ finds from the catacomb of SS. Marcellino and Pietro, Rome for my inspection. These finds constituted only 18 objects altogether. While each object was of interest for its own intrinsic properties, none of the finds resembled the particular items of my current search (i.e., the cups and vases represented in the meal scenes). I was further disappointed, after contacting the Pontificia Commissione di Archeologia Sacra in Rome as well as French and German archaeologists who had published reports on Marcellino and Pietro, to learn that no other inventory or collection of finds from this catacomb exists.

When I sat down to work, it seemed that all of the material culture from the Latin-speaking empire had been deposited in these three museums and I had only two weeks to sort through it all. Thanks to department curators Dr. Ursula Heimberg (Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Bonn) and Dr. Friederike Naumann-Steckner (Römisch-Germanisches Museum, Köln), the Spruchbecherkeramik I had asked to examine had been set aside for me to analyze when I arrived at their respective museums. During the next two weeks, I took more than 600 digital images of Roman drinking vessels with painted or incised inscriptions collected by these three museums. I also made extensive use of archaeological reports, housed in their libraries, on various Spruchbecherkeramik finds, again with assistance from Dr. Naumann-Steckner and the librarian, Mona Petsch. A side trip to the Franz Joseph Dilger Institute for Early Christian Art and Archaeology at Bonn University, where I met with Dr. Sebastian Ristow, brought me up to speed on the latest German archaeological projects related to Marcellino and Pietro, as well as Dr. Ristow’s own excavations of early church structures found underneath Köln’s famous Gothic cathedral.

My physical examination of the many types for the Trier ceramic “speaking-cup” allowed me to better compare and understand the function of the inscriptions painted on the Marcellino and Pietro banquet scenes in a way that was impossible to do relying only on photography of these finds from books (which never show the full inscription on the artifact, nor all the objects in a collection). I am pleased to report that the sheer number of extant drinking vessels with painted inscriptions (known as the en barbotine style) allowed me to recognize clear relationships between a particular Latin word or phrase and the size and type of cup or vase that carried it. These relationships, along with an analysis of other linguistic elements, e.g., bilingual speech, common to both sources of inscription (ceramic and fresco), assisted me to better characterize the type and patterns of speech signified by the painted words on the Marcellino and Pietro banquet scenes.

I would like to thank the American Academy of Religion for the research grant that enabled me, a Canadian scholar with no other source of funding, to complete this phase of my research on the Marcellino and Pietro banquet scenes. Frau Sigrid Müller of Köln must also be thanked for the generous use of her apartment at no cost. Some of this research will appear as a special chapter in A Woman’s Place: Early Christian House Churches by Carolyn Osiek and Margaret MacDonald with Janet Tulloch (Fortress Press, forthcoming 2005) and in my own book, Speaking the Words: AGAPE and IRENE: Women and Hospitality in Roman Christian Funerary Art (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, Canada, forthcoming).
RSN: How many students take introductory courses? How many are majors or doctoral students do you have?

Avery-Peck: Half to two-thirds of our courses are truly introductory, and many of the more advanced courses are also open to students with no significant background in the field. This is the only way we can meet the needs and interests of the large number of Holy Cross students who want to study religious studies, as we offer courses that provide an opportunity for advanced study. No Holy Cross departments have majors or doctoral programs.

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

Avery-Peck: We certainly are not entirely unique in this, but what defines our department is the extent to which we are conscious of — and often have a good laugh about — our every question in consensus, both the annual issues that sometimes cause contention, like who gets to teach what and in what time-slot, and the big things: hiring decisions, rethinking the major, and the like. I know there are departments on campus in which the chair informs people of what they will teach and which courses they will teach. I do not like the Religious Studies chair to do this for me before me, ask people what they want to do and, where necessary, negotiate to reach results everyone can live with. And this process is used with junior faculty as much as with senior people. Similarly, in hiring, Holy Cross gives full responsibility to the department chair, but I know of no case in which we have moved ahead with a search in which there was not consensus regarding how to define the field or in which, once a short list was in hand, there was not unanimity regarding who should be offered the position. This bespeaks a group of people who truly trust and respect each other’s judgments, and who frequently will put their own interests aside for the good of the department as a whole.

RSN: In what subfields or subdisciplines would you like to expand your department’s competence?

