2008 Annual Meeting News

Meet Me in Chicago ..................6–7
Highlights of the City
Performances and Exhibitions ........7
Reel Religion .........................7
Ten Films to be Shown
South Asian Focus .....................8
Thirty-six Sessions and Events
Kudos to South Asian Scholar Co-sponsors .8
Lafayette College and Missouri State University
Future Annual Meeting Dates and Sites . .8
Leadership Workshop ...................9
Taking Religion(s) Seriously: What Students Need to Know
Religious Studies in South Asia ........10
A Conversation with Vara Narayanan
Student Events .......................11
Returning from the Annual Meeting ....11
Absentee and Early Voting
Looking Forward to Montréal ........12
Early Registration and Passport Booth Available in Chicago
An Early Glimpse of Quebec ..........12
A Unique Religious Culture in North America and the World

FEATURES

In the Public Interest ...................35
Why Does Sex Play Such a Large Role for Fringe Sects?
Research Briefing .....................36
Envisioning Hinduism: Raja Ravi Varma and the Visual Canon
From the Student Desk ................37
Staying Straight/Going Queerly Forward: Navigating a Job Search When Your CV has Queer Written All Over It

From the Editor ..........................................................3
Strategic Plan ..............................................................4
Officer Elections ..........................................................4–5
Candidates for Vice President
In Memoriam ..............................................................13
Remembering Catherine M. Bell
Academy Announces Annual Awards ........14–15
Journalism, Marty Award, Book Awards, Excellence in Teaching, and Religion and the Arts
Membership Corner ..........................16
Important Information for Our Members
Book Corner ..............................................................17
AAR Highlights Three New Books
Briefs ..........................................................18–19
News from Around the Academy
Sustainability Task Force Update ....20
AAR Advocates Humanities Funding ....20
A Report on Humanities Advocacy Day 2008
OUP Book Series Name Change ........20
Texts and Translations now Religion in Translation
The Religion Major and Liberal Education ..21–24
The Religious Studies Major in a Post–9/11 World: New Challenges, New Opportunities
The Work of the Scholar/Activist Teacher ..25–26
Regional Meetings and Calls for Papers ..38–40
Academy Fund ..........................................................41–42
Contributors to the AAR
Upcoming Summer Seminars ..............43
Theologies of Religious Pluralism and Comparative Theology
2008 Member Calendar

October

Religious Studies News October issue.

October 13, Annual Meeting Job Center pre-registration closes.

October 15, Submissions for the January 2009 issue of Religious Studies News due. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/Publications/RSN.

October 30, Regionally Elected Directors meeting, Chicago, IL.

October 30, Executive Committee meeting, Chicago, IL.

October 31, Fall Board of Directors meeting, Chicago, IL.

October 31, Chairs Workshop at the Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.

November

November 1, Research Grant Awards announced.

November 1–3, Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL. The AAR Annual Meeting, the world’s largest gathering of scholars of religion, anticipates some 5,000 registrants, 200 publishers, and 125 hiring departments.

November 3, Annual Business Meeting at the Annual Meeting. See the Program Book for day and time.

November 14, New program unit proposals due.

December


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

December 15, Submissions for the March 2009 issue of Religious Studies News due. For more information, see www.aarweb.org/Publications/RSN.

December 31, Membership renewal for 2009 due. Renew online at www.aarweb.org/Members/Due.

And keep in mind throughout the year...

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

In the Field. News of events and opportunities for scholars of religion. In the Field is a members-only 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/In_the_Field submit1.asp.

Job Postings. A members-only publication, Job Postings lists job announcements in areas of interest to members. Issues are available online from the first through the last day of the month. Submit announcements online, and review policies and pricing, at www.aarweb.org/jump/jobpostings.
FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

We hope that this issue of Religious Studies News finds you enjoying the beginning of another semester.

We are very happy to announce that during the summer the AAR received a $400,000 grant from the Henry Luce Foundation. This grant will allow us to offer four one-week summer seminars dealing with theologies of religious pluralism and comparative theology. We encourage you to view the announcement of this initiative, which appears on the inside back cover of this issue.

This issue’s Focus section deals with various changes in faculty demographics, the role of contingent faculty, faculty unions, and a survey of AAR student members.

Of particular note in this issue is the printed announcement of our two candidates for the position of Vice President. The Vice President sits on the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, and the Program Committee, as well as in line to be confirmed as President-elect and eventually President. This is your chance to cast your vote for a position of responsibility.

Also of note is a major white paper from our Teagle project — “The Religion Major and Liberal Education.”

This issue also has many suggestions of places of interest, things to do, and sessions to attend during the Annual Meeting in Chicago next month. In preparation for it, the executive office staff has been working over the last several months attending to the myriad of details required to produce the Program Planner, the Program Book, plenary speakers, panels, sessions, workshops, and book exhibitions, with the view toward making this an enriching experience for all our members. We hope to see you in the Windy City!

Carey J. Gifford
Executive Editor

---

Dear Readers:


---

AAR Annual Meeting Events
Chicago, Illinois

Friday - October 31
Workshop on Teaching College Introductory Courses (Advance registration required) M3-208
1:30 pm to 8:00 pm
Location: CHT-Lake Huron

Saturday - November 1
Lunch Table Teaching Conversations
(Advance registration required) M1-122
11:45 am to 12:45 pm
Location: PH Salon 12
Special Topics Forum: “If I Knew Then What I Know Now”: Lessons for the First Year Teaching
(Advance registration required) M2-400
4:00 pm to 6:30 pm
Location: CHT-Conference Room 4C
Wabash Center Dinner for New Teachers
6:30 pm to 8:30 pm
Location: PH-Red Lacquer Room

Sunday - November 2
Wabash Center and Louisville Institute Grant Writing Consultation (Advance registration required) M2-202
1:30 pm to 5:00 pm
Location: CHT-PDR 7
Wabash Center Dinner for New Teachers
(Advance registration required) M31-208
7:00 pm to 8:30 pm
Location: CHT-Conference Room 4H

Monday - November 3
Teaching the History of Christianity (Advance registration required) A3-207
11:45 am to 12:45 pm
Location: CHT-Conference Room 4H

Accepting Applications
2009-2010 Workshops
Deadline - January 15, 2009

Workshops for
* Pre-Tenure Theological School Faculty
* Pre-Tenure Religion Faculty
* Pre-Tenure Theology and Religion Faculty of African Descent

Colloquy on
* Writing the Scholarship of Teaching in Theology and Religion

See web site for details

Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion
www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu

Funded by Lilly Endowment - Located at Wabash College
AAR Updates the Centennial Strategic Plan

Jack Fitzmier, American Academy of Religion

In 2003, THE AAR’s “Centennial Strategic Plan, 2004–2009” set out our mission statement, identified a series of goals for our organization (e.g., to promote research and scholarship in the field, to facilitate members’ professional development, to contribute to the public understanding of religion, to encourage diversity within the Academy), and listed a set of strategic objectives to which we were committed (e.g., attract new members, clarify the identity of the AAR vis-à-vis other scholarly societies in religion, hold stand-alone Annual Meetings, enhance the international dimension of the AAR, and prepare for our Centennial Celebration). Recently the AAR staff, working with AAR members, the Executive Committee, and the Board, have sharpened the mission statement, prioritized goals, reiterated objectives, and put in place concrete implementation plans that can be measured and assessed. We want to remind all of our members of our central commitments and strategic objectives. These spring from our original “Centennial Strategic Plan, 2004–2009,” and were approved by our Board as the “Updated Strategic Plan” in April 2008.

Our Statement of Purpose and Values

The purpose of the American Academy of Religion derives from two principal goals: 1) To promote understanding of and critical reflection on religious traditions, issues, questions, values, texts, practices, and institutions. To this end, we foster communication and exchange among teachers and scholars and the public understanding of religion. 2) To serve the professional interests of AAR members as students, teachers, and scholars.

The AAR is committed to promoting equity, responsibility, and democratic accountability within the academic study of religion and in the work of the AAR itself.

Our Near Term Objectives (to be accomplished in eighteen to thirty-six months)

• Facilitate membership development by increasing membership, members’ satisfaction, and member participation.
• Enhance our Annual Meeting with a successful meeting in Chicago that will set the stage for the Centennial kickoff in Montreal; to use our “stand alone” status to develop the AAR’s unique program.
• Foster international exchanges by building global connections and by positioning the AAR to be a resource to our international partners.

• Reimagine our governance structures to better suit our current situation, and in this seek an ideal balance among competing values.
• Celebrate the AAR’s 100th anniversary with a fundraising campaign and special programming and events.
• Enhance the public understanding of religion with new programming.
• Experiment with and deploy new technologies in scholarly communication.
• Enhance the work of the AAR’s ten regions.

The AAR has a bright future. As we plan our Centennial Celebration, look for more news about progress on our Updated Strategic Plan.

Preparation...


Candidates for Vice President

Janet Gyatso

Janet Gyatso is Hervey Professor of Buddhist Studies at Harvard University. Previously she taught for thirteen years in the Religion Department at Wellesley College before she was an adjunct faculty member at SUNY, Stony Brook. She received a BA in Religious Studies, an MA in Sanskrit, and a PhD in Buddhist Studies, all from the University of California at Berkeley. From 2000-2006, she was president of the International Association of Tibetan Studies. Gyatso co-founded the Tibetan and Himalayan Religious Group at the AAR, and currently co-chairs the Buddhism Section. At Harvard, she was the first chair of the Divinity School’s Standing Committee for the Study of Women in Religion; she is presently Director of Graduate Studies in the Committee for the Study of Religion. She has also initiated an effort to make the teaching of Buddhist ministry part of the Divinity School’s Master of Divinity curriculum. Her books are In the Mirror of Memory: Reflections on Mindfulness and Remembrance in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism; Apparitions of the Self: The Secret Autobiographies of a Tibetan Visionary; and Women of Tibet. Gyatso has just completed a research year supported by NEH and ACLS, during which she wrote a book on the relations between Buddhist and medical intellectual culture in sixteenth through eighteenth century Tibet.

Kwok Pui Lan

Kwok Pui Lan is William F. Cole Professor of Christian Theology and Spirituality at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She has published extensively in areas of Asian feminist theology, biblical hermeneutics, and postcolonial criticism. She received her PhD from Harvard University (1989) and an honorary PhD from Lancaster Theological University in the Netherlands (2004). Kwok’s books include Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology: Introducing Asian Feminist Theology; Discovering the Bible in the Non-Biblical World; and Chinese Women and Christianity, 1600–1927. She is co-editor of the Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion and has recently been asked to edit a major reference work on Women and Christianity in Asia.

Statement on the AAR

LOOK BACK ON twenty years of membership in the AAR with considerable gratitude. The proliferation of units in the organization has helped me to understand my own areas of specialty in a new light. At the same time, my involvement in service has taught me about the interconnectedness of the institutional and intellectual issues that we all share in the study of religion. Together, these two kinds of experience have shaped my values and commitments deeply. Next year, we will celebrate the centennial of the AAR. I expect there will be a renewed sense of commitment to a common future throughout this organization’s various constituencies.

We all know that the AAR is at a crossroads in its history. I feel strongly that as an organization it is critical that we work concertedly to foster broad consultation. It is imperative to include every segment of the AAR membership in its operations and decision-making. One example where our ability to process members’ input will be crucial is in assessing the practicabilities and professional benefits of our new commitment to meet separately from, but at the same time and place as, the SBL each year.

The larger the sights of our intellectual horizons, the better prepared we are to contribute the fruits of our work in the public arena. One very promising way we can capitalize on the increasingly international purview of what we study is to expand our cooperation with organizations for the study of religion abroad. This will bring an even more diverse set of scholars into the conversation. It will also provide access to those diverse perspectives for our own development as scholars. Such engagement informs us in critical ways when we are called upon to exercise our public voice. We provide historical perspective, but perhaps even more so, we model how ideas are exchanged, and how alternate points of view can both be honored for their specificity and yet appreciated for what they can teach us all.

Graduates with a PhD in religion or theology need to be very creative in securing jobs and developing careers. AAR can play an active role promoting religious studies in higher education and in other professions. It is also important to reflect on the changing nature of the profession, so that our graduates can be equipped for the changing needs of institutions of higher education and other career opportunities.

This fall at the AAR Annual Meeting in Chicago, we will meet as an independent gathering, separate from the SBL. The decision to hold independent Annual Meetings for the AAR will allow us to focus more on AAR’s identity and self-understanding, the relation of AAR to SBL and other scholarly societies, and the need to increase sessions to welcome new and diverse discourses and voices. In the past several years, we have seen a steady increase of new groups and consultations, wildcard sessions, shorter sessions on Sunday, and more forums for student members. Although the Board has decided to hold concurrent yet independent Annual Meetings for the AAR with SBL, we agree that this decision is feasible, I hope these important conversations and new practices will continue.

To remain a healthy and vibrant professional organization, AAR needs to periodically review its structure, decision-making processes, and overall programing. Feedback on Annual Meetings, regional meetings, international exchanges, professional services, and publications from members at different stages in their careers is crucial for AAR’s continued success. Creative use of the AAR website can facilitate communication about events, funding, publications, and resources, as well as facilitate networking of members who share similar interests. I have had the privilege of serving the AAR in various capacities, and my academic research and career development have been profoundly enriched by conversations and networking with AAR colleagues.

Statement on the AAR

T HIS IS AN EXCITING and challenging time to study religion. On the one hand, religion has been on the public radar screen when people discuss American politics and global issues. Books on religion have made the New York Times bestseller list for weeks. On the other hand, surveys show that religious literacy remains quite low among the American public. Comments on religious matters in the media are made by a select few and are often reduced to sound-bites.

At the same time, within the discipline of religion, numerous changes are happening because of the self-reflexivity of the field’s practitioners. Scholars have raised questions about categories, such as “religion,” “world religion,” as well as other basic concepts, and they have contested those assumptions and methodologies developed out of a colonial ethos under the dominance of a Christian paradigm. As we face globalization, migration, diaspora, multiple religious belongings, and hybrid religious identities, many have become aware of the need to reimagine the field in a postcolonial and postsecular world. AAR provides a stimulating forum and meeting place for teachers and students with diverse assumptions about and approaches to religion to engage in dialogue and cultivate friendships that are crucial for intellectual work.

AAR needs to promote understanding of religion in the public square through engaging scholars in other disciplines and savvy communications with the media. The contributions of international participants are invaluable if we want to develop a field of study that is global in outlook, multicultural in scope, and plurivocal in deliberation. For example, at this year’s Annual Meeting, we will have opportunities to hear South Asian scholars report on the study and teaching of religion in their various contexts.

The future development of the field depends on our ability to continue to attract talented and bright students.
Chicago is a bustling, energetic city that never stops no matter the season. It’s a destination with world-class cultural attractions, diverse neighborhoods, and architectural wonders. Chicago is known for critically acclaimed restaurants, famous museums, first-rate shopping, adventurous nightlife, action-packed sporting events, and a thriving theater scene.

Performing Arts

Chicago’s theater industry pushes the envelope with cutting-edge performances on historic and state-of-the-art stages. The Chicago Theatre, Goodman, Bank of America Theatre, Cadillac Palace, Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, and the Ford Center have made visiting downtown a must for theater lovers. Other distinct stages, such as the Steppenwolf and The Second City, are woven among Chicago’s various neighborhoods, solidifying the city’s reputation as a world-class theater destination.

Dining

Once in Chicago, you never have to worry about finding a place to eat. Chicago features thousands of restaurants that offer culinary favorites to suit every taste, budget, and mood. Whether the preference is Chicago-style hot dogs or a burger, fried clams or smoked eel, pierogi or pizza, Chicago has it all. Soul food, Italian, Chinese, French, Japanese, Mexican, Asian, or Spanish . . . Chicago offers a virtual United Nations of eating choices. Ethnic neighborhoods such as Chinatown, Greektown, West Rogers Park, and Pilsen are among those offering tempting tastes from around the world. Chicago is also proud to be the home of award-winning restaurants and world-renowned chefs, as well as home to deep-dish pizza — one of Chicago’s most important contributions to twentieth century culture.

Museums

Chicago is renowned for its diverse collection of museums that explore a variety of subjects, including history, art, African-American culture, astronomy, natural history, and much more. Those visiting Chicago should plan on spending time at Chicago’s Museum Campus. This scenic park conveniently joins the Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum, the Shedd Aquarium/Oceanarium, and the Field Museum of Natural History with easy access to all three locations.

The Shedd Aquarium offers one of the world’s largest arrays of sea life, with more than 8,000 aquatic mammals, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, and fish. After exploring the oceans, attendees can gaze up at the heavens in the nearby Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum. The Field Museum offers exciting displays of mummies, Egyptian tombs, Native American artifacts, and dinosaur skeletons. It is also the permanent home of Sue, the world’s largest, most complete, and most famous Tyrannosaurus rex.

Other Attraction

Right down the street from the Annual Meeting hotels, Chicago’s Millennium Park offers 24.5 acres of green space. It contains an outdoor performing arts pavilion, indoor year-round theater, restaurant, ice-skating rink, contemplative garden, public art, fountains, promenade area for special events, landscaped walkways, and green spaces. Navy Pier is the city’s lakefront playground and the state’s most popular attraction, offering visitors a unique blend of family-oriented activities. It boasts the 150-foot-high Ferris wheel, a musical carousel, the Chicago Children’s Museum, Wave Swinger ride in Pier Park, the 3-D Time Escape ride, a variety of restaurants, and the famed Chicago Shakespeare Theater.

Of Special Interest in Chicago:

The Chicago History Museum is offering free admission to all AAR Annual Meeting attendees who show their meeting badge at the main visitor’s desk. The admission includes the permanent exhibits and the Catholic Chicago exhibition. The first in a series of exhibitions to explore the contributions of the city’s religious communities, the Catholic Chicago exhibition illustrates how the experience of being Catholic in Chicago has transformed over time. Examined through a historical context are several themes — the parish, education, worship, social action, and community celebrations — that will introduce and reveal the lives of Catholics, past and present. The Chicago History Museum is located at 1601 North Clark Street. Contact 312-642-4600 or www.chicagohistory.org for more information. Public transit directions are available on the museum’s website.

The Chicago Humanities Festival (www.chfestival.org/index2.cfm) is an annual event that celebrates the arts, drama, literature, and history through a series of lectures and performances each fall. The nineteenth annual Chicago Humanities Festival’s theme is “Thinking Big.” Programming takes a broad and interdisciplinary look at human works, concepts, ideas, and yearnings of large scale and high ambition. Panels, film screenings, theater performances, and more will be occurring on the same days as with the AAR Annual Meeting. Tickets are $5. Please visit www.chfestival.org for more information.

Other Chicago museums include the Chicago History Museum (the city’s oldest cultural institution), McCormick Tribune Freedom Museum (Chicago’s newest museum), the Museum of Science and Industry, the DuSable Museum of African-American History, the Art Institute of Chicago (one of the world’s leading art museums), the Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Museum of Contemporary Photography.
Annual Meeting Performances and Exhibitions

**Architecture**

Visitors from around the world come to Chicago, the birthplace of the modern building, to admire its architectural marvels. From historic landmark buildings to contemporary technological masterpieces, Chicago is built with the unique and innovative designs that have shaped American architecture. The city is a living museum of architecture thanks to the work of such greats as Daniel Burnham, Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Helmut Jahn, and hundreds of others.

Chicago is home to the world’s first skyscraper, designed by William Le Baron Jenney in 1885. Although the Home Insurance Building no longer stands, today’s Chicago is also home to three of the world’s ten tallest buildings, including the Sears Tower, which opened in 1974. Other city landmark buildings include the Chicago Cultural Center — completed in 1897 in the Beaux Arts style — Adler and Sullivan’s 1889 Auditorium Building, and the Art Deco-era Chicago Board of Trade Building, designed by Holabird and Root in 1929.

To learn more about Chicago’s acclaimed architecture, the Chicago Architecture Foundation offers more than fifty walking tours around the city, as well as self-guided and taped walking tours are also available. The architectural boat tour has been highly recommended by Chicago natives and tourists alike as one of the best Chicago tours around. For more information on this tour, visit www.architecture.org/tours.aspx.

**Shopping**

An abundance of shopping can also be found along Michigan Avenue from Oak Street to the famed “Magnificent Mile,” which runs along Michigan Avenue from Oak Street to the Chicago River, as well as self-guided and taped walking tours are also available. The architectural boat tour has been highly recommended by Chicago natives and tourists alike as one of the best Chicago tours around. For more information on this tour, visit www.architecture.org/tours.aspx.

Chicago is home to the world’s first skyscraper, designed by William Le Baron Jenney in 1885. Although the Home Insurance Building no longer stands, today’s Chicago is also home to three of the world’s ten tallest buildings, including the Sears Tower, which opened in 1974. Other city landmark buildings include the Chicago Cultural Center — completed in 1897 in the Beaux Arts style — Adler and Sullivan’s 1889 Auditorium Building, and the Art Deco-era Chicago Board of Trade Building, designed by Holabird and Root in 1929.

To learn more about Chicago’s acclaimed architecture, the Chicago Architecture Foundation offers more than fifty walking tours around the city, as well as self-guided and taped walking tours are also available. The architectural boat tour has been highly recommended by Chicago natives and tourists alike as one of the best Chicago tours around. For more information on this tour, visit www.architecture.org/tours.aspx.

**Visit the Chicago Convention and Tourism Bureau website at www.choosechicago.com for more great ideas of things to do in Chicago.**

**Annual Meeting Performances and Exhibitions**

**Reel Religion**

Please see the Annual Meeting Program Book for more information.

**Haro Haral Pilgrimage to Katariyagama, Sri Lanka (A31–106)**

Friday, 9:00–11:00 am

This film chronicles the journey of a group of pilgrims down the war-torn east coast of Sri Lanka. The film documents the pilgrims as they meet with holy men, perform never-before-seen religious acts, and proceed peacefully through areas plagued with conflict, on their way to Katariyagama, the site of a multi-faith festival in southeast Sri Lanka.

**A Son’s Sacrifice, Ichthus, and Mouseholes (A31–107)**

Friday, 9:00–11:00 am

A Son’s Sacrifice follows the journey of Imam, a young American Muslim who struggles to take over his father’s business in New York City. On the holiest day of the year, Imam must lead a sacrifice that will define him as a Muslim, an American, and a son.

In order to unlock the secret of an ancient code of Ichthus, the protagonist Jonas finds himself searching for clues in his childhood haunt, a humble fishing village in the Philippines, casting his net into the hidden regions of a parable. Mouseholes treats the dying and death of filmmaker Helen Hill’s beloved grandfather, followed by his envisioned resurrection to join deceased aunts and a tea party in heaven, and finally by the concluding rumination on the possibility of opening a channel of communication with him metaphorically through enabling mouseholes.

**A Purple State of Mind (A1–403)**

Saturday, 9:00–10:30 am

In this film, Christian Craig Detweiler and skeptic John Marks are reunited for several conversations on religion and politics, to reflect on the cultural and religious divide in the United States (‘red versus blue’), and the possibilities of moving beyond the impasse.

**Nobody Knows: The Untold Story of Black Mormons (A1–404)**

Saturday, 9:00–10:30 am

This film addresses the history of black Mormons, their little-known legacy, the effects of the Civil Rights movement, and how it was a pivotal force in the church’s releasing its restrictions on the priesthood for blacks.

**On the Road with the Red God (A2–405)**

Sunday, 8:30–10:00 am

Every 12 years, impregnated devotees pull a 0.5-foot-tall unwieldy chariot in the Kathmandu Valley, ride an enigmatic god worshipped by Hindus and Buddhists, on a month-long journey preceded by massive animal sacrifices and teaparty in heaven, and finally by the concluding rumination on the possibility of moving beyond the impasse.

**Karunama yudu**

Saturday, 8:30–10:30 pm

In this film, Christian Craig Detweiler and skeptic John Marks are reunited for several conversations on religion and politics, to reflect on the cultural and religious divide in the United States (‘red versus blue’), and the possibilities of moving beyond the impasse.

**Madarpaa Funeral at Gurkawoy (A3–400)**

Monday, 8:00–10:00 pm

This film gives a sensual account of how the Aborigines handle the emotional complexities of death and mourning in their mortuary rituals. Finely depicting the cycle of songs and rituals that are performed at a child’s burial, the film visualizes the subtle and complex symbolic meanings that the mortuary rituals have for members of the Yolngu.

**Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter . . . And Spring (A3–401)**

Monday, 8:00–10:00 pm

The film gives a sensual account of how the Aborigines handle the emotional complexities of death and mourning in their mortuary rituals. Finely depicting the cycle of songs and rituals that are performed at a child’s burial, the film visualizes the subtle and complex symbolic meanings that the mortuary rituals have for members of the Yolngu.

**Wicker Park Grace’s Stations of the Cross (A2–407)**

Sunday, 8:30–9:30 pm

From Thomas Dorsey to the Staple Singers, Chicago has long been a capital for gospel music. That music has rich roots in the city’s churches and popular culture. A choir from the Wicker Park Church, one of Chicago’s biggest and fastest-growing congregations, will offer a sampling of gospel’s vitality and diversity.

**Salem Baptist Church’s Gospel Choir (A2–408)**

Sunday, 8:30–9:30 pm

Across time and cultures, artists have wrestled with spiritual meaning, negotiating the intersection of tradition and lived experience. Members of Wicker Park Grace, an alternative congregation in Chicago’s arts-focused Wicker Park neighborhood, have created Stations of the Cross, imbuing an ancient form with modern spirituality. This session will showcase the Stations and feature comments from some of the artists.