Avery-Peck: We are very interested in bringing to Holy Cross a specialist in African-American or Afro-Caribbean religious history and experience. This interest emerges out of our desire to cover as broad a swath as possible of religious experience, as well as from our sense of responsibility to our students — not only Holy Cross’s growing minority population but students across the board, who show a great interest in religious and cultural diversity. To broaden our current focus on Catholic theology (we have three Catholic theologians and a specialist in Church history, and two Catholic ethicists), we also have a general interest in bringing the study of Protestant theology to the department.

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

Avery-Peck: In line with our mission as a Jesuit institution, a Holy Cross education is meant to move from the theoretical to the practical, to focus on the question of how we can live in an ever more complex world. Our courses accordingly move between analytical and critical treatments of religions — concerning how we should understand religious phenomena — and the disciplines of theology and ethics — which often address more directly what we should believe and how we should act. The study of religions other than one’s own is a particularly effective way to help students to take seriously a variety of ways of making sense of the world. Religious Studies, accordingly, is particularly central to what a Holy Cross education is meant to be about. I think students are aware of this and that our departmental faculty is also conscious of having this responsibility. I know we are more interested in and willing to talk about questions of faith and the theological foundations of action than colleagues at many other institutions.

RSN: Would you say something about the way your department structures the undergraduate major? What types of courses do students take to fulfill the requirements for an undergraduate religion major?

Avery-Peck: We have a generalist major, aimed at introducing students to all aspects of the study of religion even as it makes possible advanced study in a specific area of interest. Thus, with the minimum of ten courses that comprise the major, students are required to take one course each in the fields of World Religions, Hebrew Bible, New Testament, Theology, and Ethics. Additionally, students choose two intensive courses (seminars or tutorials) in an area of concentration. For a student taking only the minimum requirement of ten courses, this leaves three free options. Over the years we’ve debated shifting to a model based on thematic tracks, for instance, with different requirements for students interested in Eastern vs. Western traditions. That would solve the problem of our current approach, which, for instance, leaves students interested in Eastern religions with too few elective slots thoroughly to cover their field. But we keep coming back to a feeling that an undergraduate religion major should have an introductory critical level understanding of all of our required areas. So while the conversation is ongoing, we are not close to making a change.

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

Avery-Peck: As you can see from the list of our major requirements, we are organized in a traditional way. For instance, we distinguish between Christianity, which is what we mean when we use the terms “Bible,” “ethics,” and “theology,” and everything else, which we place in the category “World Religions.” Thus, in our catalog, Catholic theology is “Theology,” while Jewish theology is “World Religions.” Interestingly, everyone in the department is conscious of — and often has a good laugh at — the address of this approach. But these are categories that are meaningful to our students and that help them find the courses they are interested in. Accordingly, even as we are making some changes, we continue largely to divide things as we have, except on the creation of our course “Comparative Cartesianism,” which examines Cartesianism around the world and is interested in phenomena such as popular devotion, healing background in the Catholic social and political religions, is now listed under World Religions. But on the other hand, I recently introduced a course called “Judaism in the Time of Jesus,” something I don’t think I would possibly have done at any other institution in the world. I spend the first half of the semester explaining why it is such a terrible title. Still, it’s a title that works because it uses a category our students understand. Once they are in the course, I find that they are there for good reasons and are really ready to learn about Judaism in its own terms.

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

Avery-Peck: Like many departments, we offer very little coverage of the range of fields in religious studies. What is distinctive about us, it seems to me, is our putting the interests of a department of theology within the setting of a highly academic and critical department of religious studies. I grew up in the latter type of department at a Jesuit institution. Having been at Holy Cross for ten years, I think our combination of a strong Judeo-Christian syllabus and the best of both worlds.

RSN: How do you attract majors?

Avery-Peck: The fact is that, beyond participation in the annual events through which the college introduces students to all their options in choosing a major, we do very little. Most of our majors come to Holy Cross thinking they are going to study something entirely different, often something they identify as “practical.” But they take one of our courses and are hooked. So we depend on our faculty’s teaching skills and on the general interest that brings students into our courses. Ten to twenty students complete a Religious Studies major each year, making us a relatively small department in terms of number of majors, even though we are a large department with regard to faculty resources and numbers of students in our courses.

RSN: What problems will your department face in the near future?

Avery-Peck: We constantly face the problem of how to best to meet the needs of our students, both majors and nonmajors. The problem has been exacerbated by recent developments at Holy Cross and will probably get even more difficult. The long- overdue shift from a 3/3 to a 3/2 teaching load meant that, as of a year ago, we have been able to offer many fewer seminars, which are so important for our majors. Now we are starting to see which courses they need. Similarly, the growth on campus of special programs — First Year Program, Honors Program, multidisciplinary departments in such things as pre-law programs will mean that students may find courses other courses reduces our offerings for advanced students. But in facing this issue, we are not unique on the campus.
**In the Public Interest**

**Religion, Surveillance, and National Security**

Michael Barkun, Syracuse University

Along the Changes wrought
by September 11th, one that has occasioned little public discussion is the revised Department of Justice guidelines for FBI investigations. These regulations, usually referred to as the Attorney General’s Guidelines, began in the mid-1970s as a response to the Watergate-era exposure of investigative abuses. President Gerald Ford’s attorney general, Edward Levi, issued the original Guidelines, which were slightly altered by some of his successors. The last such changes before September 11th were made in 1989.

In keeping with their original purpose, the Guidelines were sensitive to issues such as religious free exercise and individual privacy. However, the pressures that developed after 9/11 resulted in a significant loosening of restraints. On May 30, 2002, then-Attorney General John Ashcroft issued revised Guidelines, and although the revision left earlier references to the sensitivity of religion intact, changes in other provisions altered the definition of religious freedom.

The principal change in the Ashcroft Guidelines was permission for FBI agents to attend any “places or events which are open to the public” in the course of their inquiries. On the surface, this provision appears innocuous, for it seems to merely place Department of Justice personnel on the same footing as the general public. However, a closer examination reveals that this is not the case. Unlike earlier procedures, where such official visits could be undertaken only for appropriate reasons and under supervision, agents may now attend such events for purposes of observation with little or no prior approval or evidence of a crime.

It hardly need be added that places of worship may be construed as public, which permits the surveillance of many religious activities. To the extent that such observation may be systematic and long-term, it can have a chilling effect. For when individuals know that their conduct is under observation by law enforcement, they are likely to feel inhibitions and fears that would not otherwise be present.

Further, the Guidelines do not define “public,” a term whose meaning is not self-evident. For example, an event nominally open to outsiders may in fact usually be attended only by “regulars” who assume that participants are part of a community. Private drugs, religious observances, and other functions from time to time, reverting back to private use afterwards. One may imagine a variety of criteria that might separate public from private: open physical access, lack of membership requirements, advertisements or media announcements, or a sign outside. But which, if any, of these might expose a religious group to surveillance is unclear.

In addition, the Guidelines permit a new stage of investigation called the “initial checking of leads,” which is left to the agents’ discretion. This precedes what had been the opening phase under the old Guidelines, a clearly regulated “preliminary inquiry,” with formal limits on techniques and reporting requirements. These limits do not appear to apply to the checking of leads and tips. It may produce an unfettered investigative climate.

Some of these difficulties might be alleviated if there were a concept of “religious privacy.” However, no such concept has developed in America, where the right of privacy has largely grown up around different issues: freedom from media observation, for example, or the right to engage in intimate activity related to sexuality and reproduction. To the extent that religious observers are seen as agents of the government and the interference, they have done so through a right of association and, of course, by reason of the First Amendment’s “free exercise” of religion clause.

The meaning of free exercise has shifted over the years as the Supreme Court’s doctrinal interpretations have changed. These judicial decisions have been too complex to explain here. In any case, they have been shadowed by developments that are less formal but no less important. For, from the popular and occasionally governmental sentiment has identified particular religious groups as “dangerous.” In the 19th century, for example, suspicion fell on Catholics and Mormons. More recently, the putatively dangerous groups have been Muslims. And in the post-9/11 period, it is of course Muslims who have most often been labeled.

These fluctuating currents of public hostility suggest that law enforcement agencies do not simply relate to religious groups on the basis of legal doctrines. Their conduct and policies are also a reflection of broader societal attitudes, pressures, and prejudices.

From the Student Desk

**The Nuances of Bridging the Generation Gap**

Jillian Brown, Luther Seminary

I was significantly younger than most of my classmates. This feeling was only exaggerated as a fellow student turned to me and began to recount stories of her daughter who, she said with a snicker, was older than I was.