**Karunama yudu**

Sunday, 8:30–10:30 pm

In this film, Christian Craig Detweiler and skeptic John Marks are reunited for several conversations on religion and politics, to reflect on the cultural and religious divide in the United States (‘red versus blue’), and the possibilities of moving beyond the impasse.

**Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter . . . And Spring (A3–401)**

Monday, 8:00–10:00 pm

The film gives a sensual account of how the Aborigines handle the emotional complexities of death and mourning in their mortuary rituals. Finely depicting the cycle of songs and rituals that are performed at a child’s burial, the film visualizes the subtle and complex symbolic meanings that the mortuary rituals have for members of the Yolngu.

**Madarpaa Funeral at Gurkawoy (A3–400)**

Monday, 8:00–10:00 pm

This film gives a sensual account of how the Aborigines handle the emotional complexities of death and mourning in their mortuary rituals. Finely depicting the cycle of songs and rituals that are performed at a child’s burial, the film visualizes the subtle and complex symbolic meanings that the mortuary rituals have for members of the Yolngu.

**Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter . . . And Spring (A3–401)**

Monday, 8:00–10:00 pm

The film gives a sensual account of how the Aborigines handle the emotional complexities of death and mourning in their mortuary rituals. Finely depicting the cycle of songs and rituals that are performed at a child’s burial, the film visualizes the subtle and complex symbolic meanings that the mortuary rituals have for members of the Yolngu.
Sessions with a Focus on South Asia and South Asian Scholarship

The International Focus of the 2008 Annual Meeting is on South Asia and South Asian scholarship. The AAR has invited thirteen prominent South Asian scholars as our special guests, and their participation is noted below.

A31–106
Harsh Harat Pilgrimage to Katariyama, Sri Lanka
Friday, 9:00–11:00 PM
A1–103
Globalization and South Asian Religions: Redefining the Discourse beyond Diaspora
Saturday, 9:00–11:30 AM
A1–202
The New Nuni Movement in Buddhism: Challenges, Debates, and Promise
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
Featuring: Venanda Shiva, Navdanya Research Foundation for Science, Technology, and Ecology
A1–206
The Divine Child in South Asian Religious Traditions
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
A1–207
Competing Social Imaginaries in South Asian Islam: Perspectives on Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Reformer and Revivalist Movements
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
A1–209
Hinduism in Africa: Adaptation and Integration
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
A1–215
Monal Anthropology in South Asia
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
A1–230
Contemporary Ulama: Approaches to Reform, Critique, and Dialogue
Saturday, 1:00–3:30 PM
Featuring: Muhammad Khalid Masud, Council of Islamic Ideology
A1–306
Women’s Leadership and Monastic Organization in Theravada Buddhism
Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM
A1–309
Disent, Tradition, and Rights: Religion, Modernity, and Planetary Life in South Asia
Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM
Featuring: Vandana Shiva, Navdanya Research Foundation for Science, Technology, and Ecology
Fr. Tissa Balasuriya, Centre for Society and Religion, Colombo
Ashis Nandy, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies
A1–329
Heterogeneous Tantras in Practice: A Simulated Engagement of the Scholarship of David G. White
Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM
A1–336
Framing Issues in Sikh Studies
Saturday, 4:00–6:30 PM
A2–107
Prosjamin among Christians in India: Issues of Authenticity, Authority, and Identity
Sunday, 9:00–11:30 AM
A2–121
Grammar and the Gods: When Metaphysics and Language Rules Collide
Sunday, 9:00–11:30 AM
A2–128
The Power of Place
Sunday, 9:00–11:30 AM
A2–200
Art, Aesthetics, and Performance
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM
Featuring: Ira Bhaskar, Jawaharlal Nehru University
M. A. Jayashree, University of Bangalore
A2–208
Buddhism in the South Asian Context: What Can Newars Teach Buddhist Studies?
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM
A2–217
Indo-Judaic Studies in the Twenty-First Century: Current Trends and Future Trajectories in the Comparative Study of Hinduisms and Judaisms
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM
A2–221
Categories and Trajectories of Modernity in the Late-Colonial Religious Milieu
Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM
A2–251
Religion and the Environment in South Asia: A Discussion with Vandana Shiva
Sunday, 3:00–4:30 PM
Featuring: Vandana Shiva, Navdanya Research Foundation for Science, Technology, and Ecology
A2–259
The Study of Religion in South Asia: The State of the Field
Sunday, 3:00–4:30 PM
Featuring: Uma Chakravarti, University of Delhi
Muhammad Khalid Masud, Council of Islamic Ideology
Golam Dastagir, Jahangirnagar University
Premakumara De Silva, University of Colombo
M. A. Jayashree, University of Bangalore
K. Srinivasan, Vivekananda College
A2–280
Categories and Emotion in the Study of Tantra
Sunday, 3:00–4:30 PM
A2–300
Comparative Theology and the Interreligious/International Encounter
Sunday, 5:00–6:30 PM
Featuring: Dominique-Sila Khan, Institute of Rajasthan Studies
K. Srinivasan, Vivekananda College
A2–313
Complicating Indian Christian Identities: Avadh Competition, Conflict, and Colonialism
Sunday, 5:00–6:30 PM
A2–320
Colonial Secularism, Religious Fundamentalism, and the Codification of Law in South Asia
Sunday, 5:00–6:30 PM
A2–405
On the Road with the Red God
Sunday, 8:30–10:00 PM
A2–406
Karnamayyudu
Sunday, 8:30–10:00 PM
A3–100
The Influence of Religion on Women’s Legal Rights in India
Monday, 9:00–11:30 AM
Featuring: Flavia Agnes, Majlis Centre for Rights Discourse
Monnmayee Basu, University of Delhi
Uma Chakravarti, Delhi University
A3–108
Islam as Discourse: Identity Construction in Medieval and Modern South Asia
Monday, 9:00–11:30 AM
Featuring: Dominique-Sila Khan, Institute of Rajasthan Studies
A3–128
Body and Medicine in Indian and Chinese Religions
Monday, 9:00–11:30 AM
A3–211
The Role of Miracles and the Miraculous in Creating and Sustaining South Asian Religions
Monday, 1:00–3:30 PM
A3–223
New Religions in South Asia
Monday, 1:00–3:30 PM
A3–312
Caste, Dalits, and Christianity
Monday, 4:00–6:30 PM
A3–325
Sufism and Society in South Asia
Monday, 4:00–6:30 PM
A3–329
South Asian Religions, Health, and Medical Issues
Monday, 4:00–6:30 PM

Kudos to Co-sponsors

The AAR congratulates the following institutions for their generous co-sponsorship of South Asian scholars. Such support immeasurably strengthens the international dimension of our Annual Meeting.

Lafayette College
Muhammad Khalid Masud, Council of Islamic Ideology
Missouri State University
Premakumara De Silva, University of Colombo

Future AAR Annual Meeting Dates and Sites

2008 — Chicago, IL
November 1–3

2009 — Montréal, QC, Canada
November 7–10

2010 — Atlanta, GA
October 30–November 2

2011 — San Francisco, CA
November 19–22

2012 — Atlanta, GA
November 3–6
Annual Meeting Leadership Workshop

Taking Religion(s) Seriously: What Students Need to Know

KRISTA TIPPETT, the host of Minnesota Public Radio’s popular Speaking of Faith program, will open the Academic Relations Committee’s annual Leadership Workshop during the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion in Chicago on Friday, October 31.

The daylong workshop, “Taking Religion(s) Seriously: What Students Need to Know,” will explore the common goal of religion courses that all students learn to think seriously about the ways religion impacts public life and their role as citizens.

“Even though this objective is not always articulated and may be submerged in more specialized concerns, it is always an underlying goal,” said Fred Glennon, chair of the Academic Relations Committee.

In this workshop we will investigate what this goal entails and then invite participants to consider how the curriculum they oversee addresses (or could address) it; how the mission and culture of their institution shape this objective; and how it might contribute to assessment of their program’s effectiveness.

“Exchange of experience and ideas will be central to the day’s work,” Glennon said.

The interactive workshop will feature several speakers, panelists, and breakout sessions. Following the opening introduction by Chester Gillis, Georgetown University, Tippett will open with a discussion of “Educating Students for Public Life.”

“We are fortunate to have Krista Tippett address this topic,” said Kyle Cole, AAR director of professional programs. “She brings a front-line perspective to the topic of religion and public life.”

After questions and answers, a panel discussion will follow, addressing “How does the goal that all students learn to think seriously about the ways religion impacts public life and their role as citizens interact with the mission and culture of your institution?”

The concluding plenary will concentrate on a principal question: “How should this goal be assessed and how do you assess it?”

The workshop will expand a specific area addressed by the Teagle Foundation-funded “The Religion Major and Liberal Education,” which guided the theme of last year’s Leadership Workshop. “Assessment issues and student learning have been highly cited as potential workshop topics by past workshop participants,” Glennon said. “I’m very happy for the Academy that we can explore these areas and offer such a rich workshop topic.”

Colleagues in your institution, such as chairs, other faculty members, 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.

Registration is limited to the first seventy-five participants, and last year’s workshop filled up long before the Annual Meeting. The cost for the workshop is $100, which includes the entire day of sessions, lunch, and a book on the topic.

The topics for past workshops have been:

- **2007 Annual Meeting**
  - Chairs Workshop—Best Practices: Diversifying Your Faculty—Honest Conversations
  - Leadership Workshop—The Religion Major and Liberal Education

- **2006 Annual Meeting**
  - Chairs Workshop—Personnel Issues: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

- **2005 Annual Meeting**
  - Chairs Workshop—Enlarging the Pie: Strategies for Managing and Growing Departmental Resources

- **2004 Annual Meeting**
  - Chairs Workshop—Evaluating and Advancing Teaching: The Tensions of Being a Chair

- **2003 Annual Meeting**
  - Chairs Workshop—Scholarship, Service, and Stress: The Tensions of Being a Chair

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

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

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

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

We look forward to seeing you in Chicago!

The Academic Relations Committee: Fred Glennon, chair, Chester Gillis, L. Deane Lagerquist, Steve Young, Roserta Ross, Edwin David Aposhian, and Kyle Cole, staff liaison.

---

**PRELIMINARY PROGRAM**

Legal issues, conflicts, and life cycles will be addressed for individual, department, and administration concerns.

**TO REGISTER**

Complete the information below, arrange payment, and send via fax or surface mail. You can also register online as part of the Annual Meeting registration process: www.aarweb.org/meetings/annual_meeting/current_meeting.

**PAYMENT INFORMATION**

**Check:** payable to “AAR Annual Meeting,” memo “Leadership Workshop”

**Credit Card (Check one):**
- [ ] Visa
- [ ] Mastercard
- [ ] American Express
- [ ] Discover

**Name on Card** (Please Print)

**FAX INFORMATION**

- [ ] Register online (as part of Annual Meeting registration): www.aarweb.org/meetings/annual_meeting/current_meeting
- [ ] Register by Fax: 330-963-0319
- [ ] Register by surface mail: AAR Leadership Workshop
  - 260 Experient
  - 2451 Enterprise PKWY
  - Twinsburg, OH 44087
  - USA
Religious Studies News

A Conversation with Vasu Narayanan Concerning Religious Studies in South Asia

Vasu Narayanan is Distinguished Professor of Religion and Director, Center for the Study of Hindu Traditions (CSHT), at the University of Florida. She is a past president of the AAR (2001–2002).

RSN: Dr. Narayanan, thank you for taking the time for this interview. How would you describe the state of religious studies in South Asia?

Narayanan: Many areas and topics that AAR members study in departments of religious studies are investigated in other departments in India. If one were to look at these studies in Indian universities, or see the avalanche of paper proposals submitted when there is a conference on “religion,” in India, it would appear that the study of religion is very strong in Indian universities. For instance, when the call for papers for the International Conference on Religions and Cultures in Indic Civilization (held in December 2003 and 2005) went out, there were literally hundreds of proposals. More recently, scholars from Belgium have organized conferences on “Reinhinking Religion in India.” And almost every week, we get book catalogs from India with books on religion written by scholars in Indian universities.

If one considers a few indicators like these, one may be tempted to say that religious studies is thriving. However, for reasons that we will discuss soon, these studies are done by scholars in the context of other fields and there is no separate department of “religion.” And so, it would be difficult to say that religious studies is flourishing when one could argue that it is not even alive; indeed, does not even exist formally in universities. One should also keep in mind the enormous strides made by other academic fields and disciplines in the last two decades in India. We all know that India has been at the cutting edge of information technologies. These areas have boomed — as have the areas of commerce, management, etc. And so, while one may say that a great deal has been going on in the last few years in topics connected with the study of religion, we have to put it all in perspective.

RSN: Yes, we’ve noticed that the study of religion in South Asia many times is done in other fields such as law, philosophy, gender studies, and social sciences. Please explain further.

Narayanan: Indeed, yes, as you will see from the affiliations of the visiting scholars from South Asia this year, almost every department except religion is represented. There are many reasons given as to why religious studies is not a field of its own in India, but the reasons themselves have been contested. A historical reason that is often stated is that when the British created the university system in undivided India (that is, what is now India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh) around 1857, they modeled them after the university system at the University of London (Certainly this is true in structure — for instance, there are several undergraduate colleges around a city, all affiliated with a university system). Since there was no formal religious studies department there, none was started in India. However, many others believe that in the post-Independence period, the term “religion” did not have a positive connotation; in popular imagination, the word became identified with “communalism” or tensions between religious traditions. It is probably also true that the study of religion did not figure high in the priorities of the political leadership — under Prime Minister Nehru — in the 1950s.

Having said that, one could argue that there have been millennia of studies in and about religion in India. The understanding of religion is certainly different in many cultures and in the subcontinent, religion, culture, business, performing arts — all seem to combine into a seamless whole, depending on one’s perspective. The term “religion,” therefore, becomes a catch-all for many subjects there (as it does, sometimes, in other parts of the world!) but in some cases, “religion” is identified with belief structures and theology (which, in many universities is “Indian philosophy”). Some scholars now think that “religion” in India is still seen with Western templates and they are struggling against it; others have adopted those templates and exult in them. Bottom line — the diversity of scholarship is as diverse as the Indian population itself.

RSN: Have there been any changes in religious studies there since you came to the United States?

Narayanan: Yes — I came to the United States in 1975, and at that time there was very little awareness of “religious studies” in India. A handful of universities now offer courses in “comparative religion.” The University of Madras, for instance, now offers graduate degrees in this area. The call for applications last April, for instance, said that the university would offer “MA in Comparative Religion and Philosophy with specialization in Saiva Siddhanta Studies, MA in Comparative Religion and Philosophy with specialization in Christian Studies/Jainal Studies, MA in Islamic Studies.”

There is some unease with what the term “religion” or “Hinduism” covers — many Hindu scholars think there is not enough deconstruction of the belief structures of the sectarian schools or their philosophies; but they would have a ritual and embodied understanding of their heritage, and feel and act their ways through their traditions. And so, when the Vice Chancellor of Madras proposed — this was during the post-centennial celebrations of the university — a study of the religious traditions of India, many chairs were endowed and new programs were started. They have tended to focus on specific sectarian schools such as “Vaishnavism” (1984), “Saiva Siddhanta” (1983), or religious traditions such as “Islamic Studies” (2002), “Christian Studies” (1993), or “Jainology” (1983). But there is no department of Hindu studies there. Many of these “Comparative Studies,” began as endowment chairs (in this case, endowed by the Catholic Archdiocese of Madras/Mylapore) fairly early (1993) and then became full-fledged departments after a major reorganization in 2003. Several of these departments now come under the umbrella “School of Philosophy and Religious Thought.”

Another area where there has been a sharp focus in the last decade is the drawing of lines between what is called the “secularist” or “pseudo-secularist” approach and the “nationalist” positions, at least in rhetoric. A good many scholars are right in the middle, but one frequently hears voices from the ends of the spectrum. Also, in some universities at least, there are debates on what “Hinduism” being colonial constructs.

RSN: It seems that now would be a good time to expand AAR relationships with scholars in South Asia. The AAR could encourage scholarly exchanges, attendance at conferences in the region, and field research. Would you agree with that? Why or why not?

Narayanan: Oh, absolutely. I think we should all go to conferences in other countries and do field work there if our budgets permit it. We get new perspectives on how others do religious studies, how they imagine the field, and the historical contexts of academia in their culture. It could be the most enriching part of one’s scholarly career. The depth would add a new dimension on how we transmit knowledge of “religious studies” in classrooms.

Just a study of India would give us a notion of what they mean by “philosophy,” the ways they “religion” (I’m using it awkwardly as a verb here!), and the ways they understand the academic study of this field. And our South Asian guests, in turn, would understand the complexity and diversity of how religion is studied in a secular country like the United States. I believe it was Frederick Meine who once quoted an African proverb: “Those who never visit, think their mother is the only cook.” Just a step here to beyond “carry in a hurry” — there is a whole world of country cooking and haute cuisine out there — both for our guests to try in Chicago, and for us to try in India.

Centre for Studies in Religion and Society

2009/10 Visiting Research Fellowships

The CSRS invites applications for visiting fellowship appointments at the University of Victoria in Victoria, British Columbia.

Topics: Scholarly study of religion in relation to any and all aspects of society and culture, both contemporary and historical. Applications from all disciplinary backgrounds are welcome.

Eligibility: Canadian and international scholars; emeritus scholars; new scholars; scholars on sabbatical leave from their regular academic appointments.

Value: Private office space with computer and wireless Internet on the scenic UVic campus; library privileges; a congenial retreat-like setting; enhanced opportunities for research networking and stimulating scholarly exchange.

Deadline: 31 January 2009

Applications: Please submit two (2) copies of the project summary, CV, two letters of reference, and the names and addresses of two additional referees to Dr. Paul Bramadat, Director, Centre for Studies in Religion and Society, University of Victoria, PO Box 1700, Victoria BC V8W 2Y2, Canada.

Further information: www.csrs.uvic.ca
**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

**2008 ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAMMING**

**CHICAGO, IL**

**Saturday, November 1**

A1–138

ATLA Graduate Student Luncheon: Careers Beyond the Academy

11:45 AM–1:00 PM

Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee and American Theological Library Association

RSVP at www.aarweb.org/meetings/Annual_Meeting/Current_Meeting/RSP/ATLA/main.asp

A1–302

Special Topics Forum

“If I Knew Then What I Know Now”: Lessons for the First Year of Teaching

3:30–4:00 PM

Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee and the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning

A1–407

Student Members’ Party

9:30–11:00 PM

Don’t forget your free drink ticket!

**Sunday, November 2**

A2–137

Mentoring Lunchen

11:30 AM–1:00 PM

Sponsored by the Status of Women in the Profession Committee and the Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession Committee

This lunchen is by reservation only. Details are online at www.aarweb.org/Meetings/current_Meeting/Current_Meeting/Program_Book

A2–202

Special Topics Forum

“Bringing Sexy Back”: A Town Hall Meeting for the AAR Student Community

Sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee

**Absenee and Early Voting**

The AAR RECOGNIZES that its Annual Meeting falls this year on the weekend before the United States Election Day on Tuesday, November 4. As this election is an important one for our country, and so many AAR members are politically involved, we want to minimize any conflict between attending the Annual Meeting and performing our civic duties. As such, we are not holding sessions on Tuesday, November 4. We do however recognize that many of our members may be staying in Chicago on the night of November 3 and returning home on Election Day. Given the uncertainties of travel, we would encourage those members to investigate the possibilities of absentee voting and early voting, which are options in many states. To aid in this endeavor, below is a comprehensive list of the websites for secretaries of state and election boards in each U.S. state and the District of Columbia.

- Alabama: www.us.state.al.us
- Alaska: www.elections.state.ak.us
- Arkansas: www.us.arkansas.gov
- Arizona: www.az.gov
- California: www.ca.gov
- Colorado: www.elections.colorado.gov
- Connecticut: www.oct.ct.gov/otsite
- Delaware: elections.delaware.gov
- District of Columbia: www.dcbce.org
- Florida: www.ho.state.fl.us
- Georgia: us.georgia.gov
- Hawai‘i: hawaii.gov/elections
- Idaho: www.idon.state.id.us
- Illinois: www.elections.state.il.us
- Indiana: www.in.gov/sos/index.html
- Iowa: www.us.state.ia.us
- Kansas: www.kans.org
- Kentucky: www.us.ky.gov
- Louisiana: www.us.louisiana.gov
- Maine: www.state.me.us
- Maryland: www.elections.state.md.us
- Massachusetts: www.sec.state.ma.us/index.html
- Michigan: www.michigan.gov
- Minnesota: www.us.state.mn.us/home/index.asp
- Mississippi: www.us.state.ms.us
- Missouri: www.us.mo.gov
- Montana: us.mt.gov
- Nebraska: www.us.state.ne.us/wildy/index.html
- Nevada: us.nev.us
- New Hampshire: www.us.nh.gov
- New Jersey: www.state.nj/rec/stateelections
- New Mexico: www.us.state.nm.us
- New York: www.elections.state.ny.us
- North Carolina: www.usa.state.nc.us
- North Dakota: www.nd.gov
- Ohio: www.us.state.oh.us
- Oklahoma: www.us.gov/elections
- Oregon: www.us.state.or.us
- Pennsylvania: www.us.state.pa.us
- Rhode Island: www.us.ri.us
- South Carolina: www.scvotes.org
- South Dakota: www.usd.gov
- Tennessee: www.tennessee.gov/sos/index.htm
- Texas: www.us.state.tx.us
- Utah: elections.utah.gov
- Vermont: www.us.state.vt.us
- Virginia: www.us.state.va.us
- Washington: www.usstate.wa.gov
- West Virginia: www.wv.gov
- Wisconsin: elections.state.wi.us
- Wyoming: uswy.state.wy.us

Don’t Let Time Get Away from You!

Register for the AAR Annual Meeting Job Center by October 13. The Job Center is an efficient way for candidates and employers to communicate and participate in job interviews. Those who register by the deadline will receive the full benefits of the Center.

**EMPLOYERS:**
- Unlimited use of the interview hall
- Placement of job advertisement in the Annual Meeting edition of Job Postings
- Seven months of online access to candidate CV’s organized by specialization
- Ability to use the message center to communicate with registered candidates

**CANDIDATES:**
- Opportunity to place CV online for employer review
- Personal copy of registered job advertisements and employers’ interview plans
- Ability to use the message center to communicate with employers

For more information about the Job Center, see www.aarweb.org/ jumping/jobcenter.
PLANNING TO COME to the 2009 AAR Meeting in Montréal? As of February 2008, all United States citizens must have a valid passport in order to travel to Canada. A passport station, hosted by the United States Post Office, Chicago District will be set up in the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel to accept new and renewal passport applications.

Getting a passport was never so easy! For new passports, please bring your birth certificate or naturalization certificate and a current driver’s license or state ID. New passports cost $100. If you need to renew, bring your old passport. Passport renewal will cost $75. Passport photos will be available onsite for $15. Only personal checks and personal checks or money orders will be accepted. You will receive your new passport station, hosted by the United States Post Office, Chicago District will be set up in the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel to accept new and renewal passport applications.

Getting a passport was never so easy! For new passports, please bring your birth certificate or naturalization certificate and a current driver’s license or state ID. New passports cost $100. If you need to renew, bring your old passport. Passport renewal will cost $75. Passport photos will be available onsite for $15. Only personal checks and money orders will be accepted. You will receive your new passport by mail after the Annual Meeting.

Québec: A Unique Religious Culture in North America and the World

Richard Foltz, Concordia University

The Quebec government has attempted to defuse such tensions through the application of “reasonable accommodation,” defined in labor law as “the obligation of employers to change some general rules for certain employees, under the condition that this does not cause ‘undue hardship.’” According to this principle, the demands for special treatment by some religious groups should be met, to the extent that they do not impinge on the values of Quebec’s society. Typical issues have been allowance for prayer times and holidays, certain types of dress, and restriction of contact between men and women. Requests for such accommodations have come mainly from Muslims, but also from Jews, Sikhs, and others.

Controversies have arisen from the granting of accommodations to religious groups, which many see as a threat to the secular values of Quebec society. In 2007, the Quebec government appointed two well-known scholars, Charles Taylor and Gérard Bouchard, to head up a commission to investigate the practice of Reasonable Accommodation in the province and provide a report of recommendations. The commission toured the province for a year holding public forums and submitted its report in May 2008. It lay much of the blame for tensions on non-immigrant Quebecers, calling on them to be more tolerant of cultural differences. Clearly, even such an extensive project as the one undertaken by the Bouchard–Taylor commission will not be sufficient to resolve the issue, and Quebec will continue to be a dynamic test case for the building of a healthy, religiously pluralistic society.

Montréal is the second most important center of higher education in North America (after Boston), in terms of total student population, funding generated by research, and the role of education institutions in the local economy. The city boasts four major universities: two English-language institutions, McGill and Concordia, and two French, the Université de Montréal and the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). All have large and active religious departments, each with its own distinctive approach and strengths. Because the provincial government encourages and facilitates cooperation and integration of programs between the universities, students benefit from an extraordinarily high level of faculty and institutional resources and flexibility in creating their own programs of study. A joint PhD is offered by the religious departments of Concordia, UQAM, and the Université Laval in Quebec City, featuring a unique year-long seminar taught by faculty from the three universities. Faculty and students from over twenty junior colleges (Cégeps) add to the exceptionally rich and lively community of religion scholars in Montréal and the province of Quebec. The Annual Meeting of the AAR, to be held in Montréal in November 2009, will provide numerous possibilities for attendees to learn more about the unique and dynamic religious culture of Quebec. These will include a workshop/seminar on the history of Quebec, a keynote address, and several specialized panels addressing such topics as “The Quiet Revolution Forty Years Later,” “First Nations of Quebec,” “Religious Diversity in Quebec,” “Reasonable Accommodation,” “History of Catholicism in Quebec,” and “Multiculturalism in Quebec.” More information about Montréal, the province of Quebec, and special programs planned for the 2009 meeting will be available at the 2008 meeting in Chicago.

Bibliography:

In Memoriam

Catherine M. Bell, 1953–2008

Catherine M. Bell, Emerita Professor of Religious Studies at Santa Clara University, an internationally recognized authority on ritual and Chinese religions, died May 23, 2008, at age 55, after years of battling illness. Her seminal work, Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice, published in 1992 and soon considered a classic, won the 1994 American Academy of Religion Best First Book in the History of Religions award.

In response to news of Bell’s death, Barbara DeConcini, the AAR’s executive director at the time of the award, noted that “from the time she burst on the scene with Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice in the early 1990s, Catherine was a bright, shining star in our field’s firmament. Her prodigious contributions to our field and to the AAR — as scholar, teacher, and all-around good citizen — speak to her brilliance and generosity. That she accomplished so much even in the face of grinding and relentless physical suffering attests to her outsized spirit and courage.”

Bell served the Academy in various capacities, chairing the Ritual Studies Group from 1992 to 1994, serving on the steering committee of the Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group from 1994 to 1997, and on the JAAR editorial board from 1999 to 2005. She was also a featured author for AAR panel discussions, and in 2007 edited a book called Teaching Ritual, for the AAR’s Teaching Religious Studies Series.

Mary McGee, who served on the Ritual Studies Group Steering Committee when Bell was its chair, and is now chair herself, described her as an “influential colleague and generous mentor,” who “stayed actively involved in the group, encouraging the work of younger scholars and helping to integrate awareness of ritual studies across the field of religious studies. Her vision of the field and influential scholarship helped reenergize the Ritual Studies Group at a critical juncture within the AAR’s history.”

Donald S. Lopez, Distinguished University Professor of Buddhist and Tibetan Studies, University of Michigan, whose time on the Ritual Studies Group’s steering committee also coincided with Bell’s chairmanship, called her “an exemplar of the scholar of religious studies: very smart, theoretically adept, never rancorous, always generous.”

Bell served, too, on the editorial boards of the journal, Religion, and the Journal of Chinese Religions. And she served as a contributing editor for the Journal of Ritual Studies. She “made deep and fundamental contributions to the theory of ritual practices,” challenging established positions and charting her own visions of the field,” said the journal’s co-editors, Andrew Strathern and Pamela J. Stewart, who called her work “an inspiration for current and future thinking on the topic.”

In addition to Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice, Bell authored, in 1997, another book, Ritual: Dimensions and Perspectives. Dennis E. Owen, then a professor of religion at the University of Florida, writing in Religious Studies Review, described it as “a rich and detailed interdisciplinary analysis of the nature and functions of ritual.”

Bell spent twenty years on the religious studies faculty of Santa Clara University, until illness forced her to retire in 2005. Since 2000, she had been the department’s chair and, since 1998, the Bernard Hanley Professor of Religious Studies.

In addition to the AAR award, Bell garnered many more awards, including the University of Chicago Divinity School’s 2005 Alumna of the Year and several Santa Clara awards: a 1996 Brutozaco Award for Curriculum Innovation; a College of Arts and Sciences 1998 Beyma Research Award; and a 2002 President’s Recognition Award for her scholarship and teaching. That Bell would win awards regarding teaching would be no surprise to McGee. “Many of us who celebrated Catherine admired her devotion to teaching,” McGee said. “Catherine was deeply concerned about the rituals of the classroom, and one always came away from a conversation with Catherine having learned more about not only what we teach but how we teach.”

Bell received fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies and the Mellon Foundation and multiple fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, her last in 2007 for a project she was unable to finish Believing: Assuming Universality, Describing Particularity in the Study of Religion.

She is survived by her husband, Steven M. Gelber, Professor of History, Santa Clara University, her mother, Blanche Coogan, and her siblings, James Bell, Linda Whalen, Daniel Bell, and Edward Bell. And she is survived by her words. Not just those she wrote as a scholar, but also those she wrote as a friend. As Jonte-Pace noted at a memorial service for Bell, some Shakespearean-style verse from a play that

Bell wrote in 1999 for friends “captures her spirit beautifully — it’s literary, playful, and quite profound. It’s about life, death, and love, beginnings and endings, and the desire for change. Time and the millennium become a kind of metaphor in this text for the presence of death in the midst of life.” Bell wrote:

“The time is upon us for a millennial shift
To mark the moment we offer this gift
If it be more beginning or end
I cannot presume to suggest or pretend
But whether welcomed or welcomed not
Tis a moment of time not soon forgot . . .
Time is what binds us and tears us apart
But for every ending we can attempt a new start.”

October 2008 RSN • 13
MANYA BRACHEAR of the Chicago Tribune, Lee Lawrence of the Christian Science Monitor, and Mohamad Bazzi, former Middle East bureau chief at Newsday, won the 2008 American Academy of Religion Awards for Best In-Depth Reporting on Religion. Brachear won the contest for journalists at news outlets with more than 100,000 circulation; on the Web; Lawrence for journalists at news outlets with less than 100,000 circulation; and Bazzi for opinion writing. The annual awards, given out since 2000, recognize “well-researched newswriting that enhances the public understanding of religion,” said John R. Fitzmier, Executive Director of the AAR.

Brachear submitted articles on the Jewish New Year and interpretations of the story of Abraham; the potential political challenges for Barack Obama as a member of Chicago’s Trinity United Church of Christ; debate over a revised edition of the Reform Jewish prayer book; a Catholic man’s pilgrimage to 365 churches in 365 days; and a megachurch Willow Creek Community Church and its business model for surveying member satisfaction. “Newsy, ambitious, diverse. And she almost called the biggest issue (so far) of the Democratic presidential primaries with an early profile of Trinity UCC,” said a judge. “A well-written and well-researched entry,” added another judge.

Lawrence submitted articles from a series on military chaplains. She was embedded with United States troops in Iraq and Afghanistan for three months and covered the day-to-day life of Army and Navy chaplains as they navigated such issues as suicide, baptism, family separation, patriotism, interfaith dialogue, and the mentoring of foreign military clergy. Said one judge, “This ambitious series on military chaplains . . . shows how effective it can be to approach a major news event from the often-overlooked religion angle. There is wonderful clarity in the writing. . . . Good use of detail and a smooth narrative flow bring the chaplains and their work to life.”

Bazzi, writing for the Nation and Newsday, submitted opinion articles on Iraqi cleric Muqtada al-Sadr’s struggle for power within Iraq’s Shi’ite community; the possibility of civil war in Lebanon between Muslim Sunnis and Shiites; and how the United States should respond to the state- ment of Iran’s President Ahmadinejad. Bazzi’s “focus on politics and religion in the Middle East provides insight into some of today’s most vexing topics,” commented one judge. “The opinions are clearly stated and well supported,” said another, noting the articles are a “must-read for anyone trying to understand the political situation in the Middle East.”

Each contestant submitted articles published in North America during 2007. Names of contestants and their news outlets were removed from submissions prior to judging. Each of the first-place winners receives $1,000.

The judges for the contest for news outlets with more than 100,000 circulation included Cecile Holmes, a professor of journalism at the University of South Carolina and a former reporter for the Houston Chronicle; and Jeffrey Weiss, a reporter for the Dallas Morning News. The judges for the contest for news outlets with less than 100,000 circulation and for the opinion writing contest included Paul Moses, a professor of English at Brooklyn College and a former Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for Newsday, and Diane Winston, a professor of journalism at the University of Southern California and a former reporter for the Baltimore Sun. Ronald Thiemann, a professor of theology at Harvard Divinity School, served as the third judge on all three contests. Thiemann is a member of the AAR’s Committee on the Public Understanding of Religion.

2008 AAR Newswriting Contest Winners

News Outlets with Circulations over 100,000:

• First Place: Manya Brachear, Chicago Tribune
• Second Place: Varoslav Trofimov, Wall Street Journal
• Third Place: Adam Parker, Post and Courier (Charleston, SC)

News Outlets with Circulations under 100,000:

• First Place: Lee Lawrence, Christian Science Monitor
• Second Place: G. Jeffrey MacDonald, Christian Science Monitor
• Third Place: Brad A. Greenberg, Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles

Opinion Writing:

• First Place: Mohamad Bazzi, articles published in the Nation and Newsday
• Second Place: William McKenzie, Dallas Morning News
• Third Place: Robert Sibley, Ottawa Citizen

Read some of the award-winning articles at www.aarweb.org/Programs/Awards/Journalism_Awards

THE COMMITTEE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING SEEKS NOMINATIONS FOR THE AAR AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING.

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

Procedures for the nomination process are outlined on the AAR website at www.aarweb.org/programs/awards/teaching_awards

Doniger Wins Marty Award

WENDY DONIGER, a scholar whose eloquent analyses of the meaning of myths in culture has captivated scholars and the public alike, will receive the Martin E. Marty Award at the Annual Meeting in November. The Martin E. Marty Award recognizes extraordinary contributions to the public understanding of religion. The award — which has recognized Robert Bellah, Andrew Greeley, John Esposito, and Diana Eck, among others — is given to someone whose work resonates with the public as well as with scholars, and whose work is known through a variety of media.

Doniger, one of the world’s foremost scholars of Hinduism, is a well-known author, editor, translator, teacher, blogger, lecturer, and commentator who is equally incisive whether she is discussing current movies or ancient civilizations. She has been widely praised for groundbreaking work that includes the books The Woman Who Pretended to Be Who She Was, The Implicated Spider: Politics and Theology in Myth, and a new translation of the Kamasutra. Her research is cross-cultural and includes literature, law, gender, and psychology. Her work has sometimes generated controversy; she has been occasionally assailed literally, had an egg thrown at her — and threatened by people who accuse her of distorting Hinduism.

Doniger is the Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions at the University of Chicago Divinity School, where she has taught since 1978. She also teaches in the Departments of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, among others.

The annual Marty Forum at the Annual Meeting promises to be a lively conversation. Doniger will be interviewed by Laurie Patron, a scholar who has worked closely with her; Patton, the Charles Howard Candler Professor and a Professor of Early Indian Religions at Emory University; will interview Doniger from 1:00–2:30 pm on Sunday, November 2, 2008.

The AAR Committee on the Public Understanding of Religion encourages nominations for future award recipients. You may nominate online at the AAR website, www.aarweb.org/Programs/Awards

Donors 14 • October 2008 RSN
AAR Honors Five Authors in Its Annual Book Awards

**THE AMERICAN ACADEMY of Religion offers Awards for Excellence in order to give recognition to 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 affect decisively how religion is examined, understood, and interpreted.**

Awards for Excellence are given in four categories: Analytical–Descriptive, Constructive–Reflective, Historical, and Textual Studies. Not all awards are given every year. More than one book may win an award in a given category. 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 site, www.aarweb.org/programs/awards/book_awards.

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**


**Constructive–Reflective**


**Historical**


**Textual Studies**


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


Glennon to Receive Excellence in Teaching Award

**FRED GLENNON, Professor of Religious Studies and Director of Faculty Development at LeMoyne College, will receive the Excellence in Teaching Award at the 2008 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. A scholar of Christian social ethics, Glennon teaches courses on comparative religious ethics, “Ethics from the Perspective of the Oppressed,” and religion and healing, among others.**

In addition to his own scholarly work, Glennon has written several essays on teaching, including “The Learning Covenant: Promoting Freedom and Responsibility in the Religious Studies Classroom”; “Service Learning and the Dilemma of Religious Studies: Descriptive or Normative”; and “Experiential Learning and Social Justice Action: An Experiment in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.” Glennon is the chair of the AAR Academic Relations Committee and has been a member of the Teaching and Learning Committee. He has also served on the Steering Committee of the Academic Teaching of Religion program unit.

Students express their appreciation for Glennon’s commitment to discerning their individual strengths as learners, his subtle and deft guidance of discussions, his ability to promote critical thinking through judicious questioning, and his unfailing energy and enthusiasm. Students describe his passion for learning as highly contagious, and colleagues observed that he has drawn many students into religion majors and minors. Students particularly value his ability to connect practical experiences outside the classroom, such as service learning, with both classroom discussions and more theoretical topics.

Colleagues praise Glennon’s “self-awareness of himself as a teacher [and] his vision of creating a community of scholar-learners with his students,” his ability to make the study of religion important and valuable to his students, and his ability to promote students’ sense of responsibility for their own learning. They also note with approval his ability to generate continuing interest in the study of religion from the students in his general education courses. Both in the academy and on his own campus, Glennon is a strong advocate for effective teaching, and is particularly effective at helping newer teachers find their distinctive teaching voices by encouraging them to take risks in the classroom in order to engage students, by supporting sustained reflection on the practice of teaching.

At this year’s Annual Meeting, participants will again have the opportunity to engage in conversation with the Excellence in Teaching Award winner during a special session, scheduled from 1:00–2:30 PM for Sunday, November 2. The session is sponsored by the Committee on Teaching and Learning and will be chaired by Eugene V. Gallagher. Prior to the Annual Meeting, Glennon will post some of his teaching materials on the AAR website at www.aarweb.org/programs/awards/Teaching_Awards and they will serve as the basis for the session.

Fred Glennon is an impressive example of dedication to the craft of teaching, especially for his intense commitment to engaged pedagogy and the ethical dimensions of teaching. Along with the previous winners of the AAR Excellence in Teaching Award — Tina Pippin, Eugene V. Gallagher, William Placher, Janet Walton, Timothy Benick, Zayn Kassam, Patricia O’Connell Killen, and Stacy Floyd-Thomas — he demonstrates the resourceful, creative, and fully engaged teaching found among so many members of the Academy. The Teaching and Learning Committee greatly appreciates the opportunity to review and learn from the materials submitted by the candidates for consideration and acknowledges the commitment, ingenuity, and energy that they devote to teaching about religion.

The Teaching and Learning Committee encourages colleagues to send letters of nomination for this significant award to Jessica Davenport, Associate Director of Professional Programs at the American Academy of Religion, jdavenport@aarweb.org. The guidelines for this award are on the AAR website at www.aarweb.org/programs/Awards/Teaching_Awards.

Religion and the Arts Award Winners

Betye and Alison Saar

In multiple media, prints, collage, assemblage, sculpture, and installation, Betye Saar (b. 1926) and Alison Saar (b. 1956) push the boundaries and categories of art and religion. With works in the collections of the finest arts institutions and museums, the two have been hailed as “conjure women of the arts.” Each one practices a synthetic art, creating material shape for persistent spiritual and cultural questions of identity, ethnicity, race, religion, and gender. Betye Saar’s Liberation of Aunt Jemima (1972) has acquired virtual iconic status. The shrines and altars she creates explore mysticism and voudon as well as racial and sexual politics. Alison Saar’s installations, objects, and sculptures pursue relations among spiritualities in African cultural diaspora. Each one of these women might be justifiably hailed as an insider artist for persuasively, creatively bringing personal encounters with visionary, vernacular, and “outside” arts of many cultures to public attention.
Membership in the AAR provides you with a spectrum of opportunities to both enrich your professional life and contribute to the field.

- Connect with scholars in the field by attending the Annual and Regional Meetings at deep discounts.
- Search for fellow members using the Membership Database online.
- Attend professional development workshops specially designed to assist you at every level of your career.
- Help to shape the AAR by volunteering to serve on committees, task forces, and other leadership groups.
- Answer the urgent call from journalists, public policy makers, and your fellow citizens who rely on our community to foster the public understanding of religion.
- Gain access to AAR print and online publications like the Journal of the American Academy of Religion (JARR), Religious Studies News (RSN), and the monthly e-bulletins for the latest scholarship and news.

AAR Membership Categories, Dues, and Discounts

There are three membership categories — professional, student, and retired. The dues for the professional and retired categories are based on annual income. There are 11 income levels. Student members pay a flat rate of $30.

- Professional dues are automatically 20 percent discount.
- Members who live outside the United States and make less than $15,000 per year pay a flat rate of $15.

Membership can be renewed for up to 10 years.

Please consider a gift to the Academy Fund. We depend on your support to continue to provide a high level of programs and services.

All gifts to the Academy Fund are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

JOIN ONLINE TODAY!
www.aarweb.org/Members/Dues/ MEMBERSHIP FORM
2008 and/or 2009 Calendar Years

CONTACT INFORMATION: ENTER CONTACT INFORMATION. COMPLETE ALL SECTIONS TO AVOID ERRORS.

Job Title: 
Employer or Enrollment: 
Number years employed/enrolled there: 
Degrees held: 
Institution where highest degree attained: 
Major field of study for highest degree: 

PROFESSIONAL/EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

DONATE TO THE ACADEMY FUND

Please consider a gift to the Academy Fund. We depend on your support to continue to provide a high level of programs and services.

AMOUNT: 

$250 $150 $100 $50 $

All gifts to the Academy Fund are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

CHOOSING YOUR MEMBERSHIP STATUS

Renewal 
Member ID # 
Joining as a new member

CHOOSE YOUR MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

- Professional
- Student**
- Retired

** You must attach a copy of your current student ID card the first time you join. Student membership can be renewed for up to 10 years.

CHOOSE DUES RATE AND APPLICABLE DISCOUNT, PLEASE FOLLOW DIRECTIONS BELOW TO AVOID ERRORS.

Annual Income 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional</th>
<th>Professional w/SBL Discount*</th>
<th>Retired</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$40,000 - $50,000</td>
<td>$180</td>
<td>$144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000 - $40,000</td>
<td>$160</td>
<td>$128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 - $30,000</td>
<td>$145</td>
<td>$116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $20,000</td>
<td>$140</td>
<td>$112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Under $15,000 and living outside the United States: $15*

* Must make under $15,000 and live outside the U.S.

Payment due: $50

Method of Payment

Payment must be in full and in U.S. dollars from a U.S. or Canadian bank.
- Check or Money Order (payable to American Academy of Religion)
- VISA, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express

Card Number

Expiration Date (mm/yy): / / 
CID #: 
Cardholder Name (Printed)

Cardholder Signature

* Card Identification # required for all cards: 4 digits on front of AMEX; 3 digits on back of other cards.
The essays in this volume address the pedagogical challenges of teaching Confucian material to a wide audience. Although Confucianism has been a part of Chinese and Asian-influenced societies for over 2000 years, teaching this tradition can be complex due to the lack of established norms and the diversity of Confucian thought. The essays present diverse viewpoints and strategies, including debates on how to capitalize on popular interest in ancient Chinese culture, the role of Confucianism in intellectual and religious debates, and the integration of Confucianism with other world religions.


Are you interested in submitting a book proposal to one of our AAR/OUP book series? Go to www.aarweb.org/Publications/Books/proposals.asp to find more about our five different book series and to get information on how to submit your proposal.
**Religious Studies News**

**BRIEFS**

**Terrence W. Tilley**

Terrence W. Tilley, chair of Fordham’s Department of Theology, was installed as the 63rd president of the Catholic Theological Society of America at the society’s 2008 convention on June 8, 2008. In this position, Tilley hopes to improve the communications between theologians and bishops, and to help to integrate a new generation of theologians into the society.

“New patterns of relating theology to the life of the faith are emerging,” Tilley said, explaining his decision to establish “Generations” as this year’s convention theme. “Younger theologians—meaning those who either entered the field or were born after the Second Vatican Council— have neither the baggage nor the ballast that their older colleagues have.”

The author of many scholarly books and articles, Tilley came to Fordham in 2006. He has also taught at Georgetown University, St. Michael’s College, the University of Vermont, Fordham University, and the University of Dayton, where he chaired the Department of Religious Studies. A native of Milwaukee, he earned his bachelor’s degree at the University of San Francisco in 1970 and his doctoral degree at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, in 1976.

**Charles S. Prebisch**

Charles S. Prebisch has been named head of the Religious Studies Program at Utah State University (USU). Prebisch has been a part of the program since 2006 and holds the Charles Redd Department of Theology, was installed as the Charles S. Prebisch to Terrence W. Tilley Religious Studies News Society of America at the society’s 2008 convention. The society’s 2008 convention theme was “Youth and the Next Editor for Religious Studies Program at Utah State University” — meaning those who either entered the field or were born after the Second Vatican Council — have neither the baggage nor the ballast that their older colleagues have.”

The author of many scholarly books and articles, Tilley came to Fordham in 2006. He has also taught at Georgetown University, St. Michael’s College, the University of Vermont, Fordham University, and the University of Dayton, where he chaired the Department of Religious Studies. A native of Milwaukee, he earned his bachelor’s degree at the University of San Francisco in 1970 and his doctoral degree at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, in 1976.

**Charles S. Prebisch**

Charles S. Prebisch has been named head of the Religious Studies Program at Utah State University (USU). Prebisch has been a part of the program since 2006 and holds the Charles Redd Department of Theology, was installed as the Charles S. Prebisch to Terrence W. Tilley Religious Studies News Society of America at the society’s 2008 convention. The society’s 2008 convention theme was “Youth and the Next Editor for Religious Studies Program at Utah State University” — meaning those who either entered the field or were born after the Second Vatican Council — have neither the baggage nor the ballast that their older colleagues have.”

The author of many scholarly books and articles, Tilley came to Fordham in 2006. He has also taught at Georgetown University, St. Michael’s College, the University of Vermont, Fordham University, and the University of Dayton, where he chaired the Department of Religious Studies. A native of Milwaukee, he earned his bachelor’s degree at the University of San Francisco in 1970 and his doctoral degree at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, in 1976.

**Mary Elizabeth Moore**

Mary Elizabeth Moore Named Dean of Boston University School of Theology

After a nine-month search, Boston University’s oldest school has a new dean. Mary Elizabeth Moore, a professor of religion and theology and director of the Women in Theology and Ministry Program at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University, will assume the deanship of the School of Theology beginning January 1, 2009. She will succeed Ray L. Hart, a School of Theology professor of religious studies, who was appointed dean ad interim in 2003, following the resignation of Robert C. Neville.

**Willem B. Drees**

**Willem B. Drees Selected as the Next Editor for Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science**

The Joint Publication Board of Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science has announced the appointment of Willem B. Drees as the journal’s new Editor-in-Chief. Drees is Professor of Philosophy of Religion and Ethics and outgoing Dean of the Faculty of Religious Studies of Leiden University. He is author of seven books, the editor or co-editor of twenty-two books, and has lectured widely in Europe and the United States. Zygon, founded in 1966, is an academic journal exploring the interactions between religious convictions, science, and technology in the modern world.

**New Center for Engaged Religious Pluralism at Saint Mary’s College of California**

Saint Mary’s College of California recently announced the opening of the Center for Engaged Religious Pluralism, a research center that will look toward the development of a model policy to accommodate religious diversity in prisons. Barbara A. McGraw has been named the director of the center. McGraw is a professor of social ethics, law, and public life, and the author of Battling Religious/Secular Conflict: American Sacred Ground: Public Religion; Pursuit of the Good in a Pluralistic American lead-co-editor of Taking Religious Plurality Seriously: Spiritual Polities on American Sacred Ground; and co-author of Many People, Many Faiths: Women and Men in the World Religions.

**Sir John Templeton, Elected Philanthropist, Dies on Tuesday, July 8**

Sir John Templeton, the legendary fund manager and philanthropist, died in a hospital in the Bahamas on Tuesday, July 8, at the age of 95. The cause of death was pneumonia. Templeton contributed a sizable amount of his fortune to his foundation. In 1972, the Templeton Foundation began awarding the Templeton Prize for Progress toward Research or Discoveries about Spiritual Realities. The foundation, which is now run by his son John Jr., gives its honorees a financial prize of $1.6 million, the largest single annual financial prize given to an individual for intellectual merit. Sponsor of the prize, a devout Presbyterian, was a trustee on the board of Princeton Theological Seminary, the largest Presbyterian seminary, for 42 years and served as its chair for 12 years.

**Call for Papers: Darwin’s Impact on the Humanities and Social Sciences**

Call for Papers: Darwin’s Impact on the Humanities and Social Sciences: Call for Papers for a symposium on “150 Years of Evolution: Darwin’s Impact on the Humanities and Social Sciences” to be held at San Diego State University on November 20–22, 2009. Papers should address the impact of Darwin’s ideas in the humanities and social sciences, especially religious studies. Both discipline-specific and broadly interdisciplinary approaches are encouraged. Abstracts of no more than 500 words to mark.soberd@sdstate.edu no later than November 30, 2008. Accepted papers must be completed by the date of the symposium to be included in a collection of published proceedings. Accepted papers will be announced February 1, 2009.