As our conversation continued, this particular student made several comments about “how lucky” I am and “what a good idea” it was to begin my PhD work immediately after finishing my master’s degree. She opined about how difficult it was to leave her secure, full-time job to become a student again, and summed that life must be “easier” for me since I did not have a family or a spouse or a house payment to worry about. Instead, she suggested, I am “wholly free to selfishly work on my degree without the ‘normal’ distractions that come with twice my age were forced to juggle.

I realize now, months later, that my silence through this whole conversation probably gave the impression that yes, indeed, I don’t have distractions and a full-time job to worry about. Instead, I am wholly free to selfishly work on my degree without the “normal” distractions that come with twice my age were forced to juggle.

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Indeed, my classmate did get it right in our conversation: I do feel “lucky” to be a young PhD student, with all the anticipation and the very future of the academic endeavor.

My name is Jillian Brown, and I am a PhD student in Systematic Theology at Luther Seminary in Saint Paul, Minnesota, and can be contacted at jbrown@lutherseminary.edu.

*May 2005 AAR Review*
Tell us about the types of activities that you have been involved in since you retired?

Driver: When I retired 12 years ago, I decided I wanted to write a new chapter in my life. I had adored teaching and done it extensively, but I did not want to keep teaching for the rest of my life. So I decided to travel. I went to Nicaragua in 1988. In his senior years, he has shown great originality in bringing theological education to prison inmates. Farmer’s too young to retire, and Webber, (Bill) Webber, and my wife, Anne Barstow. There are strong indications that we in the U.S.A. could lose, if we’re not careful, the protections of the Bill of Rights and the checks and balances in our government — in other words, our democracy. We’re trumping on democracy in Haiti and elsewhere, and are beginning to do to ourselves what we do to others. At the least, we have to understand that the world is full of the most horrible and needless suffering. What’s learning for, at the end of the day, for the most horrible and needless suffering? It’s only tangentially related to the work in theology, culture, and ritual studies that I was doing while teaching. Currently I’m working on peacekeeping as a Christian imperative.

RSN: Do you do any teaching?

Driver: Not if I can help it. Once I let Union Seminary talk me into coming back to teach my course on “Rituals and Sacraments.” Since it had a large registration, they asked me to do it again the next year, and I said, “No, it’s too continuing.” They said, “But you only have to be here on Thursday afternoons,” and I said, “That’s what I mean — every Thursday.” When I retired, I told people that I wasn’t tired of the students, not the classroom, nor of the subject matter, but I was sick and tired of seminars! Now I like driving my own calendar and being free to travel when I like.

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

Driver: Pretty much what mine already is. Except for travels abroad, I spend half the year in Manhattan (the city I fell in love with when I was fresh out of college) and the other half in the Berkshire hills of Massachusetts. I do things that interest me. I have time for intentional work and for spiritual growth. How much better could it be? I’m very fortunate.

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

Driver: There are days when I wish that I was rich and famous — some kind of academic star. (There are plenty of those role models around.) If I had been cagy about that when I was young, I would have confined my academic interests to a single track, and I would have devoted less of my time and energy to classroom teaching. As it was, I was writing about theater, literature, theology, culture, ritual studies, and I forget what else. The public doesn’t know what to expect from you next, so they lose track.

In the classroom I was experimenting with teaching modes, always looking for ways to link book learning with life experience. In academia you don’t get many brownie points for loving to teach. So I sometimes wonder if my choices were wise. But you didn’t ask what I should have done differently, only what I might have done.

Knowing me, if I did all over again it would probably come out the same.

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

Driver: Enough said. No, something more. It’s strange, but along with my activism has come also a kind of — what to call it? — a kind of reform of my inner life. I’m doing more of what I always used to ask my students to do: to take a good look at themselves. I now have time, as I said a minute ago, for spiritual growth. And I have the motivation. What’s strange is that although I work as hard as I ever did, maybe harder in some ways, I’m less tempted to believe in salvation by works. Vita brevis. When you’re my age, the shortness of life is a liberating thought. It’s not when you’re young.