**Call for Papers: Religion and Buildings**

The Australian Religion Studies Review (www.aaran.org.au/aars_review.html) is a leading journal of the Pacific region dealing with all aspects of the academic study of religion. It is fully refereed and published by Equinox Press three times a year (April, September, and December). Issue 23.1 (2010) will cover the topic of “Religion and Buildings,” guest edited by Jennifer Clark, University of New England. This issue will explore the relationship between buildings and religious expression. Topics may include, for example, architecture, design, and interior decoration of buildings used for religious purposes; disputes over property; theology and buildings; renovation for liturgical renewal; church planning and church planting; renovation and reuse of religious buildings; absence of a building; local church history; religious buildings and multiculturalism; and preserving the heritage of religious buildings. Completed articles should not exceed 8,000 words. Submission deadline is July 2009. Early submissions are welcome. Please contact Jennifer Clark, jclark1@une.edu.au, for further details.

**Online Bibliography of Theology and Peace**

The Institute for Theology and Peace (ITP), a research center of the Presbyterian Church, has published the eighth edition of its Online Bibliography Theology and Peace, at www.itppeace.de/bibl. The bibliography contains 195,000 titles, and use of it is free of charge. The Institute (www.itppeace.de) was established in 1978 and is actively engaged in research projects on peace ethics. It publishes the series Ideologie und Frieden (Theology and Peace) and Beiträge zur Friedensethik (Contributions on Peace Ethics), has a library, and documents the literature comprehensively. For further information, contact Johannes Schloesinger at schloesinger@itpde.de.

**New Online Journal**

Religion Compass is an online-only journal publishing original, peer-reviewed, state-of-the-art surveys of current research across the disciplines of religion, politics, and law, and history. For further information, go to www.religion-compass.com.

**Association of Theological Schools and Luce Foundation Name Seven Faculty Members as 2008–2009 Henry Luce Ill Fellows in Theology**

Selected on the basis of the strength of their proposals to conduct creative and innovative theological research, the seven Fellows (below) will engage in year-long research in various areas of theological inquiry. The 2008–2009 Fellows constitute the fifteenth class of scholars to be appointed since the inception of the program in 1993, bringing the total number of Luce Fellows to 105. The program is supported by a grant from The Henry Luce Foundation, honoring the late Henry Luce III.

- Douglas E. Burton-Christie, Loyola Marymount University
- Margaret E. Fallar, Yale University Divinity School
- Carole R. Fontaine, Andover Newton Theological School
- Arun Y. Jones, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
- Demetrios S. Katso, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology
- Elizabeth Newman, Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond
- Allen D. Verhey, Duke University Divinity School

**Are you interested in the latest happenings in the field of religion? Would you like to post an announcement of an event, award competition, or other news of importance in the field? If so, please visit In the Field, for news of events and opportunities for scholars of religion published online by the American Academy of Religion. Visit this link for more information: www.aarweb.org/publications/In the Field.**

**EBSCO Publishing and American Theological Library Association Announce Digital Archives**

EBSCO has partnered with the American Theological Library Association (ATLA) to provide digital collections of indigenous graphs and serials in digital format. The collections will contain more than 29,000 monographs covering religion and theology. The majority of the monographs are from 1850 through 1923, with the earliest one dating back to 1322. The monograph collections are estimated to include 7.5 million pages of content. With each collection, researchers can view all of the typogaphy, graphics, and drawings as they were originally presented.
2008–2009 Lilly Theological Research Grant Recipients

Congratulations to the following 2008–2009 Lilly Theological Research Grant winners:

For Faculty Fellowships:
- Ellen Jeffery Blue, Phillips Theological Seminary
- Elizabeth Margaret Bounds, Emory University
- Marion Sahne Grau, Church Divinity School of the Pacific
- Robert J. V. Hiebert, Associated Canadian Theological Schools
- C. Kevin Rowe, Duke University

For Theological Scholars Grants:
- Peter J. Gentry, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
- Johnny Bernard Hill, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary
- M. Jan Holton, Yale University
- Kevin Jung, Wake Forest University
- Michelle Lee-Barnewall, Biola University
- Martha L. Moore-Keish, Columbia Theological Seminary
- Caleb O. Oladipo, Baptist Theological Seminary, Richmond
- Thomas E. Reynolds, Victoria University
- José David Rodríguez, Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago
- Angela Marie Semander, Washington Theological Union

For Research Expense Grants:
- Reginald David Broadnax, Hood Theological Seminary
- J. Kameron Carter, Duke University
- Michelle A. Clifton-Soderstrom, North Park Theological Seminary
- Don Sik Kim, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
- Ian Christopher Levy, Lexington Theological Seminary
- Karen Elaine Mason, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
- Pablo Pilochnik, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
- Raymond F. Penelton, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
- Dwadason N. Premnath, Saint Bernard’s School of Theology and Ministry
- Scott Douglas Sea, Christian Theological Seminary
- Douglas Foster, Abilene Christian University
- Paul Blovers, Emmanuel School of Religion
- D. Newell Williams, Brite Divinity School
- Víctor Westphale, Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago
- Ames Yong, Regent University

Christianity Today Book Awards

Christianity Today has recently announced its 2008 book award winners. The awards serve to recognize outstanding volumes that shed light on people, events, and ideas that shape evangelical life, thought, and mission. This year, 49 publishers nominated 359 titles published in 2007.

Apologies/Evangelism
There is a God: How the World’s Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind
Antony Flew with Roy Abraham Varghese
HarperOne

Biblical Studies
The Jesus Legend: A Case for the Historical Reliability of the Synoptic Jesus Tradition
Paul Rhodes Eddy and Gregory A. Boyd
Baker Academic

Christianity and Culture
Faith in the Halls of Power: How Evangelicals Joined the American Elite
D. Michael Lindsay
Oxford University Press

Christian Living
Caring for Mother: A Daughter’s Long Goodbye
Virginia Stem Owens
Westminster John Knox

The Church/Pastoral Leadership
The Call to Joy and Pain: Embracing Suffering in Your Ministry
Ajith Fernando
Crossway

Fiction
Quaker Summer
Lisa Samson
Thomas Nelson

History/Biography
A Secular Age
Charles Taylor
Belknap Press

Missions/Global Affairs
Disciples of All Nations: Pillars of World Christianity
Lamin O. Sanneh
Oxford University Press

Spirituality
The Jesus Way: A Conversation on the Ways That Jesus & the Way
Eugene H. Peterson
Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Theology/Ethics
Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music
Jeremy S. Begbie
Baker Academic

AAR Career Services

Visit the AAR’s new Career Services webpage at www.aarweb.org/jump/careers for these services:

Job Postings
Annual Meeting Job Center
Candidate CVs
Workshop Information
Employment Statistics
Articles Discussing Career Issues

Also see the ad on page 11 for information about the 2008 Job Center.
**Sustainability Task Force Update**

The sustainability Task Force has been looking at ways to create a more sustainable AAR and to promote issues of sustainability within the study and teaching of religion. The task force is dedicated to making the AAR as sustainable as possible by looking into resource management and reduction at meetings and while traveling to meetings, workshops geared for infusing curriculum with sustainability issues, and working with publishers to offer educational materials with sustainability topics and printing them on recycled paper.

The task force asked the AAR Board of Directors to consider an ecological audit of the AAR and of the Annual Meeting. Sustainability Task Force Chair Sarah McFarland Taylor reported to the Board that the task force would be researching and pursuing options for a low-cost or donated comprehensive "environmental audit" of the AAR. There are a variety of organizations that specialize in assessing the environmental impact of nonprofit organizations and make recommendations for reducing their "ecological footprint."

In the course of researching sustainability options, one common point has emerged. The chief environmental impact of the AAR as a whole comes from the greenhouse gases generated by our members' travel to and from our Annual Meeting. In response, the task force is discussing several measures:

- Meeting when possible in major cities that are more direct flights rather than multiple connecting flights (reducing take-offs and landings);
- Choosing cities for the Annual Meeting with excellent public transportation (or very walkable locations) to minimize taxi and short use (including regional meetings);
- Publicizing well the public transportation options for travel to the conference and within the conference city;
- Promoting ride-sharing to the conference and within the conference city;
- Reducing our use of products, such as plastics used for cups, badge holders, etc.;
- Working with hotels to provide more local sources of food and other reception fare (foods with fewer "fossil fuel miles" on them);
- Asking that task forces and committees meet face-to-face at the AAR Annual Meeting and then (when feasible) meet electronically through conference call or video conferencing instead of flying to Atlanta for meetings during the rest of the year;
- Purchasing Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) to offset greenhouse gases.

The purchase of RECs to offset greenhouse gas production is controversial, since there are those who argue that offsetting simply shifts the emissions to other gases in the first place, rather than eliminating them altogether. However, for business travel, which will occur anyway, the consensus seems to be that implementing an offsetting program, on balance, is better than doing nothing and can actually contribute to environmental and social justice efforts in the communities these credits benefit.

The task force is recommending that a volunteer carbon offset option be included in the online registration page for future Annual Meetings. Members could be invited to follow a link to calculate their carbon emissions for travel to the conference and purchase RECs. This measure has already been implemented at the AAR Midwest Regional meeting, although it has not been linked to its registration page. A separate e-mail goes out from the Midwest Regionally Elected Director inviting members to purchase credits.

The task force is also recommending conserving other resources, such as:

- Stationery/Paper — The AAR Executive Office has already made huge strides in reducing paper use and moving toward more electronic means of communication. For the paper that the organization still consumes, the task force researched options for the purchase of more sustainable paper stock and found that the major paper supplier used by Emory University, where the office is located, is Mohawk paper. Mohawk is a watermarked, archival quality paper that is a 100 percent post-consumer recycled paper product, which can be used in virtually all Xerox machines and laser printers. Mohawk's production plant is also 100 percent "carbon neutral," offsetting its carbon emissions through the purchase of Renewable Energy Credits. The task force recommends that the AAR purchase its paper from Mohawk.

- Hotel Sustainability Requests — The task force recommends working with our partner hotels as much as possible to encourage them to implement sustainable measures at host hotels, including the following:
  - Providing guests a way to opt out of daily linen laundering by providing a sign placed on the bed or in the bathroom (or other comparable system);
  - Using compact fluorescent bulbs;
  - Using more environmentally sustainable cleaning products;
  - Providing a living wage to hotel domestics hired to clean and service rooms; and
  - Making sure that recycling bins are numerous and prominently displayed throughout the hotel.

The task force has called for more research paper awards at the regional level for work dealing with religion, environment, and sustainability. The AAR Midwest Region has gone ahead and endowed a paper prize in this area, and hopes other regions will follow with similar awards.

At the Annual Meeting this year, the task force encouraged the Program Committee to expand the Religion and Ecology Program unit session limits, which was granted. It also successfully proposed South Asian environmental activist and author Vandana Shiva as a speaker for the 2008 Annual Meeting in Chicago. The task force's first special session will be "The Greening of Faith: Religious Environmentalism and Beyond."

There are several items the task force will be exploring in the next few years. One of the issues is to find ways of providing more local, bioregionally grown, sustainably produced food options for the Annual Meeting. Task force members are talking with the American Humane Society's Sustainability in Food and Farming program and with VegAdvantage, a free service provided by vegetarian chefs who work with conferences, hotels, schools, universities, businesses, and other organizations to integrate more vegetarian options into menus, as well as more locally produced foods. VegAdvantage also works out all the logistics, which frees up conference planners to focus on other things.

Another project the task force is considering is the Sustainability Teaching Initiative. Task force members are exploring a variety of opportunities to create a series of workshops on teaching about religion and sustainability. Additionally, part of the initiative includes working with textbook publishers to include more sustainability content in their books and sponsoring a workshop or seminar for book vendors run by the "Green Publishing Initiative." Committee member Laurel Kearsn continues to work on the Greening Seminaries initiative.

The committee will also be building future links between AAR's syllabus project website and the Forum on Religion and Ecology's syllabus website.

---

**AAR Goes to Capitol Hill to Advocate for Humanities Funding**

In March, the AAR and 34 other associations involving higher education co-sponsored Humanities Advocacy Day, an annual event in Washington, D.C., organized by the National Humanities Alliance (NHA).

A total of 94 humanities advocates representing 21 states and the District of Columbia visited 127 Senate and House offices. The AAR participants were board member Brian K. Pennington, Maryville College; member Charles B. Jones, Catholic University of America, and his son, Trevor; and AAR staff member Margaret Jenkins, Director of Development. John R. Firthman, the AAR's Executive Director, represented the AAR at the NHA's annual meeting held the day before.

The AAR, along with other members of the NHA, is advocating a budget of $177 million for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) in fiscal year 2009, an increase of about $32 million over the fiscal year 2008 appropriation. The NEH is the largest funder of humanities programs in the United States. The AAR also supports fiscal year 2009 funding of $12 million for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), the grant-making arm of the National Archives and Records Administration.

As of the AAR's press deadline, the House of Representatives and the Senate have yet to vote on bills funding NEH and NHPRC for fiscal year 2009.

---

**Oxford University Press Book Series Name Change**

The name of the Oxford University Press/AAR book series formerly known as Texts and Translations has been changed to Religion in Translation. Religion in Translation seeks to make available to research scholars and classroom teachers alike significant primary texts in English translation, significant new secondary scholarship on religious texts, and reprints of major works of scholarship in the field of religious studies. Given this broad mandate, we seek proposals from all areas of the discipline that will bring to an English-speaking audience texts of major importance to the world’s religious traditions; monographs that open up specific texts to wider audiences; and new translations of classic works of secondary scholarship that are perennially relevant to the understanding of religious phenomena, values, ideas, and practices.

For further information on the series, please go to www.aarweb.org/Publications/Bookseries/religionintranslation.asp.

To reach one of the two editors for this series, please contact either Anne E. Monius, Harvard Divinity School, anne_monius@harvard.edu, or Kevin Madigan, Harvard Divinity School, kevin_madigan@harvard.edu.
The Religious Studies Major in a Post-9/11 World: New Challenges, New Opportunities

I. Opportunities

New Perceptions

These days, it is hardly news when a publication prints a retraction. When the retraction is for an eight-year-old obituary, though, people tend to stand up and take notice. As the 1990s came to a close, The Economist was so certain of the imminent demise of organized religion that it featured God’s obituary in its final issue of the millennium.1 The editor’s perspective was clear, if myopic. Changing demographics and the collapse of Western Europe was in free fall. “The cynical, questioning, anti-authoritarian West,” often led by college professors, had just completed a century of relentless (and frequently effective) attacks on religious belief. For politicians, intellectuals, and even some clerics, “religion was becoming marginal to public life . . . [and] faith an irrelevance in foreign policy.”2 The U.S. Secretary of State at the time, Madeleine Albright, was of the opinion that any given world problem was “complicated enough without bringing God and religion into it.”3 And when Henry Kissinger published his 900-page, career-summarizing Diplomacy in 1999, the word “religion” did not even appear in the index of a book that was way out. So off the shoulders of the Enlightenment cannon declared.

How times have changed.

A recent study reports that the proportion of the world’s population that claims membership in the world’s four largest religions — Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism — actually increased over the past century, from 67 percent in 1900 to 73 percent in 2005.4 The number is predicted to reach 80 percent by 2050. Last year, Harvard faculty engaged in a very public debate over the importance of the study of religion in the university’s core curriculum, with the approved core featuring multiple references to religion (if stopping short of mandating its study).5 Former Secretary of State Albright recently has become a high-volume advocate of the public role of religion, writing that the failure of Americans to understand other religions “poses one of the great challenges to our public diplomacy.”6 And a few months ago, The Economist printed a retraction of its notorious obituary, declaring: “Athists and agnostics hate the fact, but these days religion is an inescapable part of politics.”7

Of course, those of us in the field of religious studies know that religion has always been an inescapable part of politics, as well as an inescapable part of economics, foreign policy, social mores, and domestic interactions. The waning years of the twentieth century were certainly no exception. While the reality has not changed in recent years, public perceptions doubtlessly have. World events have led Americans to a new appreciation of the importance of knowledge about religion and to a vivid awareness of the dangers that emerge when we fail to recognize religion as a potent source of motivation and behavior. In a world shaped not merely by 9/11 but by Iraq, Bosnia, Katrina, and the West Bank — not merely by abortion, but by gay marriage, intelligent design, euthanasia, and stem cells — Americans increasingly accept the idea that we need better to understand the diverse range of religious phenomena. In one recent survey, over 80 percent of Americans responded affirmatively to the question, “Do you think people should learn more about religions other than their own?”

If we truly wish for students to engage the tremendous variety of human understandings of life, death, suffering, love, and meaning, there is perhaps no more direct path than through the study of religion.

II. Challenges

The Religious Studies Major in Transition

The religious studies major is in a state of flux. By most indicators, the field is growing, perhaps significantly. The number of religious studies majors increased by 22 percent in the past decade (to an estimated 47,000 students), with like percentage increases in the number of total courses offered, course enrollments, and faculty positions in the field.8 The number of religious studies majors at public institutions has grown even more rapidly, by 40 percent during the same period, signifying a sea-change in the field. What was once a major settled largely within liberal arts colleges and denominationally-linked institutions is now establishing a widespread presence at state universities. In the past five years alone, new degree programs in departments of religion have been proposed or established at the University of Texas, Ohio State, Duke, and a host of other institutions.

In a sense, our jobs as scholars of religion became a lot easier on September 11, 2001. Suddenly, the arguments we had been making for years about the importance of understanding world religious traditions were being made by others: not merely by former Secretaries of State and magazine editors, not merely by the general public, but by college deans, provosts, and presidents — at times, even by our “cynical, questioning, anti-authoritarian” colleagues.9

A Return to Liberal Education?

Concurrent with (if largely coincidentally) these changes in public perceptions of the importance of religious literacy, there emerged a new (or reemerged an age-old) debate about the quality of the education provided by American colleges and universities. In 2006, former Harvard President Derek Bok reminded that American college students “improve far less than they should in such important areas as writing, critical thinking . . . and moral reasoning” and lamented that students often fail in “learning what they need to know to become active and informed citizens.”10 In 2007, UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute, after surveying over 100,000 college students, released a national study of students’ engagement with issues of “meaning and purpose,” categorizing “spiritual development as a core component of a liberal arts education.”11 Meanwhile, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) was conducting a multi-year study of liberal education that concluded, “The world in which today’s students will live is one of disruption rather than certainty, and of interdependence rather than insulation.”12 It called for a widespread shift in the “focus of schooling from accumulating course credits to building real-world capabilities.”13 In its influential 2007 report, College Learning for the New Global Century, the AAC&U mapped out framed learning outcomes for all American college students:

• Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World, “focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring.”
• Intellectual and Practical Skills, including “creative and critical thinking,” “inquiry and analysis,” and “written and oral communication.”
• Personal and Social Responsibility, including “civic knowledge and engagement — local and global,” “intercultural knowledge and competence,” and “ethical reasoning and action.”
• Integrative Learning, including the synthesis and application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems.”

For many of us in the field of religious studies, these “new directions” for American college students seemed anything but novel. The four essential outcomes embraced by the AAC&U outline themes that religious studies has been focused on for decades: intercultural reasoning, engagement of big questions, critical thinking and writing, moral reasoning, and the application of all of these skills to new global contexts and lived behaviors. It is safe to say that few disciplines in the academy more centrally and more naturally address the AAC&U outcomes than does the field of religious studies.

At a time when leaders in higher education are increasingly asking students to engage the large issues of life’s meaning and to think critically and responsibly about their role in the world, religious studies offers unique opportunities. Other disciplines such as philosophy, literature, and the creative arts doubtlessly engage questions of ultimate meaning. Yet these endeavors are largely the province of the talented few: the philosopher, the poet, the painter, the dancer. The rest of us stick to the audits. While, to be sure, we can learn to appreciate the creations of these artists and scholars, we remain observers. Religions, by contrast, is largely created by its adherents, millions of worshipers and hundreds of thousands of local religious communities — through their prayers, rituals, devotions, and acts of charity; their conversations about scriptures; and their hierarchies and institutions — shape and are shaped by the religious meanings of their traditions. If we truly wish for students to engage the tremendous variety of human understandings of life, death, suffering, love, and meaning, there is perhaps no more direct path than through the study of religion.

Clearly, the field of religious studies now finds itself at a pivotal moment. An unprecedented confluence of world events, public perceptions, and educational insights has created exciting possibilities for the growth and re-imagining of the field — possibilities that were unimaginable even a decade ago. The current moment presents important opportunities for the academic study of religion — and poses a series of challenges.

How we, as scholars of religion, respond to these challenges will hang, in large part, on our ability to give better, more informed answers about the future of the discipline — not to mention the future of American public literacy about a broad range of religious phenomena.

NEWS
What constitutes the religious studies major is also undergoing rapid change. The American Academy of Religion conducted comprehensive surveys of undergraduate course offerings in religion in both 2000 and 2005. The results are striking, if not surprising. The number of sections taught of courses in Islam and Hinduism each almost doubled during the five-year period, by most indications, courses in Christian Theology, Old Testament, and New Testament were flat or down. Sections of Introduction to World Religions grew in number. The General introduction to the Bible declined. There is a very real shift occurring in the field of religious studies—not a shift away from the study of Western religions per se (indeed, courses in the Introduction to Western Religions were up significantly during the five-year period), but one away from the study of Christianity in isolation.

The eighteen-month-long, American Academy of Religion study of the religious studies major, supported by the Teagle Foundation and resulting in this White Paper, found much evidence corroborating these numbers—as well as evidence of challenges that have emerged amid the rapid change.

Rethinking the “Seminary Model”

At religiously-linked schools such as Colorado Christian University (Council of Christian Colleges and Universities) and Santa Clara University (Jesuit), efforts are underway to re-conceptualize and to globalize the study of religion on campus. Colorado Christian provides a particularly interesting example of the transformation of the field. An evangelical university that “purposely seeks to foster spiritual as well as intellectual growth,” Colorado Christian has just added its first comparative course in world religions and seeks to establish a religious studies major. On a campus where “Christianity isn’t a religion, it’s a life,” such undertakings can be controversial. As Frank Ames reports, “Although many parochial institutions maintain high academic standards for students and appoint outstanding scholars and teachers to their faculties—and often succeed in providing excellent education—it is fair to say that religious commitment at times diminishes empathy toward the Other and awareness of the Self, which are essential in religious studies.” While Ames and his colleagues at Colorado Christian are currently negotiating the at times subtle lines between personal religious commitment and the scholarly study of religious traditions, they are convinced of the importance of the academic study of other religious amid a devotional context.

At Santa Clara, the development is consciously involved in efforts to “explore the shape and function of theological studies in relation to other approaches to religion,” including political science, history, classics, women’s and gender studies, and environmental studies.

Colorado Christian and Santa Clara are part of a larger movement in which departments and curricula in religious studies at public, private, and church-related institutions are gradually, persistently, and unevenly shifting from a “seminary model” for the study of religion (in which courses in Bible, Christian history, and Christian doctrine are seen as primary and courses on other religions and aspects of religion are deemed secondary or even unnecessary) to a comparative model (in which the focus is on promoting student understanding of religious beliefs and historical processes of multiple religious traditions in a comparative context).

Faculty and Administration Map Perceptions of the Field

In the state system of Texas, another sort of transformation is underway. Between 1995 and 1985, almost all instruction in religion within the units of the Texas College and University System was performed by “Bible Chairs”: instructors nominated and paid for by various Christian denominations and institutions teaching from an explicitly devotional perspective. The practice was declared unconstitutional in the mid-1980s, but a perception that religious studies is indistinguishable from religious practice remained in the minds of many administrators and faculty members across the state. The permission granted in May 2007 by the University of Texas, Austin to establish the first-ever Department of Religion within the state system represents a significant change in state policy.

But old perceptions die slowly: on one university campus in Texas, while 98 percent of the students believe that religion influences world events in significant ways, 10 percent of the faculty members are still of the opinion that religious studies courses are, by their very nature, non-intellectual. Such sentiments fly in the face of nearly unanimous legal consensus. As early as Abington v. Schempp in 1963, the United States Supreme Court declared the constitutionality of religious studies in the state setting. Speaking for the majority, Justice Thomas Clark wrote: “[I]t might well be said that one’s education is not complete without the study of religion. . . . Nothing we have said here indicates that such study of the Bible or of religion, when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education, may not be effectuated consistent with the First Amendment.” Despite such assurances, the concerns of some faculty members, in Texas and elsewhere, who fear that religious studies courses are primarily devoted to an encroachment of religious practice into the classroom can still present real obstacles to the development of the discipline in state settings.

In some senses, what is happening in the Texas state system parallels the movements at Colorado Christian and Santa Clara—on the one hand a transition of the religion major from a seminary to a comparative model. In Texas and other state-school contexts, however, the common fear faced is not that religious studies is not Christian enough, but rather that it might be too much so.

Evolving Interdisciplinary Efforts and Sub-fields

Amid already established programs of religious studies, the challenges are often of a different nature. At the University of Minnesota and Louisiana State University, efforts are underway to increase the interdisciplinary outreach of relatively small programs as a means of increasing both course offerings and institutional allies. In these settings, the size and scope of the religious studies major is growing, but largely through increased collaboration between core faculty and colleagues in cognate departments. The University appointment of a scholar in Hinduism, for instance, might be jointly shared between Religious Studies and Asian Studies. Gail Hinch Sutherland of Louisiana State observes, “This is going to mean that we probably have to leave the narrow textualists for seminaries and well-endowed private universities. No one wants to trade scholarly profundities for glib generalities but we must take note of the world we are preparing our students to inhabit.” This is not to say that text is unimportant to students of religious studies. Still, in certain interdisciplinary- and area-studies settings, emerging perceptions of the proper balance of religious studies is already shaping the nature and direction of the field, pointing the way to courses and faculty appointments in some sub-fields and not in others. Indeed, such directions may be partially responsible for the rapid nationwide increase in the number of courses in areas such as Hinduism and Islam but decline in the number of courses in Bible and theology.

We encourage you to attend “The AAR White Paper on the Religion Major: A Forum” at the Annual Meeting in Chicago

This interactive forum is from 9–11:30 AM Saturday, November 1.

Check the Annual Meeting Program Book for the location!
the discipline better coordinate efforts between scholarly communities and four-year institutions to educate students in religious studies and to provide greater access to the discipline.

The challenges to the religious studies major are thus multiple: rapid growth, especially in public universities; a pronounced if uneven shift away from a seminary and toward a comparative model for the major; a range of misperceptions about the major and its goals on the part of administrators and peers; new, emerging subfields and interdisciplinary emphases; questions posed about the content of the major and its assessment; and the rapid and newfound growth of religious studies in community-college contexts.

The most common request made by the more than 300 faculty members who directly contributed to the AAR–Teagle initiative on the religious studies major was a desire for more frequent and more structured conversations in sorting through the various challenges that they face on a day-to-day basis. All of us, as scholars or religion, continually grapple with questions about the major: How should it be conceived? What is essential for our students to learn? How can we convey and assess these essential outcomes effectively? Indeed, those of us in the new and changing field of religious studies often do not appreciate how rarely some of these same questions are considered in other disciplines. Religious studies scholars have been exceptionally circumspect about the bases of the discipline (often because they have been compelled by skeptics to justify the field’s existence), and doubtlessly individuals in the field have developed innovative responses to a host of challenges, but too few of these responses have been formulated on a local, ad hoc basis. A signal contribution of the AAR–Teagle initiative has been to provide contexts and support for colleagues to compare their emerging articulations of the nature and value of a religious studies major, the substance and shape that it should have, and the multiple ways in which this project relates to broader national and educational objectives. The American Academy of Religion has a unique and critical role to play in sustaining and advancing these conversations, but there are things that all of us, as scholars in the field, can and must do. The remainder of this White Paper is dedicated to mapping out seven concrete actions that we, as scholars of religion, can take for studying, defining, and strengthening the religious studies major.

III. Actions

The American Academy of Religion will celebrate the centennial of its founding in 2009. In conjunction with this landmark, it is appropriate that the AAR and its members commit themselves to a series of actions for improving the major.

Studying the Major

The discipline of religious studies must begin to define, develop, and nurture practices and structures for sustained scholarly discussion of the undergraduate major. Towards this end, the AAR–Teagle Working Group makes the following two recommendations to the AAR Board:

1. Starting with the 2009 Annual Meeting, the American Academy of Religion should inaugurate a consultation on “The Religious Studies Major” with the following two recommendations to the Annual Meeting.

While the AAR Annual Meeting features hundreds of sessions each year, there is no continuing forum for the discussion of the shape of the major. Currently, multiple sessions focus on teaching and on strategies for individual courses, but we rarely pause as scholars to compare and engage ideas about the aim and content of the undergraduate curriculum in religious studies, as such. Adding a consultation on “The Religious Studies Major” would provide an initial step toward filling this void. Individual sessions could focus on topics such as “The Capstone Course and Its Role in the Major,” “Building Interdisciplinary Bridges,” “Integrating the Major and the Goals of Liberal Education,” “Balancing Required Courses and Electives,” “Making the Case for the Major with Administrators,” and “The Challenge of Teaching Ethics in the Major.” The aim would be to provide a forum for scholars to share challenges, best practices, successes, and failures. Additionally, a creation of a consultation on “The Religious Studies Major” would provide an administrative structure for continuing the conversation that is sustained in various settings (including regional meetings) throughout the year. This structure would also serve to support step 2, outlined below.

2. Beginning in 2010 and continuing through 2012, the AAR should convene three annual, day-long workshops on the Religious Studies major, with each workshop focusing on a different theme related to the major. Colleagues across the discipline are grappling with a range of issues — from trying to establish the religious studies major amid hostile environments to re-conceiving long-entrenched curricula to address the evolving needs of a liberal education. Sharing best practices for the formulation, implementation, and assessment of learning outcomes; exploring the successes and failures of particular curricula for the major; and exploring the lines between serving students’ academic and spiritual needs are all undertakings that demand an extended period of time. The workshop model has proven highly effective in such contexts, and is in allowing for dialogue but in helping to establish a core network of stakeholders and leaders in the discussion. There appears to be much enthusiasm for the workshop idea among the membership of the AAR: the day-long workshop on “The Religion Major and Liberal Education” held at the 2007 Annual Meeting in San Diego drew unprecedented attendance, filling with 75 registrants from almost 50 institutions. Consequent on the ability to secure outside funding to support the initiative, the Working Group recommends that the AAR “jump start” the scholarship of the major by holding a series of three annual “Leadership Workshops” on the major between 2010 and 2012.

Defining the Major

The discipline must continue to work to articulate a distinctive and invigorating religious studies endeavor and to define the specific characteristics and value of the religious studies major. Towards this end, the Working Group makes the following two recommendations to the AAR Board:

1. Beginning in 2009, the AAR should parallel its highly successful Syllabus Project web pages by launching a new website, “The Major Project,” on compiling discipline-wide information on central aspects of the undergraduate major.

The AAR’s Syllabus Project collects almost 400 syllabi for dozens of different courses submitted by individual faculty members. In an ever-evolving field, it affords scholars of religion — new and seasoned alike — the opportunity to pursue the field’s initial setup and continue of their colleagues’ course offerings on a range of topics. It also allows scholars to locate and to network with colleagues in the discipline who are engaged in teaching projects similar to their own. The web pages featuring the “Syllabus Project” have proven highly popular among the AAR membership, becoming the second most visited pages on the entire AAR website.

It is proposed that in 2009 the AAR should launch parallel web pages dedicated to “The Major Project” and collecting data specifically on that nature of religious studies majors from a range of institutions. The AAR membership will be asked to submit descriptions of the major requirements, prerequisites, and rationales from their home institutions. They also will be asked to volunteer their own contact information so that they might serve as resources in response to any questions that might emerge. The goal here is simple but important: a free exchange of information. If faculty members on one campus are seeking a way to conceive (or re-conceive) of major requirements, they will be able to turn to these web pages as a clearinghouse for ideas and approaches utilized by colleagues on other campuses. As a result of the supported Leadership Workshop at the 2007 Annual Meeting, the major, three dozen plans already have been collected in this effort.

2. In light of a growing consensus about the characteristics of the religious studies major, the discipline and its members should work together to distinguish the religious studies major from undergraduate majors in theology, history, philosophy, sociology, classics, and other distinct disciplines.

The AAR–Teagle initiative on the religious studies major has revealed at least one important, and somewhat surprising, truth: despite the diversity of the field, there is emerging a strong and growing consensus about the basic characteristics of the religious studies major. In part prompted by recent world events and in part shaped by educational movements, religious studies programs in almost every setting — public, private, denominational, and secular — are contending with certain common elements as essential to the major. These concepts can be found in the directions taken by religiously-linked programs such as Santa Clara and Colorado Christian, in public university settings such as Texas and Louisiana State, and in liberal arts contexts such as Eckerd and Rhodes.

While setting these characteristics forth is, at best, a preliminary step in a larger discussion, it is nonetheless important that we do so — to assist our colleagues in their discussions with administrators who might otherwise blend the lines between the study of religion and its practices. It is clear to others and to ourselves the links between the discipline and the essential components of a liberal education, and to avoid misrepresenting and mislabeling the major as something it is not to students and colleagues alike. In discussions with colleagues in and outside of religious studies, it is important to establish or to refine undergraduate majors in religious studies, several common characteristics emerge. The religious studies major is, by its very nature:

• Intercultural and Comparative: The major should reflect more than one religious tradition and engage the phenomena of religion comparatively across and within cultures.

• Multi-disciplinary: The major promotes the development of students toward a range of methodological and theoretical approaches to religious phenomena.

• Critical: The major teaches students to examine and engage religious phenomena, including issues of ethical and social responsibility, from a perspective of critical inquiry and analysis of both the other and the self.

• Integrative: The major applies theoretical knowledge of religious phenomena to lived, practical contexts, both historical and contemporary.

• Creative and Constructive: The major employs knowledge of religious phenomena and the skills of religious studies in the solving of complex problems, including those raised in the personal and social engagement of issues of life, death, love, violence, suffering, and meaning.

There are obvious and strong affinities between the characteristics of the religious studies major and the AAC&U outcomes of liberal education, discussed in Section I. These links should be embraced and strengthened through our continued articulations of the major, the development of continued learning outcomes, and the implementation of robust assessment plans.

While there are many worthwhile manners by which students can study religion, not all such approaches are appropriately labeled a “major in religious studies.” The field of religious studies has rightly come to mean things distinct from the disciplines of history, theology, sociology, philosophy, and political science. It is in part a degree that examines a single religion or one that explores multiple religions from a single methodological perspective. The religious studies major, it seems to fuel confusion on the part of colleagues, administrators, students, and the public. It is also, by definition, to disassociate the major in religious studies from at least some of its core connections to the values of a liberal education.

Strengthening the Major

One clear challenge to efforts to improve the major in religious studies is the fact that the discipline and its members currently lack key data about certain central issues. A second challenge is that many of us find our programmatic assessment plans (as well as our knowledge of assessment, in general) to be in their infancy. Toward the end of addressing some of these challenges, the Working Group makes the following three recommendations to the AAR Board:

1. Beginning in 2009, the AAR should assist in the coordination of several pilot studies. Each individual campus should be dedicated to the tracking of religious studies majors after graduation and in the collection of data with regard to students’ career paths.

(continued from page 22)
As a prototypical course of study in liberal education, understanding the nature and importance of religious studies rightly makes no claim to being a professional degree. Its requirements and nature should not solely or even primarily be determined by their usefulness and applicability to the job market, per se. Such valid sentiments, however, do not mean that our responsibilities to our students, our institutions, and ourselves in the major should not be informed by an awareness of the lives students will lead after college. Almost 50,000 undergraduates currently majoring in religious studies in the United States. Yet most religious studies programs have only limited and anecdotal knowledge of what happens to students after their final classes. As one faculty member at Wartburg College put it, at present “it’s really more a matter of [students] keeping track of us than our keeping track of them.”

What have students found helpful about the religious studies major? What needs to be improved? Is the discipline equipping students with skills that they feel serve them well in life beyond college? Effective assessment mechanisms, at all levels from the institution to the student input, and there are rich insights to be mined from graduates who have gained the perspective afforded to them by life experiences and a little distance from their undergraduate studies. The discipline needs to develop a set of best practices for the tracking of undergraduate majors post-graduation, including models for overcoming the practical challenges in the process and examples of survey instruments that might be employed in various contexts. Currently, there exists no systematic tracking of external funding for the initiative and perhaps in cooperation with the AAR Job Placement Task Force, beginning in 2009 the AAR should collaborate with a group of three or four institutions to pilot potential tracking techniques and survey instruments with an eye towards sharing effective models with the larger AAR membership.

2. Beginning in 2009, the AAR should continue the pilot program designed to connect community-college faculty who are teaching courses in religion with colleagues in the field at four-year institutions in the same geographic area. The goal will be to promote best practices for fostering effective collaborations between such faculties.

As field of religious studies matures, it increasingly must address challenges that, in some instances, have been faced by other academic disciplines for decades. Twenty years ago, the number of community colleges offering courses in religious studies was quite nominal; today, over 40 percent of community colleges offer courses in the discipline. How faculties at two-year and four-year institutions collaborate to train students, who are preparing to pursue religious studies in graduate school, is astonishingly shapethe health of the discipline in the years ahead. There is a need for scholars of religious studies to develop mechanisms that will ensure that the discipline, through developing mechanisms for a sustained conversation about the major, defining the major more fully and carefully, filling gaps in our present knowledge about the major, and assessing it more robustly, the hope is that we, as scholars of religion, can foster a rich and productive dialogue that creates a genuine “scholarship of the major” in the years ahead.

IV. The Task Ahead

In 1999, precisely the time when The Economist was relaunching its obituary of God, historian D. G. H Hart was publishing an obituary of the discipline. Through developing mechanisms for a sustained conversation about the major, defining the major more fully and carefully, filling gaps in our present knowledge about the major, and assessing it more robustly, the hope is that we, as scholars of religion, can foster a rich and productive dialogue that creates a genuine “scholarship of the major” in the years ahead.


5 For a fuller discussion of these issues, see Darby Kathleen Ray, “Do You Know Where Your Students Are? Tracking Community College Students,” www.utexas.edu/features/25college/index.html.

The Work of the Scholar/Activist Teacher

Rebecca Alpert and Traci West

This featured article is dedicated to the memory of Letty M. Russell (1929–2007), whose life was a pioneering example of how to bring scholarly and activist commitments together. Letty Russell was an architect and builder of feminist liberationist theology. She was one of the first women ordained in the United Presbyterian Church and subsequently a Professor of Theology at Yale Divinity School. Her life work at Yale began in 1975 and continued up until her death.

In May 2007, a group of activist scholars met for a consultation, “Teaching Scholars, Changing Models.” The consultation was envisioned by Letty and those she mentored as a way to encourage the next generations of teachers and scholars to further Letty’s passion: to envision a world in which we bring liberation and feminist/competent practice into our classrooms and institutions of learning. Its goals were to develop transformative strategies for combating feministic/womanist activism and scholarship in academic institutions, encourage mentoring relationships between senior and junior scholars, build a network of the many scholars who want to work on educational transformation, and develop models of teaching to combine both social analysis and action for transformation. It was an opportunity for an intergenerational, interracial, and interfaith group to share transformative strategies with one another and to honor her to be there with Letty Russell and move forward her vision.

We have selected comments from some of the participants and organized them to reflect differing dimensions of the practical and value-based wisdom we gained in terms of transforming our institutions and our individual classrooms. We begin with two descriptions of activist, political work to create change for the sake of building good community within our own academic institutions, realizing that it will not always happen organically.

Letty Russell and Margaret Farley:

Forces for change in educational institutions can be creative or destructive; in either case, communities of learning will not flourish if they remain passive. For five years, from 1995–2000, many faculty, students, alumni, and friends of Yale Divinity School engaged in a struggle with the university central administration to retain the location and historical buildings of the divinity school. The struggle was not about “bricks and mortar,” but about sustaining and improving place and space for shared study, life, worship, learning, and action. Against needless demolition, loss of historical integrity, and diffusion of community life, the struggle was for life-giving leadership and future transformative community strategies in theological education, providing service to church and society.

Judith Plaskow:

I teach “Nature and Experience of Religion” to undergraduates. For each tradition studied, we read selections from scripture and then a text relating that tradition to the contemporary world. My determination to include Islam in the course, which I had not done before 9/11, was itself considered a political decision stemming from my conviction that it would be irresponsible to teach this course in 2006 without including Islam. If we did nothing else all semester, it would be valuable for the students to own, open, and read parts of the Qur’an and experience some of its remarkable similarities to the Bible as well as its important differences. I hope students will leave the course with a more complex view of Islam. I fear that they will read their own preconceptions into the material.

Kate Ott:

Institutions are created and sustained by people — creating change requires matching strategy and intentionality with those who prefer to maintain the status quo. I worked with other Christian ethicists on a proposal to promote the adoption of policies and guidelines, such as flexible work policies and scheduling and childcare benefits, to foster family-friendly departments across the academy. As I encountered colleagues who were not sure about the appropriateness of such advocacy, this organizing work taught me how timid our society can be about collective action — rendering our convictions all the stronger. The doing of ethics is not confined to the classroom — it is meant to transform the classroom, the department, the field, and hopefully the world.

Mary C. Churchill:

In “Indians and Allies: Approaches to Social and Cultural Issues Facing Native Americans,” I employ the case method, which uses fictional scenarios of real issues in Native communities. I hope that students will move beyond their stereotypes to an empathic understanding of American Indians, but I fear that the strategy might be dehumanizing or construed as undermining appropriation. Students research Native and non-Native roles in preparation for role plays in which they explore a problem and possible resolutions. Students learn not only about themselves, their assumptions, fears, and strengths, but also about some of the concrete realities American Indians experience and the role of religious traditions for real people in living communities. The scenarios prompt students to see the inseparability of Native and non-Native peoples and problems.

Traci C. West:

In my “Sexual Ethics” PhD seminar, students are invited to examine examples from a controversial photography exhibit by Robert Mapplethorpe that includes homoerotic photographs of black males as well as black male/white male sexualized interactions. I fear reinforcement of heterosexist and racist stereotypes, but hope for scrutiny of the criteria for morally and aesthetically appreciating human bodies and sexuality in public life. Students write down the issues of comfort/discomfort that surface for them based upon their own gender, race/ethnicity, and religious background. The class discusses those issues and how they inform our judgment about whether we consider these photographs to be art or pornography, and the public benefit, if any, of such an exhibit.

Traci C. West is professor of Ethics and African American Studies at Drew University Theological School.

(continued on page 26)
Anne Joh:

I have found that out of the assigned readings in “Introduction to Theology,” the books that generated the most rage from many of the white students in my class are Missionary Compust by George Tinker and God of the Oppressed by James Cone. I wanted students to examine why and where the rage came from. In order to tap into deeper analysis of their rage, the class broke into small groups that asked questions of how we can engage in “social relocation” to listen to what the scholars were saying and why they might be making those particular theological reflections. I believe that we learn best from one another through listening and what Gayatri Spivak refers to as “non-coercive rearrangement of desire.” My fear is that there is part of us that simply and willfully refuses to listen to the heart of the other.

M. Shawn Copeland:

The market culture in which we live not only drains our humanity, creativity, and spirituality, but subordinates us to oppressive power arrangements. In the undergraduate core course “Person and Social Responsibility,” conventional classroom work is combined with service or advocacy work in preselected field placements in: youth work (mentoring and tutoring), the correctional system, emergency shelters, literacy, international refugee centers, domestic violence, suicide prevention, and HIV/AIDS services. Such service or advocacy work provides students with up-close-and-personal contact with the breakdowns in United States society and helps them to grasp the impact of social oppression, social injustice, and social indifference on the lives of concrete human persons.

Shannon Clarkson:

Doctor of Ministry programs could benefit by including women from countries of the global south, expanding the horizons of both United States participants and global southern women. I participated in founding an International Feminist Doctor of Ministry in 1993. With its Asian women coordinators in Japan and Korea, we created guidelines to ensure the inclusion of women in countries of the global south and participants who do not want to be ordained. The advent of the Internet cafe and Internet discussion groups brought a sea of change in the program’s administration. This technology has enabled instant submission of papers as well as collective justice work. A week does not go by without requests for response to a human rights issue one of the participants is facing.

Rebecca Alpert:

I assign students in a Women’s Studies class to observe how race and gender function in their daily experiences so that they can see how such common-place events are woven into the pattern of social discrimination by default. One assignment is to write a one-page descriptive narrative describing in detail an experience the student had that involved race and gender. Students get a rich tableau of many ways their lives are defined by race and gender. They often comment that they never would have noticed or thought about the experience they described if they didn’t have to for this assignment. They then analyze one of the events they describe so they can make connections between their lived experience and the systems of oppression we study in class.

Janet Jakobsen:

Without connections to the world beyond the academy, scholars cannot realize the potential impact of their work, nor can they draw on external resources to support change within the academy. We could enhance the effectiveness of our scholarship and our activism by building more institutions that serve as hybrids, institutions that are in the academy with access to academic resources and also operate at and beyond its borders. Hybrid centers or projects allow activists to enter, but on terms that are different than those of usual academic practice, enabling us to shift our work to make it more useful to activists who don’t share our institutional paradigms. Bridge institutions allow for collaborative knowledge production between activists and academics, but we will have to create them ourselves.

Kristen J. Leslie:

Academic theories and classroom explorations are only as helpful as their ability to understand and reflect the specifics of lived human suffering. To introduce a wider notion of pastoral care that attends to the structures and causes of suffering, I invited students to join in my research and consulting at the United States Air Force Academy. On the military base, we faced many new pastoral considerations and had lengthy discussions about transforming theologies and authoritative allegiance. After returning, we watched what happened when pastoral care was forced into a very public and political space, including my own testimony for the House Armed Services Committee on the matter of Christian proselytizing at the Air Force Academy.

Jung Ha Kim:

I think scholars often assume a fictive dichotomy between the academy and the community. The classroom may be a privileged space and time for both teachers and learners to consciously reflect and analyze what is going on, but not necessarily an isolated experience from everyday life that is deeply rooted in communities of belonging and accountability. In my course for graduate students on “Asian-American Experience,” over half of the classes take place outside of the classroom. The community setting of the classes allows “leaders” from varying Asian-American ethnic groups to “eavesdrop” on class discussions and to participate by sharing their stories and community needs. We watch documentary films and discuss them together and engage in a “fish bowl” dialogical process of intentionally listening in on certain conversations, such as a group of Vietnamese elderly, after which we come together to address the issues that we heard.

The ongoing work of maintaining vitality and authenticity in activist-scholarly teaching requires a range of strategies for bridging the classroom-community divide. These strategies make a unique contribution to overarching learning goals.

M. Shawn Copeland teaches Theology and African and African Diaspora Studies at Boston College.
**What’s My Job? Academic Citizenship and the Well-being of Schools, Departments, and Programs**

Fred Glennon, Le Moyne College, glennon@lemoyne.edu

Fred Glennon is Professor of Religious Studies and Director of Faculty Development at Le Moyne College, where he teaches courses on religious social ethics, introduction to the study of religion, and religion and healing, and directs the Faculty Excellence Program. His research focuses on the ethics of poverty policy, the justice of labor markets, and teaching and learning for social justice. He is co-author of Introduction to the Study of Religion (Orbis Books). He is currently chair of the Academic Relations Committee and a member of the Board of Directors of the AAR.

EVE RYONE AGREES that changes in higher education are having an effect on the work of faculty members, departments, and programs. A key change is the growth of the corporate model into academia and its corollary of moving away from hiring tenure-track faculty toward hiring contingent faculty (both full-time and part-time). In a recent book (The Last Professors, Fordham University Press, 2008), Frank Donoghue contends that higher education is coming increasingly under the management philosophy of the “casualization” of labor, the global norm practiced by employers everywhere, in which employees are paid more by the job than with the traditional salary, benefits, and job security to which academics have been accustomed. The same financial corporate values of lowering labor costs and the need for flexibility in the hiring process reflect more efficiently changing demographics, interests, and programs now dominate most institutions of higher education. The new institutional reality is worse for those teaching in the humanities who have few connections to external funding sources or competitive options in the private sector. Donoghue contends, “We depend entirely on our home institutions not only to pay us a fair salary but to determine both the kinds of work and the amount of work we have to do (publishing, teaching, service, outreach) in order to earn that salary” (Higher Education Update, June 11, 2008).

But what are the effects of such changes on the work of faculty members in departments and institutions? What does the traditional three-legged stool of publishing, teaching, and service look like today in light of these changes? What impact does the corporate model have on conceptions of shared governance, collaboration, collegiality, and representing the academy in/to the public? How does the growing percentage of part-time and temporary faculty members in our institutions affect the service or “academic citizenship” requirements of the shrinking tenure-track faculty? What citizenship responsibilities accompany part-time and temporary faculty work? What responsibilities do tenure-line faculty members have toward part-time and temporary faculty as fellow citizens of our institutions? These and other questions were the backdrop for the Special Topics Forum entitled “What’s My Job? Academic Citizenship and the Well-being of Schools, Departments, and Programs,” held at the 2007 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion in San Diego and sponsored by the Academic Relations Committee. The committee invited panelists to reflect on these themes on the basis of their backgrounds and experience: Mark Schwehn, Professor of Humanities at Christ College, Valparaiso University; Jane Dammen McAlife, former Dean and Professor in the College of Arts and Sciences at Georgetown University and now President of Bryn Mawr College; and Louis A. Ruprecht, Associate Professor and William Sutlies Chair of Religious Studies at Georgia State University.

Mark Schwehn began the discussion with his concern over the concept of “job” in the title of the forum. He believes that most professors see their work as a career and profession, not a job. That is why he prefers the term “vocation.” Vocation transcends the mundane activities of the work we do to provide a sense of meaning and identity. We not only choose our vocation, our vocation chooses us and defines who we are. So the first question he addressed is “What is my vocation? What is fundamental to it?” In Schwehn’s view, our vocation is not a three-legged stool but a partial description of the manifold ways in which we teach. He suggests that we should focus on what we are good at and think of ourselves as teachers first, which is the fundamental component of our vocation as faculty members. In his view, the other two legs of scholarship and service are ways of teaching — we teach through our publications and through the various ways we serve the academy and the broader communities.

Second, Schwehn raised the question of responsibility — to whom should we turn for leadership in the academy? He suggests that we must look to ourselves and then to those we trust in academic leadership positions, who demonstrate responsibility and practical wisdom. He recognizes that there are many competing goods and demands in the academy these days coming from students, parents, administration, trustees, funders, and the public at large. At times, we must take responsibility for the whole; we need to stand up for the health of the academy in the context of these competing goods and demands.