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

Driver: One: Love it or leave it. Two: Make sure you enjoy, and prod, your students to draw connections between what they’re learning and what the world needs now. However clichèd it may be to say it, we are living in fearful times. There are strong indications that we in the U.S.A. could lose, if we’re not careful, the protections of the Bill of Rights and the checks and balances in our government — in other words, our democracy. We’re trumping on democracy in Haiti and elsewhere, and are beginning to do to ourselves what we do to others. At the least, we have to understand that the world is full of the most horrible and needless suffering. What’s learning for, at the end of the day, if not for the relief of suffering and the protection of liberty? ♦

The Committee on Teaching and Learning seeks nominations for the 2005 AAR Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Nominations of winners of campus awards, or any other awards, are encouraged.

Procedures for the nomination process are outlined on the AAR Web site at www.aarweb.org/awards/teaching.asp.
A question like this makes me feel in religion became a vital part of my American life and why?

RSN: What are your ideas about the current and future state of the study of the history of religion in America?

Lippy: For me, the study of the history of religion in America is something that has become increasingly broad. When I started out in the field, the emphasis was still largely on institutional history — looking at the traditions and denominations, the theologians and thinkers, the processes of assembly and conferences. Now the field has expanded, thanks to comparative methodologies. Most of us would be lost without some of the interpretive constructs advocated by sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, and a host of others. Plus, taking a serious look at vernacular culture, particularly vernacular stuff and not just the great art and architecture, has opened many new avenues of exploration. Then there's the so-called “new immigration” since 1965 that is changing the whole texture of American religious life. We've become so much more sensitive now to how ethnicity and also to region — and not just New England and the South. So what goes into a cultural history study keeps reaching in fresh directions. And the more we reach, the more we may get a sense of the pulse of American religious life, past and present.

RSN: What advice would you give to our readers about your current research, lecturing, or publishing plans?

Lippy: Not too long ago I was chatting with a friend about our days as graduate students, and I commented that sometimes I sometimes anguished about where the ideas would come from to sustain as a scholar the history of religion. It takes a look at clusters of images and ideas the way it focuses on religion in America. The encyclopedia was their key to studying for graduate students who have said that the encyclopedia represented an expanded avenue of exploration. Then there's the interpretive constructs advocated by sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, and a host of others. Plus, taking a serious look at vernacular culture, particularly vernacular stuff and not just the great art and architecture, has opened many new avenues of exploration. Then there's the so-called “new immigration” since 1965 that is changing the whole texture of American religious life. We've become so much more sensitive now to how ethnicity and also to region — and not just New England and the South. So what goes into a cultural history study keeps reaching in fresh directions. And the more we reach, the more we may get a sense of the pulse of American religious life, past and present.

Avery-Peck: This is not so much advice as a request. Begin with the assumption that if something has gone wrong or if you have never gotten what you want, it is not because the chair wanted things to turn out badly. In my experience, chairs want to do the best they can for the faculty in their department and always do so, within the constraints of the institution’s policies, budgets, the competing needs of other departments, faculty, and student demands — and warning and time they’ve been given to solve the problem. So let the chair know what is going on, what you need, or what is bothering you. But then it is the chair’s turn to solve the problem. Don’t take an adversarial position.

RSN: What gives you the greatest satisfaction as a chair?

Avery-Peck: There are two things. On the one side, it’s working with our students and especially our faculty to help them reach their potential. This means not only to be extraordinarily compatible, although I may have been the one more consumed by administrative coordination. I’ve kept daily lists of things to do since I was in the fifth grade! I know for sure Peter was more diplomatic and patient in negotiating with authors as they can. I can’t and finally if someone was late in getting material in, I was the one who would try to crack the editorial whip. Sometimes I think I’m overly consumed with organizational detail. But the encyclopedia represented our effort 20 years ago to bridge more traditional approaches, with their emphases on institutions and traditions, with the newer emphases. So has editors on gender, popular culture, visual culture, and even the increased visibility of groups like Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims in American religious life. When we first wrote this, I think we had a real feel for the character of the field and for the amazing number of folks who were doing first-rate work on American religion. Both of us, I think, have appreciated comments over the years from graduate students and scholars who still go to the encyclopedia to get initial, but serious, coverage of topics and issues. Yet so much has changed since the encyclopedia came out. Peter and I had hoped to bring out an expanded, updated version, but unfortunately the publisher is unwilling to do so. But it would be a useful challenge to see if we could help define the field for yet another generation of students and scholars.
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**AMERICAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION**

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- That true religion cannot conflict with the divine gift of reason and instincts for freedom.
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- That there cannot be disparate conditions for different people to achieve the same goal – salvation in Heaven.
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