(continued on page 28)
Third, what does citizenship look like in light of the growing number of adjuncts and contingent faculty? Schwenk contends that, in this context, senior faculty should assume more ownership of governance, while junior faculty should focus more on mission. Senior faculty need to partner with junior faculty and the school from their lack of experience.

We need to develop junior faculty into the mission of the department and the institution so that they can develop their vocation as teachers and so that their teaching in all of its forms reflect that mission. He contends that this is true regardless of institutional setting — classroom teaching should look the same. This is not true, however, for shared governance. The deliberative task of departments, he suggests, is to think together about the best ways to live out our vocation. Teaching is a "corporate vocation."

Although in his view we should consider our best way to live out our vocation. Teaching is a "corporate vocation." He suggests, is to think together about the changes taking place in the world and in the academy make this ideal more difficult. He asked those present to think about the following question: "To what extent have material and social conditions reduced our vocation to a job?"

The notion of changing conditions in the academy was central to Jane McAuliffe’s reflections. She noted that when she came into the academy there was a "McChips" model prevalent in the profession (see film Goodbye, Mr. Chips or James Hilton’s book by the same name): faculty stay at one institution throughout their career, are married to the job, and think of serving that institution in whatever capacity necessary. They were identified with their institutions. This is not true today. Faculty members have a difficult job in our institutions today, especially junior faculty members who have many other responsibilities and expectations. Instead of the old model, McAuliffe sees in today’s faculty a movement towards loyalty to the "gild," not the institution. There is a focus on "moving up the academic food chain." In this new context, she worries especially about the post-tenure faculty. Full professors have a difficult time moving beyond where they are and she suggests that this is due in part to a deficit in mentoring of faculty.

What we need, McAuliffe suggests, is a new ideal about what the role and life of the faculty member is within an institution. On the one hand, faculty members need a much broader perspective on their part. They need to be clued into the bigger issues facing the country and higher education. At the least, they should know the institution and the curriculum (especially the core curriculum). Faculty can draw on wider networks to build and enrich the life of the department and the college. Some of the larger issues for faculty to have conversation with include being conversant with globalization and the changes that are happening in rapid fashion. The world is flat and students will compete with others around the globe in terms of work and careers. The liberal arts are more important now for students because many will switch their careers a number of times and a strong grounding in the liberal arts will provide the intellectual agility they need. Yet, the faculties in these areas need to be clued into new technologies and communications media that are shaping the transmission of knowledge and instruction. Faculty members also need to stay alert to the pressures being imposed on us: access and affordability, assessment (mandated from external institutions), the effects of rankings (on a more global level), ever-increasing regulations of higher education, and sustainability. Faculty need to work with the institutions because students are more demanding. Because the faculty is the core of the institution, they must be held to the same time, the institution needs to be more flexible to allow faculty on their gifts and strengths, and this flexibility should be reflected in the rewards structure.

The questions related to the impact of the growth of contingent faculty on academic citizenship were brought to the forefront by Louis A. Ruprecht, who indicated that a title for his reflections might be "Where the virtues of the polis meet the late capitalist academy." As a person who struggled for ten years to find a permanent position in the academy, able to procure only one-year or multiple-year contracts, he noted that the three legs of the academic profession’s stool vary. For contingent faculty, the primary focus is on teaching more and there is a sense of (or desire for) institutional service and commitment. The tripod does not stand very well, he noted, when the legs are uneven.

Instead of the question "What’s my job?" Ruprecht asked, "What, no job?" He and others were overbold about the changes that were about to happen. Those expected to retire did not do it as quickly and, more importantly, institutions replaced them with contingent faculty (full-time and part-time). The late capitalist and corporate model of downsizing came to dominate. Retiring faculty members were not replaced. Institutions, this model tells them, operate more efficiently and cheaply with contingent faculty, whom he likened to “resident aliens.” Ironically, even though contingent faculty members do more teaching, which many would contend is the central role of the professor, they are not rewarded for their efforts. Contingent faculty members often feel that their work is structured as a job in the narrow sense, but that their labor is not fully recognized. Moreover, they cannot be recognized as outstanding teachers because the teaching awards go to full-time, tenure-track faculty members.

Now that he is a full-time member of a faculty, Ruprecht understands more fully how demanding the service or academic citizenship requirements of the faculty are. They are very labor intensive and consume a great deal of time; yet there is no consensus on what counts as service. While he does not advocate eliminating service altogether, he believes that they should improve the work of the faculty, he wonders if the tripod is a legitimate metaphor for what we do anymore. In many ways, the tripod metaphor diminishes service and civic engagement because the demands of scholarship and service take us away from teaching. Reminded of Socrates, he noted, “Free from the duties of the polis, one can be a teacher.” Instead, Ruprecht advocates for more democracy and diversity in determining how faculty members invest their time and energies in their institutions.

What followed was a lively discussion between the panelists and the audience. Is the academy corrupted by economic structures and the corporate model? Some observed that faculties are no longer self-governing bodies, a characteristic central to professional life. Instead, external forces are shaping the professorate. There is a big difference between being a “professional” and being an “employee.” In the world of employer-employee relations, one participant observed, “the pipeline is gone and in its place is a new pipeline to isolate individualized workers in a knowledge factory. Yet in this context, the need for faculty to affirm service and to take their rightful place as academic citizens of their institutions and communities becomes all the more important. As one participant observed, service is the “democratic work of the polis.” The political work of the faculty within the institution is what allows us to fight the corporate model. Moreover, the community service and engagement is the face and the role that academics play as public intellectuals in centers, institutes, and the like, that enable the faculty to articulate such values as democracy, collegiality, and the cultivation of humanity, which challenge the narrowness of the economic and corporate models.

Some affirmed that perhaps we should think of the forms of engagement of faculty with their institutions and communities as more of a spectrum or continuum and less of a tripod. The stages in the career of the faculty play a significant role in the expectations of how they invest their time and energy in service and citizenship activities. Many departments “protect” junior faculty from the damage of service and citizenship for fear that too much time invested in service will take them away from the activities of scholarship and teaching that are the primary avenues for getting tenure and promotion. While this was an important concern, some felt that equally important was the need to help in the “formation” of new faculty members as academic citizens, perhaps as early as the graduate school (where they are often identified as to see their work primarily as scholarship). Some noted that in this socialization process, academics are trained as “solo” practitioners, but have to engage in group practice. Yet we are judged, in tenure and promotion processes, on being a “team player.” The implication is that, in addition to forming our junior colleagues for citizenship, we have to transform the “conservative” nature of current tenure processes to become more open and flexible to accommodate these changing realities and to place more value on the work of academic and institutional citizenship in all its forms. This would enable new faculty to develop the skills necessary to assume leadership positions in their departments, institutions, and communities, and to challenge the increasing dominance of corporate models in higher education.

“A feast of ideas and insights.” — BILL MOYERS

“This rich, meaningful book is a fascinating journey through the labyrinth of questions we all have about life, faith, God, choices, and doubts.” — TOM BROKAW,* from the Introduction

NOW IN PAPERBACK

Featuring the wisdom of some of our deepest and most spiritual thinkers, including Desmond Tutu, Madeleine L’Engle, William Sloane Coffin, Francis Collins, Martin Marty, Andrew Greeley, and Barbara Brown Taylor.

Edited by PBS’s Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly host Bob Abernethy and writer William Bole, The Life of Meaning is “literally an answer to your prayers.”

SEVEN STORIES PRESS
www.sevenstories.com
Looking the Other Way? Accreditation Standards and Part-Time Faculty (2008)

Earl Henry (Music), Webster University

With Purview From Maine to Guam, the six different regional accrediting organizations provide their member institutions with guidelines for managing issues of educational integrity and long-term financial viability, and also study sensitive issues in higher education. Most of the regional accrediting organizations contain separate commissions that deal with different types of educational institutions (for example, K-12 schools, technical schools, and colleges and universities). This report treats the following entities: the Middle States Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (hereafter Middle States commission); the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (New England commission); the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (North Central commission); the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (Northwest commission); the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (Southern commission); and two divisions of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges: the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (Western junior commission); and the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities (Western senior commission). The New England Association of Schools and Colleges has a separate commission, not included in this discussion, that accredits technical and career institutions.

According to their mission statements, accrediting organizations serve the "common good by assuring and advancing the quality of higher learning" (North Central) and by "asserting an authority that "defines, maintains, and promotes educational excellence" (Middle States). As the Western senior commission phrases it, the goal of accreditation is to foster "institutional engagement with issues of educational effectiveness and student learning." The influence of accrediting organizations is enhanced by the fact that accreditation is required for access to federal funds such as student aid.

There is no shortage of verbiage in the documents written by accrediting organizations to direct institutions of higher learning in their efforts to "assure educational quality, enhance institutional effectiveness, and foster continuous improvement." (Northwest). All of the organizations publish handbooks that explain and amplify their standards, requirements, and procedures. These documents range from twenty-eight pages (New England) to nearly two hundred pages (North Central). While repetition is legion, the seven handbooks studied, together with their supplementary publications, comprise nearly one thousand pages.

Since their founding, the regional accrediting organizations have confronted and established positions on many contentious issues in American higher education. To one extent or another, for example, agencies have issued guidelines to address faculty evaluation, academic freedom, diversity, distance learning, and intellectual property rights. With commissioners and evaluators trained and experienced in higher education, one might expect them to be in the vanguard of the debate over part-time faculty. They are not. While the AAUP, the National Education Association, and the American Federation of Teachers, among others, have documented the growth of non-tenure-track appointments and detailed the ensuing deterioration of the profession, accrediting agencies have been largely silent. Most accreditors take no position on faculty who, whether full- or part-time, are off the tenure track—and the term "contingent faculty" appears nowhere in any of the standards documents.

Because accreditors do not address the whole spectrum of contingent faculty, the present study is a survey of accreditation handbooks and selected statements relating to part-time faculty ("part-time" and "adjunct") are used synonymously in this document. Many of the guidelines and principles in accreditation handbooks are drafted in such general terms that, given an effective spin, virtually any topic or issue could be said to have been addressed. Often, handbooks refer to requirements for the faculty in ways that make it unclear whether full-time faculty or all faculty are meant.

The statements explored in the following pages are those that touch directly on faculty employment status: definitions; qualifications; training, and evaluation; guidelines for faculty sufficiency; and academic freedom.

Definitions

While the existence of contingent employment in the academy is well documented, accreditors differ substantially in their recognition of full- and part-time faculty status (Table 1). Only two accreditors, the Northwest and Western senior commissions, provide true definitions of the term "part-time faculty." The two statements are nearly identical, and both appear in the respective glossaries (and not in guidelines themselves). A part-time faculty employee, according to the Northwest commission, is one "whose major responsibility is not related to the institution in question. These faculty are customarily assigned one or two classes with class-related responsibilities only."* The institution should have "publications that make clear the status (e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct) of each faculty member."

The New England commission takes a different tack, leaving the matter of definition to individual institutions. "Faculty categories (e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct)," writes the New England commission in its 2005 Standards for Accreditation, "are clearly defined by the institution as the role of each category in fulfilling the institution's mission and purposes." The Middle States commission regards the term "faculty" as inclusive: "the term faculty shall be broadly construed to encompass qualified professionals such as third parties contracted by the institution, part-time, or adjunct faculty, and those assigned responsibilities in academic development and delivery.

Table 1: Definitions and Requirements for Public Identification of "Part-time Faculty"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditor</th>
<th>Definitions and Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle States commission</td>
<td>No definition or requirement for public identification; stipulates that &quot;whenever used in these standards, the term 'faculty' shall be broadly construed to encompass qualified professionals such as third parties contracted by the institution, part-time, or adjunct faculty, and those assigned responsibilities in academic development and delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England commission</td>
<td>No definition. &quot;The institution publishes a list of its current faculty...distinguishing between those who have full- and part-time status.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central commission</td>
<td>No definition or requirement for public identification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest commission</td>
<td>Part-time faculty are defined as those not related to the institution in question; [they are] customarily assigned one or two classes with class-related responsibilities only. **Catalogs and other official publications should be readily available and accurately depict...faculty (full-time and part-time listed separately).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern commission</td>
<td>No definition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western junior commission</td>
<td>No definition. Catalogs and other official publications should &quot;accurately depict,&quot; among other things, &quot;faculty (full- and part-time listed separately).&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western senior commission</td>
<td>&quot;Part-time or adjunct faculty [are those] whose major responsibility is not related to the institution in question. These faculty are customarily assigned one or two classes with class-related responsibilities only.&quot; The institution should have &quot;publications that make clear the status (e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct) of each faculty member.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Trends in Faculty Status, 1975–2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>FT Tenured</th>
<th>FT Tenure Track</th>
<th>FT Non-Track</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* Source: National Center for Education Statistics, National Study of Postsecondary Faculty: 2004

Editor's Note:

This article was provided by and reprinted with the permission of the American Association of University Professors at www.aaup.org.
contracted by the institution, part-time or adjunct faculty, and those assigned responsibilities in academic development and delivery.5,6

Even when accredited bodies avoid the issue of contingent faculty in their standards guidelines, they may still require that statistics on faculty be separated into full- and part-time categories. The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWC) states that, as a minimum, institutions should be able to identify faculty by part-time or full-time status.7 Yet, even if more guidance were forthcoming, it is far beyond the ability of the majority of post-secondary institutions to divide their faculty into separate part-time and full-time categories.8

As used by some college and university administrators today, the term “part-time faculty” is a misnomer. A large percentage of those designated part-time faculty are actually full-time faculty who are paid on a part-time basis.9

Definitions of “full-time” and “part-time” vary among institutions, and the term “full-time” may be defined as a number of credit hours, as determined by each individual institution.10 Definitions of “part-time” vary even more. Definitions are typically vague, and there is no clear standardization of definitions of “full-time” and “part-time.”11

Qualifications, Training, and Evaluation

Although accrediting commissions are reluctant to recognize differences between full- and part-time faculty, they are in general agreement that the latter group must be supported and integrated into the college or university community (Table 2). In assessing “Organizational Structures to Ensure Sustainability,” the Western senior commission asks for information and policy documents that address ways in which “part-time faculty are treated with full-time faculty.”12 This definition used by the Northwest commission is nearly as limiting and also includes the phrase “or two classes.”13 While we have no evidence that accrediting commissions have any interest in the number of courses taught by individual adjuncts, institutions that regularly employ part-time faculty to teach three or more courses clearly practice outside accepted standards in the Western senior and Northwest commissions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptor Policies</th>
<th>Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle States commission</td>
<td>Employment policies and practices for part-time faculty “should be as carefully developed and communicated as those for full-time faculty.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England commission</td>
<td>Faculty categories (e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct) are clearly defined by the institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central commission</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest commission</td>
<td>Employment practices for part-time and adjunct faculty include dissemination of information regarding the institution, the work assignment, rights and responsibilities, and conditions of employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern commission</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western junior commission</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the case of the Western Junior Commission, part-time faculty are described simply as “those who are often appointed at the last minute.”14

As used by some college and university administrators today, the term “part-time faculty” is a misnomer. A large percentage of those designated part-time faculty are actually full-time faculty who are paid on a part-time basis. 9

The definitions of “full-time” and “part-time” vary among institutions, and the term “full-time” may be defined as a number of credit hours, as determined by each individual institution. 10 Definitions of “part-time” vary even more. Definitions are typically vague, and there is no clear standardization of definitions of “full-time” and “part-time.” 11

Table 2: Employment Policies and Requirements for Training and Integration of Part-time Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptor Policies</th>
<th>Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle States commission</td>
<td>Employment policies and practices for part-time faculty “should be as carefully developed and communicated as those for full-time faculty.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England commission</td>
<td>Faculty categories (e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct) are clearly defined by the institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central commission</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest commission</td>
<td>Employment practices for part-time and adjunct faculty include dissemination of information regarding the institution, the work assignment, rights and responsibilities, and conditions of employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern commission</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western junior commission</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Policies Specifically Addressing Qualifications and Evaluation of Part-time Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptor Policies</th>
<th>Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle States commission</td>
<td>“Criteria for the appointment, supervision, and review of teaching effectiveness for part-time, adjunct, and other faculty [should be] consistent with those for full-time faculty.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England commission</td>
<td>“The preparation and qualifications of all faculty are appropriate.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central commission</td>
<td>Accreditation guidelines request information on evaluation of part-time faculty (appendix).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest commission</td>
<td>Part-time faculty should be “qualified by academic background, degree(s), and/or professional experience”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern commission</td>
<td>Institutions should report the qualifications of part- and full-time faculty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western junior commission</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Policies Regarding Dependence on Part-time Faculty or Sufficient Numbers of Full-time Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptor Policies</th>
<th>Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle States commission</td>
<td>The institution should have “a core of faculty with sufficient responsibility to the institution to assure the continuity and coherence of the institution’s programs.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England commission</td>
<td>The institution avoids undue dependence on part-time faculty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central commission</td>
<td>The institution should have “an instructional staffing plan that supports the mission of the institution.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest commission</td>
<td>The institution avoids undue dependence on part-time faculty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern commission</td>
<td>Institutions that employ at least one full-time faculty member for each graduate degree program offered.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...
Western junior commission states this position with clarity: the institution "relied on faculty expertise for quality of programs." The Southern commission acknowledges responsibilities in a similar way, saying that "the institution placed primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of its curriculum with its faculty." At least one accreditor holds faculty responsibility directly if they choose to build programs largely on the backs of adjuncts. "The greater the dependence on [part-time] employees," writes the Middle States commission, "the greater is the institutional responsibility to provide orientation, oversight, evaluation, professional development, and opportunities for integration and recognition of the faculty." The Northwest commission advises a candidate institution to demonstrate "that it periodically assesses institutional policies concerning the use of part-time and adjunct faculty and their impact on the mission and goals of the institution."

While only the New England commission cautions specifically about a dependence on adjuncts, most accreditors recommend that institutions employ "sufficient" numbers of full-time faculty. The Western senior commission statement is typical of these relatively weaker guidelines. While avoiding a reference to adjuncts, it acknowledges the possibility of limits on part-time appointments: "The institution demonstrates that it employs a faculty with substantial and continuing commitment to the institution sufficient in number, professional qualifications, and diversity to achieve its educational objectives, to establish and oversee academic policies, and to ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs wherever and however delivered." A reference to "out-of-class" responsibilities in the New England commission handbook acknowledges that faculty do more than transfer knowledge in the classroom. Institutions using adjuncts who are listed only to appear for class and are paid as such are not fulfilling New England’s requirement that there should be an "adequate number of faculty whose time commitment to the institution is sufficient to assure the accomplishment of class and out-of-class responsibilities essential to the fulfillment of institutional mission and purposes." The Western senior commission insists that institutions should employ "at least one full-time faculty member for each graduate degree program offered." Both the Western junior and Middle States commissions want a "core" of full-time faculty "adequate to the institutional mission." For the Northwest commission, the faculty must be "adequate for the educational levels offered, including full-time faculty representing each field in which it offers a major." Likewise, the Southern commission requires an "adequate" number of full-time faculty "to support the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs." The North Central commission’s handbook includes neither a discussion of faculty status nor a statement on institutional commitment. There are no written guidelines, in fact, preceding a faculty that is 100 percent part-time. Indeed, having accredited in any profit institution (the University of Phoenix) as early as 1978, the North Central commission seems more comfortable than other accrediting agencies with a significant number of part-time faculty itself. Its commissioners, for example, see little need for "old-fashioned, one-on-one faculty-student interaction; "Mentoring and advising, once thought to be primarily the responsibility of those with a faculty task, may now be found throughout an organization, particularly in the student services area."

Throughout its handbook, the North Central commission presents itself as receptive to a corporatist model of higher education. In the introduction to one of four major accreditation criteria ("Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge"), the commission employs a term popularized in the late 1950s by corporate management strategist Peter Drucker: "Computers may have introduced the Information Age, but in a short time our definitional language for this new era began to include the term knowledge worker. The shift is as important as it is misunderstood." While admitting that "knowledge worker" is a "fuzzy" term for some in the profession, the North Central commission feels confident that "the juxtaposition of these two words says something important to the academy and to students and faculty of all kinds of institutions, and a probable right to be jibed by the substitution of the term "knowledge worker" (an employee whose ideas are managed) for "professor" (one whose freedom to pursue individual research is protected by tenure)."

Academic Freedom

Rooted in the nineteenth century Humboldtian model, academic freedom is the principle of American higher education that guarantees research and publication rights for individual professors. Each of the accreditors addresses these rights and protections in some way, although the focus and details of their statements vary (Table 5). Likewise, statements on the rights of part-time faculty range from unambiguous commitment to contrary views. The New England commission statement is one of the more helpful for adjuncts in mandating that academic freedom be extended to all faculty, regardless of rank or term of appointment. Although the Middle States commission lumps principles of academic freedom in with those related to "intellectual freedom" and "freedom of expression," it also specifies that these principles should apply to adjuncts as well as full-time faculty. In defining academic freedom as affecting all members of the institutional community, the Western senior commission appears willing to afford rights to part-time as well as full-time faculty. While the Northwest commission provides a lengthy and detailed section on academic freedom, there is no mention of specific faculty categories. Other accreditors include generic statements and guidelines — some without reference to faculty in any category. While allowing individual institutions to define "academic freedom" for themselves, the Southern commission suggests that information on related campus issues along with their eventual resolution might be included in a self-study document.

The North Central commission talks about "freedom of inquiry," asking member institutions to create a climate that "celebrates intellectual freedom." If the commission is alone, however, in excluding from its handbook any reference to the term "academic freedom."

Recent Action

Accrediting commissions provide at least one useful tool for measuring their diligence in enforcing standards. Agency websites or newsletters include sections discussing "recent actions" (petitions for candidacy, initial accreditation, continuing accreditation, and the like). The contents of these public disclosures run the gamut from a list of actions presented without commentary to detailed reports summarizing actions that refer to specific criteria in published documents (Table 6). The last three reports of the Western senior commission are available online; for June 2007, the site reports the denial of a candidacy application along with a probation. Likewise, although no details are given. Also without comment, the North Central commission publishes a list of institutions accredited, renewed, and referred. For the most recent commission meeting (October 2007), one "on notice" listing is documented. Although the New England commission lists dozens of accredited and renewed institutions, no negative actions are reported for April 2007.

Other accreditor websites and published reports contain more specific and detailed information. Through November 2007, the Middle States commission lists several negative actions with a detailed history available. Reasons given for these warnings or probation range from leadership and financial concerns to concerns about "climate of performance" and "academic rigor." During the same period, three institutions were removed from warning status and dozens were granted initial or renewed accreditation. By far the most comprehensive and useful summary of commission decisions is published online by the Southern commission. For June 2007, the commission specifies over thirty initial or continued accreditations and four removal of warning actions. A review of actions in earlier periods (also conveniently available online) shows numerous warnings and probation issues.

Conclusion

Despite a collective ideostep on the issue of part-time faculty, standards on student learning and support, faculty development, and the necessity of maintaining a faculty of involved and knowledgeable exist in all accreditation handbooks. The problem with these lofty statements, however, is that their vagueness allows institutions to spin their compliance evidence. A standard requiring that institutions commit on their use of part-time faculty, for example, is much weaker than one stating that part-time faculty should generally teach one or two courses. Likewise, when agencies mandate that part-time faculty must be evaluated without specifying which institutional constituencies are involved in the evaluation process, the requirement means little. If an instructor is evaluated by students, using an instrument that may or may not have statistical validity, then a type of "evaluation" has taken place. On the other hand, requiring that part-time faculty have evaluations "consistent with those for full-time faculty (as Middle States does) would seem to discourage the wholesale use of adjuncts. After all, in addition to budgetary incentives, avoidance of the due process associated with tenure-track evaluations is an incentive for administrators to create part-time positions. If evaluations for part-time faculty are required to be equally rigorous and comprehensive, as some accreditors stipulate, then enforcing institutional compliance would remove one of the incentives for hiring adjuncts.

In 1997, Chronicle of Higher Education reporter Courtney Leatherman asked, "Do Accreditors Look the Other Way When Colleges Rely on Part-Timers?" Leatherman noted that many accrediting guidelines pertaining to part-time faculty were vague and that the accreditors had been criticized for not enforcing the guidelines that were on the books. At about the same time, action Keith Hoeller filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education against the Northwest commission for failure to enforce its own policies regarding faculty. In deflecting Hoeller’s complaint, the commission argued that its standards were never meant to be applied to part-time faculty. The commission has since revised the handbook to better separate these categories of faculty responsibility.

Unfortunately, more than a decade after Leatherman’s article, little has changed. Little, that is, except the proportion of college faculty now on the tenure track. Today, this figure has reached 68 percent. While a few accreditors have added statements dealing with the evaluation and support of part-time faculty, there is little evidence that noncompliance with these statements has been a concern for accreditation institutional evaluation. Because of the relatively scant information released by some accreditors, the public often has no way of discerning the specific problems leading to actions taken by

---

Table 5: Statements on Academic Freedom Specific to Part-Time Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditor</th>
<th>Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Middle States commission    | "Academic freedom, intellectual freedom, and freedom of expression are central to the academic enterprise [and should be extended to all members of the institution’s community (i.e., full-time, part-time, and adjunct).]"
| North Central commission    | None.                                                                       |
| Northwest commission        | None.                                                                       |
| Western junior commission   | None.                                                                       |
| Western senior commission   | A question for institutional engagement suggests that academic freedom policies should “support a climate of academic inquiry and engagement for all members of the institutional community.” |

Table 6: Statements on Academic Freedom Specific to Part-Time Faculty Recent Actions Listed on Accreditor Websites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditor</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle States commission</td>
<td>Actions for last three years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England commission</td>
<td>Past four commission meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central commission</td>
<td>Past five commission meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest commission</td>
<td>No “recent actions” information, but status of member and candidate institutions available in directory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern commission</td>
<td>No &quot;recent actions&quot; information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western junior commission</td>
<td>Actions for last three years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western senior commission</td>
<td>Current and previous two commission reports.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FACULTIES THAT ARE unionized have significantly higher percentages of courses taught by tenured or tenure-track faculty members, as opposed to adjuncts. According to research presented this week at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. At the same time, colleges that are unionized tend to spend less per student on academic support services, the analysis found.

Officials of the national faculty unions said they did not know of similar research findings. Much of the previous research on faculty unions has focused on the most direct bread and butter issues: wages and benefits. But the authors of the new research — two doctoral students at Vanderbilt University — said that it was important to explore as well questions of how faculty unions affect college issues that relate to the student experience.

Based on the premises that students benefit from having more tenure-track and tenured faculty members, and from more spending on academic support categories (everything from advising centers to study abroad centers), the researchers said they wanted to see if there are patterns that could relate to unionization.

The authors — Marc Stein and David Stuit — are “agnostic” on faculty unions (in Stein’s words), study at a university without them, and have no ties either to academic unions or those who oppose them. Their study arrives at a time that the national unions have all started campaigns to try to both improve adjunct pay and benefits and also to reverse the decline in the percentage of tenure-track jobs. The issue is a sensitive one, however. While many tenured faculty who work full-time tenure-track and adjunct positions (in Stein’s words), study at a university without them, and have no ties either to academic unions or those who oppose them. Their study arrives at a time that the national unions have all started campaigns to try to both improve adjunct pay and benefits and also to reverse the decline in the percentage of tenure-track jobs. The issue is a sensitive one, however. While many tenured faculty who work full-time tenure-track and adjunct positions (At Southern commission, 2001, 122; Northwest commission, Accreditation Handbook, 17). Middle States commission, Characteristics of Excellence, 38; 10 Middle States commission, Handbook of Accreditation, 63; 11 Middle States commission, Handbook of Accreditation, 63; 12 Middle States commission, Handbook of Accreditation, 63; 13 Middle States commission, Handbook of Accreditation, 63; 14 Middle States commission, Handbook of Accreditation, 63; 15 Middle States commission, Handbook of Accreditation, 63; 16 Western junior commission, Accreditation Reference Handbook, 18; Southern commissions, Resource Manual, 46; Middle States commissions, Characteristics of Excellence, 38; Northwest commission, Accreditation Handbook, 63.

Despite generally dismal news for the academy, there are also occasional rays of hope. While the North Central commission avoids well-defined terms such as “professor,” “tenure,” and “academic freedom,” and does not prohibit institutions from employing no faculty at all, the Southern commission has taken a different position, at least in some cases. In the most recent commission report (June 2007), one denial of candidacy and one probation were based at least in part on core requirement 2.8: “The number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support the mission of the institution and to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs.” While other problem areas were listed in both cases, a failure to meet a core of faculty arguably did, in fact, affect accreditation decisions by the Southern commission. Based on information available to the general public, the same cannot be said for higher education accrediting agencies.
Students Speak: A Report on the AAR Graduate Student Survey

David V. Brewington, Emory University

Survey Mechanics and Response Rate

On March 24, 2008, 2,439 survey invitations were e-mailed to current AAR student members. The survey included questions about demographics, education, why students were pursuing an advanced degree, what students knew about advanced degrees and job markets when they entered the program, mentoring at their institution, and their relationship with and expectations of the American Academy of Religion. After several follow-up messages, the survey was closed on April 3, 2008. A total of 1,154 respondents started the survey (47.3 percent), while 1,046 completed it, making for a response rate of 42.9 percent.

Program and Job Market Expectations/Realities

Most respondents (approximately 82 percent) indicated that they are pursuing an advanced degree as a result of their interest in the subject matter and their desire to become part of the professoriate (when given the option to choose more than one reason). When asked to choose a specific reason, interest in the subject matter was the top reason given (at 43.5 percent).

For the most part, students had a good understanding of the expectations placed on them by their departments (e.g., over 85 percent have a clear, or some, understanding of when they were expected to take exams, when they were expected to graduate, and criteria used for determination of graduation). However, students indicate that they were less clear about the state of the job market in their specialty — 80.6 percent indicated they had no or no only some understanding of this (see Figure 1). Only 12.7 percent had a clear understanding of their program’s job placement success in their field of study (see Figure 2).

Most respondents clearly prefer a tenure-track faculty position (86.7 percent — see Figure 3). Working as a nontenure-track faculty member is the next desirable position after a tenure-track job. The least preferred employment outcome for students is teaching in secondary schools, followed by working in journalism, working in government, and working in academic administration. However, students have the perception that they are much more able to receive a nontenure-track faculty job over a tenure-track faculty position (Figures 4 and 5). At the same time, students know little about their ability to get nonacademic jobs.

When given a chance to rank their most preferred academic setting, liberal arts colleges garnered the highest preference, while working at a research university was the second highest preference. The least desired academic setting was a community college. However, over half (51.4 percent) of respondents indicated that getting a satisfactory job will be harder than they originally thought when they matriculate (Figure 6). Individuals cite their own experience in the job market, hearing their peers talk about it, and seeing that “quite a few people who completed degrees in the past few years still have not gotten a job,” amongst many other reasons.

Around 50 percent of respondents indicated that their departments offer teaching development centers, readily available resources on teaching, teaching assistant training courses, and academic job seminars. Only 31.8 percent indicated their department offers seminars or workshops on nonacademic position opportunities.

Mentoring

Students met with their advisors predominately once a semester (56 percent), and almost a third met with their advisors once a month. Nearly 10 percent met with their advisors once a year or less (Figure 7). Reasons given include the following (comments verbatim):

• I have no advisor.
• My advisor is only in the States one quarter per year.
• I am still with my default advisor, who is not a particularly gifted administrator. I will meet more frequently with my “real” advisor once I have moved on in my program to my area of specialization.
• The Advisor is hard to reach. I talked more with the Dean of Advanced Studies and another adopted professor as my mentor.
• Professors are much too busy, have little interest in the MA program, and little knowledge about teaching positions available to graduates with MA degrees.
• We met about once a month in the early stages of writing, but the last year of writing, we met every few months. In the last stages, we went four months without meeting because his direction was becoming paralyzing. I had a “ghost advisor” work with me to complete the dissertation.
Most students rated the quality of their time with advisors as somewhat or very high (71.9 percent), but over 20 percent indicated some level of low satisfaction (Figure 8). Dissatisfaction with advisors included personality conflicts, poor communication, micromanagement. Advisors had too many advisees or too much work, differences over personality. Analysis indicates that graduate student members of AAR are very interested in seeing more attention devoted to job placement as a whole, and in light of a lack of tenure-track academic jobs, they would like to see more information coming from AAR about nonacademic job settings. Suggestions include the following (all comments verbatim):

- Perhaps spotlight/give publicity to programs that make a significant effort in this regard, especially since the best programs are often rather neglected in this area.
- I think one of the best things that AAR could do would be to encourage or coerce institutions and/or departments to begin keeping and reporting a variety of helpful statistics about admission, funding, retention, degree completion, job placement, and careers of alumni. If that information was widely available it would go a long way towards clearing up current practices.
- It’s a catch-22 because if most students knew about the current job realities and the high costs, they would probably not start a graduate program right now. ... Graduate programs do need to begin to advise students of possible ways to structure career paths given the current context. I think, for the most part, the baby boomers will just retire and let recent grads figure it out for themselves. Little responsiveness or mentoring is happening, let alone if you are a minority or a woman.
- Encourage hiring institutions outside of academia to become more of a presence within the meetings, particularly in the job search process, and involve students in mentoring for job considerations from the beginning of their careers.

Relationship to AAR

Most students indicated that they join the AAR to network (74.6 percent). Most students cited networking as the most important role that AAR has played in students’ graduate careers, with sharing and hearing others’ research a close second at 67.7 percent. Nearly 26 percent of students responding to the survey provided some comment or thoughts on specific suggestions for how the AAR could be more helpful in job placement issues. These comments are instructive and deserve much more detailed analysis than can be provided here. However, non-systematic analysis indicates that graduate student members of AAR are very interested in seeing more attention devoted to job placement as a whole, and in light of a lack of tenure-track academic jobs, they would like to see more information coming from AAR about nonacademic job settings. Suggestions include the following (all comments verbatim):

- Perhaps spotlight/give publicity to programs that make a significant effort in this regard, especially since the best programs are often rather neglected in this area.
- I think one of the best things that AAR could do would be to encourage or coerce institutions and/or departments to begin keeping and reporting a variety of helpful statistics about admission, funding, retention, degree completion, job placement, and careers of alumni. If that information was widely available it would go a long way towards clearing up current practices.
- It’s a catch-22 because if most students knew about the current job realities and the high costs, they would probably not start a graduate program right now. ... Graduate programs do need to begin to advise students of possible ways to structure career paths given the current context. I think, for the most part, the baby boomers will just retire and let recent grads figure it out for themselves. Little responsiveness or mentoring is happening, let alone if you are a minority or a woman.
- Encourage hiring institutions outside of academia to become more of a presence within the meetings, particularly in the job search process, and involve students in mentoring for job considerations from the beginning of their careers.

Emergent Themes and Next Steps

At this point in the analysis, emergent themes seem to be the lack of information on and preparedness for the academic job market, a lack of information on nonacademic jobs, and a desire for tenure-track positions in liberal arts and research universities, combined with a sense of the lack of ability to attain these positions. To address these and other related themes, AAR Career Services is working to implement improvements that will expand AAR’s employment resources. These improvements include regional meetings workshops that will provide insight into the job market as well as online links and resources about nonacademic career opportunities. In addition to Career Services, various constituencies of the AAR — particularly the Job Placement Task Force and the Graduate Student Committee — will use this data to inform their work with graduate institutions, administrators, faculty, and students as we continue to address the realities for future scholars and leaders of the study of religion.
Why does sex play such a large role for fringe sects?

Kimberly Winston  © 2008 Religion News Service

People are sexual beings, and therefore sexual transgressions and scandals have occurred in all religions at all times in history. Sexual scandals do not occur only in the groups commonly called “cults.” All religions have strengths and weaknesses among their leaders and followers, and we would be well advised to accept these weaknesses rather than trying to distinguish between religions and “cults.” All religions are populated by human beings, and humans suffer from pride, arrogance, hubris, and credibility, among other imperfections and deadly sins. Both leaders and followers may adopt beliefs and practices that seem strange to outsiders, but people work out their systems of believing and living in diverse ways.

Kimberly Winston  © 2008 Religion News Service

The juxtaposition of children and alternative forms of sexual expression in sectarian movements ensures there will be trouble. This is especially true when communal life is hidden from public view because the pairing of children and secrecy arouses outsiders’ suspicions. The child victim is paradicted in front of us by critics of new religious movements, stigmatizing the experiences of real children within these communities. The focus on sexual predators in sectarian group functions as a convenient distraction from the widespread sexual abuse of children in the broader society. In this instance, and in other cases such as the incident at Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, actions to protect children tragically result in further damaging their lives.

Sarah M. Pike, California State University, Chico

One of the points I stressed to Kimberly Winston is that ethical values relating to sexuality change in mainstream society and alternative religions. Conflicts sometimes arise due to the interactions of the shifting values of mainstream and marginal groups. For example, David Koresh was functioning in a social context in which sexual activity by young teenage girls was not unusual. Among the Branch Davidians, it was deemed best to channel youthful female sexuality toward hearing “God’s children.” Conversely, when Fundamentalist Latter-day Saints moved to Texas, legislators raised the age a girl could be married with parental consent from fourteen to sixteen. Members of new religious movements will reform unconventional sexual practices, especially to retain custody of children.

State authorities have the responsibility to investigate and prosecute those engaging in abusive and illegal sexual activity, but the definitions of these changes. Authorities who get carried away by the hysteria promoted by the “cult” stereotype may take excessive actions, which harm the children they are aiming to protect.

Catherine Wessinger, Loyola University

The April 2008 Texas child protection official’s removal of 116 children from a Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (FLDS) community was widely covered by national and media. Much of this coverage disregarded the religious and historical contexts for the state’s actions. Journalist Kimberly Winston of Religion News Service interviewed AAR members Timothy Miller, Sarah Pike, and Catherine Wessinger for a story about sexuality in sectarian movements that ran in several newspapers. Winston was particularly interested in exploring the reasons behind the uneasy marriage of sexual experimentation and sectarianism. Winston’s story is followed by responses from Miller, Pike, and Wessinger. These pieces work together to suggest that there is further need for informed coverage of stories about religion, particularly unconventional religion.

The juxtaposition of children and alternative forms of sexual expression in sectarian movements ensures there will be trouble. This is especially true when communal life is hidden from public view because the pairing of children and secrecy arouses outsiders’ suspicions. The child victim is paradicted in front of us by critics of new religious movements, stigmatizing the experiences of real children within these communities. The focus on sexual predators in sectarian group functions as a convenient distraction from the widespread sexual abuse of children in the broader society. In this instance, and in other cases such as the incident at Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, actions to protect children tragically result in further damaging their lives.

Sarah M. Pike, California State University, Chico

One of the points I stressed to Kimberly Winston is that ethical values relating to sexuality change in mainstream society and alternative religions. Conflicts sometimes arise due to the interactions of the shifting values of mainstream and marginal groups. For example, David Koresh was functioning in a social context in which sexual activity by young teenage girls was not unusual. Among the Branch Davidians, it was deemed best to channel youthful female sexuality toward hearing “God’s children.” Conversely, when Fundamentalist Latter-day Saints moved to Texas, legislators raised the age a girl could be married with parental consent from fourteen to sixteen. Members of new religious movements will reform unconventional sexual practices, especially to retain custody of children.

State authorities have the responsibility to investigate and prosecute those engaging in abusive and illegal sexual activity, but the definitions of these changes. Authorities who get carried away by the hysteria promoted by the “cult” stereotype may take excessive actions, which harm the children they are aiming to protect.

Catherine Wessinger, Loyola University

The juxtaposition of children and alternative forms of sexual expression in sectarian movements ensures there will be trouble. This is especially true when communal life is hidden from public view because the pairing of children and secrecy arouses outsiders’ suspicions. The child victim is paradicted in front of us by critics of new religious movements, stigmatizing the experiences of real children within these communities. The focus on sexual predators in sectarian group functions as a convenient distraction from the widespread sexual abuse of children in the broader society. In this instance, and in other cases such as the incident at Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, actions to protect children tragically result in further damaging their lives.

Sarah M. Pike, California State University, Chico

One of the points I stressed to Kimberly Winston is that ethical values relating to sexuality change in mainstream society and alternative religions. Conflicts sometimes arise due to the interactions of the shifting values of mainstream and marginal groups. For example, David Koresh was functioning in a social context in which sexual activity by young teenage girls was not unusual. Among the Branch Davidians, it was deemed best to channel youthful female sexuality toward hearing “God’s children.” Conversely, when Fundamentalist Latter-day Saints moved to Texas, legislators raised the age a girl could be married with parental consent from fourteen to sixteen. Members of new religious movements will reform unconventional sexual practices, especially to retain custody of children.

State authorities have the responsibility to investigate and prosecute those engaging in abusive and illegal sexual activity, but the definitions of these changes. Authorities who get carried away by the hysteria promoted by the “cult” stereotype may take excessive actions, which harm the children they are aiming to protect.

Catherine Wessinger, Loyola University
Influences. He quickly reeled off a list of Western artists who have worked in the same genres as Mulick has: oil and watercolor painting, as well as the popular media of comic books and advertising posters. “But what about Indian artists?” I asked. “Of course,” he replied almost dismissively, as if the question were so obvious it need not even be posed. “Ravi Varma, other Indians. All Indian painters know other Indians’ work. I have many books, many posters around to look at.” As we browsed through his personal reference library of Indian and Western lithographs, posters, books, and comic books, I was amazed at the stacks of aged lithographs that he had carefully preserved, including many from the Ravi Varma Press.

Raja Ravi Varma (1848–1906) was one of the earliest artists in India to use the medium of oil and to embrace a Western academic style in his portraits and narrative paintings of Hindu mythological subjects. Varma’s technique and subject matter were popular with Orientalists and with elite Indian nationalists; but his paintings were especially popular with the Hindu masses, who waited in line for days just to glimpse his images of the gods. For many Hindus, these new “realistic” paintings of the gods were an exciting way to engage in darshan, the ritual exchange of glances between devotee and deity that could previously only be experienced in the temple. To meet the growing demand, Varma founded his own lithographic press in Bombay in 1894, which made his images of the Hindu gods affordable to the middle classes and rapidly spread them across India. Several art historians have recognized Varma’s substantial contribution to modern Indian art, noting that the Indian tradition of careful image preservation has meant that for more than a century now popular art has been indebted to his vision. This is certainly attested to by my conversations with Pratap Mulick and other artists. What is far less studied, however, is Varma’s impact on devotional Hinduism. Varma’s reproductions of Hindu gods were purchased by middle-class women, who hung them in their kitchens and used them in domestic pujas (worship) ceremonies, and by Hindu priests who installed them in temples. Today, Varma’s images of the Hindu gods — and other models on them by later artists — are ritually used in homes, shops, street shrines, and temples throughout India.

In summer 2007, I spent several weeks traveling from New Delhi to Jaipur and then on to Mumbai. I interviewed several artists (working in the media of god posters, comic books, and oil painting) about Varma’s influence, in order to explore the lasting impact that Varma has had on Hindus’ picture and worship the divine. While in India, I also visited many small Hindu temples and modest street shrines to take note of the range of god posters and other visual imagery used in their devotional services, and I met with several Hindu families to discuss the images used in their home-based worship practices. Finally, I collected god posters from various vendors during my travels. Following this field research, I examined the Smith Poster Archive, a collection of 3,500 Indian devotional posters created in the twentieth century by the generations of artists following Varma, which is housed at the Special Collections Research Center in the Syracuse University library.

In fall 2008, I will return to India for further research on Hinduism’s visual canon. As a religion, Hinduism is notoriously difficult to define: there is no single historical founder, no single body of texts that all Hindus revere as sacred, and no single soteriological system of belief. Instead, Hinduism is characterized by an array of regional gods, stories, and scriptures. This diversity has led several scholars to claim that one can only speak of Hinduism in the plural, of many Hinduisms. My research explores artist Raja Ravi Varma’s contribution to the definition of Hinduism as the shared religion of all Hindus by examining the legacy of the visual canon established with his paintings and lithographs. In his lifetime, Varma traveled throughout India to paint Hindu gods from every major region and sect, seeking to define a Hinduism unified through its very diversity. Today, those featured by Varma are the deities that are known, worshiped, and reimagined again and again by Hindus throughout our land.

I am grateful to the American Academy of Religion and to the National Endowment for the Humanities, both of which made it possible to begin this new research project. I will continue this research in 2008–2009 under the auspices of the American Institute of Indian Studies, which has generously funded four months of further field research in India.

W HILE SIPPING steaming tea one hot morning in the studio of Pratap Mulick in Pune, western India, I asked the artist about his influences. He quickly reeled off a list of...
From the Student Desk

Staying Straight/Going Queerly Forward: Navigating a Job Search When Your CV Has Queer Written All Over It

Pen Name: Emmy Russorde

Emmy is in a PhD program in religious studies near you. She is writing her dissertation and hopes to find a tenure-track job teaching in a religious studies department somewhere.

JUST A LITTLE over a year ago, I was sitting in a room of academics discussing the privileges and perils of being queer in the religious academy and the conversation turned to job searches. One of my conversation partners was about to embark on the job search process and asked advice from others as to how “out” she should be. She already determined that she should certainly not be out in her curriculum vitae or cover letter. I have to admit that I didn’t hear any of the advice that my other colleagues offered her, because her question sent me spiraling on my own journey of anxiety. As one with queer personal and professional identities, and whose academic work is deeply involved with queer theory, I was beginning to worry. “What am I going to do?” I thought, “My CV has QUEER written all over it.”

Perhaps the fact that I had not yet thought of this “problem” shows my naiveté, but I, of course, prefer to believe that it has more to do with the changes I have experienced in my lifetime. After all, I grew up in the Will and Grace generation — a generation who has experienced public images of gay and lesbian people in television, movies, and print media, a generation for whom pride parades, rainbow flags, and equality bumper stickers abound, a generation that has known out lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) family members, teachers, pastors, and friends, and a generation that has seen LGBT lives, experiences, and perspectives become “legitimate” sources of academic inquiry with the presence and growth of gay, lesbian, and queer studies in academic settings. Of course, the burgeoning viability of LGBT lives has not been all sunshine and roses.

Accompanying these generational shifts, there have been many public, often religious, voices condemning homosexuality and denouncing all things queer. And the political gains made toward equality and nondiscrimination have been met with as many (and more) political defeats and setbacks. Yet, I have been “out” since I was a teenager and my academic life has included LGBT and queer studies since my college days. So in that conversation with my colleagues, I was left wondering how it was that I would navigate the job search process, entering a profession in the religious academy, which is itself deeply enmeshed in conflicts around sexuality, sexual orientation, and gender identity, and entering it as a queer person who studies queer things (among others).

For LGBT academics in the fields of religion, the job search process is fraught with complex negotiations of identity. This characteristic is not unique to LGBT academics; such negotiations are always part of the performance of identity, no matter what the identity is. But there are some unique negotiations that come with this particular identity. For example, many of the postings for positions to which I am applying list ordination as a requirement. I, like many LGBT academics, have been a member of one of the majority of Christian denominations that refuses to ordain gay people. So I find myself trying to choose between glossing over this obvious lack in my qualifications, experience, or scholarship.

T he heart of the matter is that regardless of my qualifications, experience, or scholarship, my queerness is a stumbling block for any institution and individual. Unlike other minority candidates, this diversity is not prized nor typically sought out, but more often seen as a liability. In the current social and political climate, where debates about equality for LGBT people are charged with religious rhetoric, and where religious communities continue to discuss the morality of same-sex relationships, my own being becomes the site of conflict and I find myself struggling to negotiate my queer religious academic identity in a way that is both full of integrity and professionally advantageous.

Riding in the car one day with friends in an unfamiliar city, I was charged with navigating. As I read the directions we’d printed from MapQuest to the driver, I instructed her to “stay straight” on the street upon which we were currently driving. A voice from the back seat piped up and said, “Wouldn’t the more appropriate directive be to ‘go queerly forward’?” As I continue in this process, loaded with complex negotiations and countless choices, I plan to go queerly forward, with as much integrity, grace, and humor as I can, and maybe make it a little easier for those who will come after me. For this religious academic whose CV has queer written all over it, I can only hope that there are a few institutions who are ready to head in that direction too.

New Titles in Religious Studies From Sorin Books

When God Is Gone, Everything Is Holy
The Making of a Religious Naturalist
Chet Raymo
In what he describes as a “late-life credo,” renowned science writer Chet Raymo narrates his half-century journey from the traditional Catholicism of his youth to his present perspective as a “Catholic agnostic.” Raymo combines rigorous work in the scientific academy and a reverence for creation born of Catholic sacramental tradition to articulate his perspective as a religious naturalist. Visit Chet at www.scienccemusings.com

Hardcover • 160 pages • $22.95

When in Doubt, Sing
Prayer in Daily Life
Jane Redmont
Drawing on her own prayer life, as well as the prayer experiences of friends from Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Buddhist, and agnostic backgrounds, Jane Redmont explores both the gifts of diverse communities and the individuality of prayer, stressing that what is effective and meaningful for one person might not be so for another. Visit Jane at www.actsofhope.blogspot.com

Paperback • 448 pages • $18.95

“Charming and full of verve. . . Highly recommended.”
—Library Journal

Available from your bookstore or from
SORIN BOOKS / Notre Dame, IN 46556
www.sorinbooks.com / Ph: 800-282-1865

Promo Code: AF1100805PV

October 2008 RSN • 37
Regional Meetings and Calls for Papers

For information about our ten regions and more detailed Calls for Papers, go to www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Regions.

Preregistration
Online preregistration will be available in January at www.aarweb.org. Please utilize the AAR website for registration, as it saves paper and helps the region fulfill our national AAR mandate to promote environmentally sustainable gatherings.

Hotel Information
The Radisson Cross Keys offers hotel room registration online at www.radisson.com/visitbaltimore or by phone at 888-201-1718. Indicate that you are attending our conference to receive the conference rate. Discounted hotel rooms ($125) will be held until March 2, 2009. Only 40 discounted rooms have been reserved, so reserve rooms early. For updated conference information, consult www.aarweb.org/About_AARRegions/Mid-Atlantic/Call.asp. Information will be posted as it is available.

2009 Proposal Guidelines
Paper Proposals (250–500 words) should include full name, title, institution, phone number, fax number, e-mail, and mailing address. The proposal should state the proposal’s purpose and how the argument will proceed. Provide enough context to show that you are aware of the basic literature in the field and summarize the argument of your presentation. An abstract of the paper (350 words) should also be included. Accepted abstracts will be posted online.

Proposals for a Panel Session should include abstracts (150 words) and contact information for each individual participant. A “panel” is a session with one announced theme and a list of participants who address that theme but do not present separate formal papers.

Proposals for a Paper Session should include the name of the designated session head and should include abstracts (150 words) and contact information for each individual participant. A session with separately arranged paper topics is considered a “paper” session. If you have not presented a paper before a learned society, you must send us your paper and a plan to present (12 pages maximum). In your cover letter, attach any information that may help us weigh your submission.

You will have approximately 35 minutes to present your paper (whether by reading it or by interactive discussion) and to respond to questions. Your paper should not exceed 12 double-spaced pages.

We cannot supply any audiovisual equipment or prohibit rental costs. Consider bringing photocopied handouts to your session.

You have an idea or inquiry and want feedback, please send it to Linda Barnes, Boston University, linda.barnes@bu.edu. Applications should be sent to individuals listed in the call.

Co-Sponsoring Conferences: NEMAA will function as a co-sponsor of conferences proposed by members around the region. NEMAA’s contribution will involve:
1) Grants of up to $800 to help support conference-related costs; 2) Assistance with resources to facilitate conference planning, including best-practice planning schedules; and 3) Access to regional e-mailings to publicize the event. Proposals should be sent to Grove Harris, Cambridge, MA, gweharva@post.harvard.edu, and should include a conference title, an abstract, list of projected speakers, schedule, contact person, and a budget that indicates how the NEMAA grant will be used. If submitted by graduate students, a faculty mentor must be identified. Rolling deadline.

Teaching Workshops: The topics of greatest interest to our members include course development and teaching in general. If you would like to organize a teaching workshop, NEMAA will provide: 1) Grants of up to $800 to help support conference-related costs; 2) Assistance with resources to facilitate conference planning, including best-practice planning schedules; and 3) Access to regional e-mailings to locate presenters and/or to publicize the event. Proposals should be sent to Barbara Darling-Smith, Wheaton College, kobist1@wheatonma.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 NEMAA grant will be used. If submitted by graduate students, a faculty mentor must be identified. Rolling deadline.

Salon Series: A lunch and/or dinner series, held in different parts of the region, focusing on the work of regional authors (these can be works in progress). NEMAA will provide grants of up to $400 to help support related costs and access to regional e-mailings to publicize the series. Proposals should be sent to Michael Hartwig, Emmanuel College, partypandy@comcast.net, and should include a title, abstract, list of authors and/or facilitators, schedule, contact person, and a budget that indicates how the NEMAA grant will be used. If submitted by graduate students, a faculty mentor must be identified. Rolling deadline.

If you have an idea that is not listed here but that you feel is consistent with these goals, please send an inquiry! For a list of currently scheduled events, see the New England–Maritimes Region webpage at www.aarweb.org/About_AARRegions/New_England-Maritimes.
Pacific Northwest
Pacific Lutheran University
Tacoma, WA
April 24–26, 2009
Papers will be accepted for the following pro-
gram units at our Call for Papers website
available in November 2008. The ofﬁcial
Program Unit calls will appear in our fall
2008 newsletter and on our webpage (www.pwu-aar.org).

Archaeology of the Ancient Near East
(ASOR) Sharon Press, Drew University, sharonpress@andrew.cmu.edu
Asian and Comparative Studies
Heidi Schmitt, National University, heidischmitt@national.edu
Hebrew Scriptures
Letitia Campbell, Emory University, letitia.campbell@emory.edu
Interreligious Dialogue with the Natural Sciences
Paul Ingram, Pacific Lutheran University, paul Ingram@plu.edu
New Testament and Hellenistic Religion
Paul N. Anderson, George Fox University, pander@georgefox.edu
Religion and Society
Kevin O’Brien, Pacific Lutheran University, kbrien@plu.edu
Theology and Philosophy of Religion
Dennis Jowers, Faith Seminary, djoners@faithseminary.org, and Matt Kim, Emory University, mkim@emory.edu
Women and Religion
Andy Bass, Gonzaga University, andy bass@gsa.edu, and Kendra Irons, George Fox University, kiron@georgefox.edu

Special Topic Session in Arts and Religion
Susan G. Carter, Marylhurst University and the California Institute of Integral Studies, susangcarter@yahoo.com or scarter@cit.edu, and Louise M. Pare, lmpare89@comcast.com

Rocky Mountain–Great Plains
Regis University
Denver, CO
March 6–7, 2009
The Regional Program Committee cordially
invites you to submit proposals for papers and
panels to be presented at the 2009 Regional
Meeting in Denver, Colorado. The deadline
for submissions is November 3, 2008. Each
proposal should consist of a one-page abstract
describing the nature of the paper or panel.
Please be sure to include reliable contact infor-
mation. If you require technological support
for your presentation (such as Internet con-
nection, or audio and projection equipment),
you must request it with your proposal.
Proposals are welcome in all areas of religious
and biblical studies. The Program Committee
also welcomes proposals for panels and the-
matic sessions in the following areas:
• Religious Studies among the Disciplines
• Religion and Popular Culture
• Women and Religion
• The Bible and Cognate Literature
• Interreligious and Interfaith Dialogue
• Pedagogical Methods and Technologies
• Syro-Palestinian Archaeology
Only those proposals received by the deadline
will be considered for inclusion in the pro-
gram. Presentations are limited to 20 min-
utes, with a brief amount of time allowed for
questions.
Student Paper Awards: Graduate students are encouraged to submit proposals. There
will be awards for the best AAR and SBL stu-
dent papers. The awards are presented during
the luncheon on Saturday and carry a stipend of
$100 each. To be considered for the award, a
student must submit a copy of the com-
pleted paper, along with an abstract, by
November 3, 2008 (Papers not chosen for an
awarded will be considered for the program.
A student’s name and contact information
should appear only on the cover page of the
paper; student papers will be judged anony-
mously. The paper should be 12–15 pages
double-spaced (for a 20 minute presentation).
Requests for supporting technology (Internet
connection, projector, etc.) must accompany
your proposal.
The Program Committee also invites under-
graduate students for the “Theta Alpha Kappa
National Honor Society Undergraduate Panel.”
There will also be an award for the best paper
in the panel.
Regional Scholars Award: The SBL offers
a Regional Scholars award ($1,000 plus nation-
al recognition as a Regional Scholar) for an
outstanding paper presented at the regional
meeting by a PhD candidate or recent PhD
(four years or fewer). If you are interested in
competing in the Regional Scholars competi-
tion, you must indicate so with your paper
proposal. See the regional website for more
information (www.rmgp.org).

Program Committee. All 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 Randy Lumpert at
rlumpert@regi.edu by November 3, 2008. It
is hoped that at least one faculty person from
each of the participating schools in the region
will serve on the Program Committee. Details
on the Program Committee proposal review
process will be e-mailed to those who self-
define by the deadline.

Please send all proposals and inquiries to MS
Word Format to: Randolph E. Lumpert, Regis
University, Department of Religious Studies,
3333 Regis BLVD, E-4, Denver, CO 80221;
W: 303-458-3511; F: 303-964-5467;
rlumpert@regi.edu.

Southeastern
Sherratt–Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC
March 13–15, 2009
Call deadline: October 1, 2008. For com-
plete information on the Call, themes, and
submission guidelines, log onto the AAR
website or visit www.aar.org. Please
use the proposal submission form available on
the SECSR website.

Consultation on Teaching
Feminism/Womanism
Margarita Suarez, Meredith College,
suarezm@meredith.edu, and Letitia Campbell,
Emory University, letitia.campbell@emory.edu

AAR Joint Session on Places of
Redemption
Mark Medley, Baptist Seminary of Kentucky,
mark.medley@bu.edu, Emily A. Rowe,
Lexington Theological Seminary, earoew@ lextheo.edu,
Michelle Voss Roberts, Rhodes College,
rroberts@rhodes.edu, and Emily Holmes,
Rhodes College, bhollmes@rhodes.edu.

AAR Academic Study of Religion and
Pedagogy
Margaret Ayner, Intenerdenominational
Theological Center, mayner@tcu.edu.

(SBL) Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament
Bryan Bibb, Furman University,
bibb@furman.edu, or David Garber,
Mecer University, garber dg@mercre.edu.

(AAR) History of Christianity
Michael Simmons, Auburn University,
bishopmichael@centurytel.net.

(AAR) History of Judaism
Gilya Schmidt, University of Tennessee,
gchiu@utk.edu.

(AAR) Islam
Juliane Hammer, University of North
Carolina, charlotte. jhammer@wisc.edu,
and Rachel Scott, Virginia Polytechnic Institute,
rmscott@vt.edu.

(SBL) New Testament
C. Kevin Rowe, Duke University,
keen@duke.edu.

(AAR) Philosophy of Religion
Mark Wells, Montreat College,
wells@montreat.edu.

(AAR) Religion, Culture, and the Arts
Megan Summers, Berkeley Preparatory
School, summersm@berkeleyprep.org, and
Adam Wain, Florida State University,
amadanwain@gmail.com.

(AAR) Religion, Ethics, and Society
Grace Kao, Virginia Polytechnic Institute,
gkao@vt.edu, and Darla Schumm,
Hollins University, dschumm@hollins.edu.

(AAR) Religion in America
Lynn S. Neal, Wake Forest University,
neald@wfu.edu.

(AAR) Religions of Asia (formerly, History
of Religions)
Steven Ramsey, University of Alabama,
steven.ramsey@ua.edu.

(AAR) Women and Religion
Michelle Voss Roberts, Rhodes College,
rroberts@rhodes.edu, and Emily Holmes,
Rhodes College, bhollmes@rhodes.edu.

Undergraduate Research
Send submissions by December 15, 2008, to
chair Bernadette McNary-Zak, Rhodes
College, mcnary_zak@rhodes.edu.

Southwest
Marriott Hotel, DFW Airport
Irving, TX
March 7–8, 2009
Submit proposals to the section chairs as list-
ed below. Please indicate if the proposal is
being submitted to more than one section.
The deadline is November 1, 2008.

Arts, Literature, and Religion
Papers are solicited on the role and power of
art to present cultural values or to criticize
them, the relationship between American

(continued on page 40)
culture and the practice of religion, and whether religious tolerance and tolerance of religion are abiding cultural principles.

Proposals/abstract should be submitted to Katherine Downey, The Hockaday School, kdollow@mail.hockaday.org.

History of Christianity
Three areas are of special interest: 1) 500th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin; 2) 400th anniversary of John Smyth’s founding of the first Baptist church in Amsterdam; and 3) 200th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln.

Send proposals to Arthur A. Toppy, wttoppy@greensum.net.

Philosophy of Religion and Theology
All topics are welcome. A joint session with the Asian and Comparative Religion section and ASSR on the topic “Design and Evolution: The Encounter of Traditions and Modern Science,” is planned. Send proposals to the chairs of each section. All proposals should be no more than two pages, pasted into the body of the e-mail.

Submit proposals to both Steve Oldham, University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, soldham@umhb.edu, and Rebecca Hutkey, University of Oklahoma, rhutkey@ou.edu.

Ethics, Society, and Cultural Analysis
All topics welcome, including politics and religion, race and religion, social ethics, poverty and economic justice, ecological and environmental ethics, medical ethics, theological ethics, sexual ethics, and the use of scripture or tradition in ethics.

Send proposals to Melanie L. Harris, Texas Christian University, m.l.harris@tcu.edu.

Comparative and Asian Studies in Religion
All topics welcome, especially religion and science, taxonomy in religious studies, nationalism, politics, and possession, and trance in comparative perspective. A joint roundtable session with Philosophy of Religion and Theology section and ASSR on “Design and Evolution: the Encounter of Traditions and Modern Science” is also planned. Proposals should not exceed 500 words (Word attachment preferable).

Send proposals to Iverne M. Vargas, Austin College, avargas@auustincollege.edu.

Theta Alpha Kappa
Student members in the Southwest Region are invited to submit papers. Submissions must come from the chapter advisor and include: 1) Presenter’s name and contact information; 2) Entire paper (preferred) or an abstract of the paper (acceptable); 3) Name of the school; and 4) Venue for which the paper was prepared (e.g., honors project, senior thesis, etc.).

Submit proposals to Nadia Lah autosky, Texas Christian University, n.lah autosky@tcu.edu.

Upper Midwest
Luther Seminary
Saint Paul, MN
March 27–28, 2009
Submit proposals after September 15 online at www.smta-aarhl.org. The program for the 2009 Regional meeting will be announced in January 2009.

Joint AAR/SBL Sessions:
Multicultural Perspectives on Theology, Religion, and Biblical Interpretation
Pricella Epping, Graceland University

AAR Sessions:
Native American Religions
Dennis Kelley, Iowa State

Ethics
Mary Gaebler, Gustavus Adolphus College

Historical Perspectives on Religion
Jim Kremer, Mariquette University

Religions in North America
Murphy Pizza, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

Religion and Science
Greg Peterson, South Dakota State University

Religion and Ecology
Nancy Vinson-Vangerud, Hamline University

Religion, Art, and Culture
Phil Stoltzfus, University of St. Thomas

Religion, Gender, and Sexuality
C. Neal Keye, College of St. Scholastica

Philosophy of Religion: Systematic Theology
Paul Capetz, United Theological Seminary, and Courtney Wilder, Midland Lutheran College

World Religions
Mark Berkson, Hamline University

Teaching the Bible and Religion
Matthew Skinner, Luther Seminary

Undergraduate Research
Lori Brandt Hale, Augsburg College, and Bruce Forbes, Morningside College

SBL Sessions:
Old Testament/Hebrew Bible
Paul Niskanen, University of St. Thomas

New Testament
Juan Hernandez, Bethel Seminary, and Daniel Scholz, Cardinal Stritch University

Christian Apocrypha
Casey Ellidge, Gustavus Adolphus College

Religion in the Ancient World
Glen Menzies, North Central University

Greek and Roman Religions
Philip Sellew, University of Minnesota

Early Judaism and Judaic Studies
Michael Wise, Northwestern College

Archaeology and Excavation Reports
Mark Schuler, Concordia University

Multiple Submissions
(New policy) Scholars may submit only one paper proposal to one session of the Upper Midwest regional meeting. Subsequent submissions will be declined.

Questions and Other Topics
Questions about the upcoming meeting or the appropriate section for proposals should be directed to Deanna A. Thompson, Hamline University, 1556 Hewit Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104, dtthompson@gcu.hamline.edu. Proposals for papers or topics not listed in the call for papers are to be brought to her attention.

Notice to Graduate Students
The Upper Midwest region is pleased to announce the availability of travel scholarships in the amount of $100 and $250 for graduate students whose papers are accepted for presentation at the regional meeting. A limited number of these scholarships are available and they will be awarded on a competitive basis. Details may be requested at the time of making a paper proposal.

Upper Midwest Regional Officers
President: Bruce Forbes, Morningside College, Sioux City, IA
Vice-President: Susan Hill, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA
Program Committee: Amy Marga, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, and Phil Stoltzfus, University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN
Regional Director: Deanna A. Thompson, Hamline University, St. Paul, MN

Western
Santa Clara University
Santa Clara, CA
March 21–23, 2009

Standing at the Crossroads: Twenty-First Century Challenges in Ethics, Religion, and Social Justice — Reclaiming Traditions and Renewing Commitments

This year’s theme is intended to foster discussion about responses generated by diverse faith traditions to new and old issues of social justice and equity, including, but not limited to, globalization and structural violence, civil rights, genocide, and war; intersections of race, gender, poverty, and social injustice; sexual, gender, and identity issues; and ecologic devastation/habitat destruction caused by the technical, biologic, and economic developments of the twenty-first century.

Session chairs are encouraged to develop individual calls that will produce papers and panels that offer critical reflections on themes in relation to the ongoing interests of their sections. Joint sessions and interdisciplinary panels are encouraged, if relevant to the needs and interests of the section. Panels and papers may focus on, but are not limited to, the following themes: 1) Discussions of selected religious traditions and their social and ethical behavioral commitments, with particular attention to how these commitments are reflected in ongoing/everyday practice(s); 2) Explorations of the use of local and global faith-based strategies to promote cultural pluralism and peace; 3) Reviews of contemporary religious responses to new technologies, biomedical developments, scientific discoveries, and/or environmental concerns; 4) Investigations of the ongoing relationship between religious traditions and evolving social justice values; 5) Studies of the ability of marginalized groups (i.e., women, racial, ethnic, sexual, religious or caste minorities, and the poor) to successfully engage with, or challenge, marginalizing religious traditions, practices, and political, spiritual, or clerical authority, leading to new/renewed faith commitments, new interpretations of traditional practices, new understandings of scriptural text/s and authority, new practices and rituals, or new laws; 6) Reflections on the challenges that arise for religious traditions during periods of migration, genocide, war, or other volatile situations; and 7) Historic analyses that compare and contrast spiritual, religious, and ethical responses to globalization and structural violence, as well as gender and race relations in the past with current responses and realities today. For further information, visit www.sjsu.edu/wecsor.
ACADEMY FUND

Member contributions are crucial to the continuing support of AAR programs.

To learn more about Eugene V. Gallagher Gifts from $25 to $99
Gifts from $500 to $999
Gifts from $1,000 or more

Tribute Gifts
In honor of Emilie Townes
Barb Boyd
Bernadette Brooten
Mary F. Bednarowski
Barbara Boyd
Bernadette Brooten
Robert A. Bruttell
Jornn Jacobsen Buckley
OCTOBER 2008 • 41
We strive for accuracy in our records. Please notify the AAR of any incorrect listings.

NEW IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY FROM IVP ACADEMIC

The Triumph of God over Evil

Thydology for a World of Suffering

William Hasker

Responding to the work of John K. Roth and D. Z. Phillips, philosopher William Hasker argues that evil in the world provides no evidence of moral fault in God, the world’s creator and governor.

“A serious and original work of philosophy.”
—C. Stephen Evans, University Professor of Philosophy and Humanities, Baylor University

This is the first volume in the Strategic Initiatives in Evangelical Theology, a series meant to ignite discussion among evangelicals and the wider academic community on emerging, ground-breaking, and controversial subjects.

The Renewal of Trinitarian Theology

Thomas F. Torrance

Incarnation

The Person and Life of Christ

Thomas F. Torrance

Edited by Robert T. Walker

Global Dictionary of Theology

A Resource for the Worldwide Church

William A. Dyrness, Yelit-Matti Kärkkäinen, Juan Francisco Martínez and Simon Chan, editors

IVP Academic

Experientially Rooted. Critically Engaged. 630.734.4800 · ivpanademic.com
Summer Seminars on Theologies of Religious Pluralism and Comparative Theology

Funded by The Henry Luce Foundation and sponsored by the American Academy of Religion and its Theological Education Steering Committee

Faculty

John J. Thatamanil, Assistant Professor of Theology, Vanderbilt Divinity School, Project Director. Thatamanil is the author of The Ironbound Divine: God, Creation, and the Human Predicament (Fortress Press, 2006). He is currently at work on a book tentatively entitled Religious Diversity After “Religion” (Fordham University Press). He is Chair of the Theological Education Steering Committee and a past President of the North American Paul Tillich Society.

Francis X. Clooney, S. J., Parkman Professor of Divinity and Professor of Comparative Theology, Harvard Divinity School. Clooney is one of the founding figures of comparative theology in its contemporary form. He is the author of numerous books, including Theology After Vedanta: An Experiment in Comparative Theology (SUNY Press, 1993); Hindu God, Christian God: How Reason Helps to Break Down the Barriers Between Religions (Oxford University Press, 2001); Divine Mother, Blessed Mother: Hindu Goddesses and the Virgin Mary (Oxford University Press, 2005); Beyond Compare: St. Francis de Sales and St. Vaishnava Devotee on Loving Surrender to God (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2008); and The Truth, the Way, the Life: Christian Commentary on the Three Holy Monarchies of the South Indian Madrasa (Oxford, 2008).


S. Mark Heim, Samuel Abbott Professor of Christian Theology, Andover Newton Theological School. Heim is the author of several books on Christian approaches to theologies of religious pluralism. Among these, two have been recognized as foundational offerings that have changed the very terms of conversation within the field: Salvation: Truth and Difference in Religion (Oxhs, 1995) and The Depth of the Riches: A Trinitarian Theology of Religious Enigma (Eerdmans, 2000).


John Makransky, Associate Professor of Religion, Boston College. Makransky’s publications include Buddhism Embodied: Sources of Controversy in India and Tibet (SUNY Press, 1997); “Historical Consciousness as an Offering to the Tri-Historical Buddha” and “Comparative Academic Buddhist Theology: The Emergence and Rationale” in Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Comparative Buddhist Scholars, which he co-edited with Roger Jackson (2000); “Mahayana Buddhist Ritual and Ethical Activity in the World” in Buddhists in a Christian Journal (2000); “Buddhist Perspectives on Truth in Other Religions: Past and Present,” in Theological Studies Journal (2005); and “Buddhist Analogues of Sin and Grace: A Dialogue with Augustine,” forthcoming in Augustinian Heritage.

Peter Ochs, Edgar M. Bronfman Professor of Modern Jewish Studies, University of Virginia. Ochs has edited, co-authored, and authored several books, including: The Return to Scripture in Judaism and Christianity. Essays in Pragmatic Scriptural Interpretation (Palgrave Press, 2006) and Peter, Paul, and Mary: The Development of a Moral Theology (Cambridge University Press, 2005). He is currently at work on two book projects: Another Reformation: Postbiblical Christianity and the Jews (Beaux Press) and Core, Study Teaching and Learning Scriptural Reasoning (Eerdmans Press).

Assistance

Rebecca A. Chappel, Assistant Professor of Religion, Philosophy and Asian Studies, St. Olaf’s College. Ramachandran’s monographs include Accomplishing the Accomplished: The Upanisad as a Source of Valid Knowledge in Shankara (University of Hawaii’s Press, 1993); The Limits of Scripture: Vedic and Upanishadic Romanticism of the Authority of the Vedas (University of Hawaii’s Press, 1994); and most recently, The Advaita Worldview: God, World, and Humanity (SUNY Press, 2006).

Objectives

These week-long seminars will provide training to theological education faculty who are often preparing students for future religious leadership and ministry. The Theological Education Steering Committee invites applications from theological educators interested in pursuing these questions. The seminars will help address the question of religious diversity as a question of faith, that is to say, as a properly theological question: What is the meaning of my neighbor’s faith for mine? While we expect that the bulk of applicants will come from seminaries and divinity schools, we also welcome theological educators who teach in theology and religious studies departments.

Cohort One

June 7–14, 2009, Union Theological Seminary, New York City

May 30–June 6, 2010, University of Chicago Divinity School

Cohort Two

June 13–20, 2010, Union Theological Seminary, New York City

May 29–June 5, 2011, University of Chicago Divinity School

Two separate cohorts will each be composed of 25 participants and 8 instructors and will meet for a week-long event the first summer, then a one-day event the following fall at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, followed by another week-long event the next summer. The seminars are designed for those relatively new to the theologies of religious pluralism and comparative theology, allowing them to learn from scholars and advance their understanding. The result of the summer seminars will be to increase the number of theological educators who can teach in the areas of theologies of religious pluralism and comparative theology in a variety of institutions in which theological education takes place.

All accepted applicants will be awarded a cash stipend of $1,000, plus the grant will cover their expenses incurred in their participation in the seminars.

The goals of these summer seminars are to provide theological educators with the following:

• Substantive introduction to the best in current scholarship and teaching resources in the areas of theologies of religious pluralism and comparative theology;

• The opportunity to engage in an interreligious conversation about the meaning of religious diversity;

• The opportunity to bring their own specific areas of research expertise into conversation with theologians of religious pluralism and comparative theology;

• Support in developing teaching resources, syllabi, and other programming appropriate to the particular needs of their home institutions;

• The opportunity to disseminate their learning by means of publication or other appropriate media; and

• A cohort of scholar-teachers who can support each other in their own ongoing scholarly and teaching development in the areas of theologies of religious pluralism and comparative theology.

To be assured of consideration for Cohort One, applications must be received by December 5, 2008. Applicants will be notified by mid-January 2009.

The application deadline for Cohort Two will be in the fall of 2009.

For more information, please go to www.aarweb.org/Programs/summer_seminars or contact John J. Thatamanil at j.thatamanil@vanderbilt.edu.

Further information will also be available in the AAR booth (501) in the Book Exhibit hall at the AAR Annual Meeting in Chicago, November 1–3, 2008.
THE POLITICS OF LOVE

A constellation of internationally prominent theorists—philosophers, theologians and psychoanalysts—will gather to discuss the question of whether the concept of love can be redescribed as a political concept. Is love necessarily a private matter or does it also have a public meaning? Can love become part of a political project? In addition to an ethics or religion of love, can there be a politics of love?

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
April 16-18, 2009

Coordinators
Linda Martín Alcoff, Professor of Philosophy
John D. Caputo, Thomas J. Watson Professor of Religion and Humanities

Registration
Fee: $125, Students: $60
Preregistration is recommended.

Made Possible in Part by a Grant from the Ray Smith Symposium.

Accommodations and all sessions at
The Sheraton Syracuse University Hotel and Conference Center

For more information and on-line registration visit our website at http://pcr.syr.edu/

Contact
Elizabeth Kad, Department of Religion
Hall of Languages, 501
Syracuse University
Syracuse, New York 13244-1170.
Telephone: (315) 443-8862
Fax: (315) 443-9568
Email: pcrcconf@syr.edu