

Workshops

THATCAMP

The Humanities and Technology Camp

Friday, November 21, 9:00 am–5:00 pm

Chris Cantwell, University of Missouri, Kansas City, Presiding

The advent of digital technology and social media has not only transformed how today's religious communities function, but also how scholars teach and research religion more broadly. If you are interested in how technology is changing—or can change—the work of religious studies scholars, then we invite you to attend the AAR's second annual THATCamp! THATCamp stands for "The Humanities and Technology Camp," and they exist to bring scholars and technologists of every skill level together to learn how to integrate digital technology into their teaching and research. THATCamps are unconferences, which means this learning and building occurs not through formal presentations but in hands-on workshops or sessions proposed on the spot by participants. Topics we will cover could include academic blogging, social media in the classroom, digital research methods, web-based class projects, online publishing, and countless others.

The cost for the workshop is \$25, which includes the entire day of sessions and coffee. There will be time for lunch on your own. Registration is limited to the first 100 participants.

RELIGION AND MEDIA

The History and Materiality of Religious Circulations

Friday, November 21, 11:00 am–6:00 pm

Jenna Supp-Montgomerie, Quest University, Canada, Ann Burlein, Hofstra University, and Kathleen Foody, College of Charleston, Presiding

The Religion and Media Workshop, one of the most popular sessions at the AAR annually, is a day-long seminar designed to foster collaborative conversation at the cutting edge of the study of religion, media, and culture. In 2014 the Workshop will explore the history and materiality of religious circulations.

Our topic will be religious circulations. What makes it possible for particular forms of religion to become popular? How do obstacles, such as secrecy, silence and censorship, block the circulation of religion (as compared to the role of gossip, scandal, and threat)? What are some good ways of thinking about networks? Most generally, how do media increase contact between diverse religious expressions, even enabling them to circulate globally, while obscuring, obstructing, or enhancing specific religious understandings?

The workshop will not be structured as traditional paper sessions, but rather as a master class in religious circulations, their possibilities and limits. Three to five readings will be circulated to participants before the event. Because of the nature of this year's workshop, it is essential that all participants commit to doing the readings ahead of time and prepare to participate in seminar-style conversation. We invite you to join us for a master class on the possibilities and impossibilities of religious circulations.

The cost for the workshop is \$70, which includes lunch and the entire afternoon of sessions. Registration is limited to the first 75 participants.

LEADERSHIP

Best Practices in an Era of Contingent Labor: A Workshop for Chairs of Religious Studies Programs and Departments

Friday, November 21, 1:00 pm–5:00 pm

Toddie Peters, Elon University, and Theodore Trost, University of Alabama, Presiding

According to the American Association of University Professors, more than half of all faculty members across the United States hold part- or full-time, non-tenure-track teaching positions. What can departments and institutions do to improve the working conditions of these contingent faculty colleagues? In plenaries, panels, and breakout sections, participants in this workshop will explore concrete ways for chairs and departments to help contingent faculty members thrive. Contingent faculty members and experts who have studied the circumstances surrounding "contingent labor" will lead the workshop. A best practices document for contingent faculty drafted by the Academic Relations Committee will focus our discussions.

The cost for the workshop is \$75, which includes lunch and the entire afternoon of sessions. Registration is limited to the first 75 participants.

Participants will include:

Courtney Bender, Columbia University

Edward Curtis, Indiana University

Christine Gudorf, Florida International University

David Watt, Temple University

Workshops (cont.)

RETHINKING ISLAMIC STUDIES

Teaching Islamic Studies: Key Topics and Best Practices

Friday, November 21, 1:00 pm–5:00 pm

Danielle Widmann-Abraham, James Madison University and Omid Safi, University of North Carolina, Presiding

The 2014 Rethinking Islamic Studies workshop will continue to explore best practices for teaching undergraduates foundational topics in Islamic Studies. This year, we will look at conceptual and pedagogical strategies for teaching four topics: law, Shi'ism, ritual practice, and violence.

Our focus will be pedagogical, exploring the practical aspects involved in enhancing student learning and critical thinking regarding essential topics in the study of Islam. Our goal is to enhance the integration and mutual enrichment of Islamic Studies and the broader field of Religious Studies. Through both presentations and conversation, we will collectively explore such questions as: How can we help students grasp both the historical formation and contemporary practice of Islamic law? How do we situate the authority of law in terms of the various practices that characterize the lived religion of Islam? What resources does the broader field of Religious Studies offer in terms of thinking about law/jurisprudence as a comparative category that can enrich inquiry about Islam? In teaching about Shi'i traditions, how do we facilitate the exploration of distinct interpretive traditions of Islamic history and theology without reifying sectarian differences? How can we build students' appreciation for the multiple effects of ritual performance, as it embodies tradition, forms ethical subjects, and structures temporal human life? Finally, violence remains one of the most crucial questions in religious studies inquiry. How do we shape classroom conversations about violence as an intellectual topic of profound ethical import? To put it another way, how can we orient analysis of violence in the past so that it contributes to reflexive analysis of violence in the present? What conceptual frames help students think critically about violence in relation to Islamic tradition and in terms of universal human phenomena? And as a corollary, what implicit parallel practices of nonviolence can we excavate for students in the humanities?

The format will consist of presentations by experienced instructors combined with interactive small group discussion. Our aim is to provide an opportunity for reflection on effective teaching and student-centered learning. The workshop is intended both for graduate students and professors of Islamic studies, as well as scholars from other fields in religious studies who are looking to incorporate Islamic materials in their courses.

The cost of the workshop is \$35, which includes the entire afternoon of sessions and a coffee break. Registration limited to the first 70 participants.

RELIGION AND ECOLOGY

Religious Environmentalism and Environmental Activism

Friday, November 21, 1:45 pm–5:00 pm

Roger S. Gottlieb, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Presiding

The Religion and Ecology Group invites you to examine the fusion of religion and politics in religious environmentalism. Many people of established faiths and of eclectic spirituality are engaged in environmental activism for explicitly religious or spiritual reasons. Simultaneously, many secular environmental organizations define themselves as seeking to protect the "sacredness of life." What are the theoretical and practical implications of these hopeful connections? And should this fusion of religion and politics radically alter our understanding of each?

This workshop will offer:

- ☞ An overview of religious environmental activism and the spiritual dimensions of secular environmental groups.
- ☞ A theoretical framework to conceptualize types of political activism.
- ☞ Case studies of activist religious environmental activism; e.g., civil disobedience by religious leaders over Keystone XL, interfaith reforestation efforts in Southern Africa, indigenous resistance to fracking.
- ☞ A chance to join with thoughtful colleagues in examining questions such as:
 - Do progressive movements (for democracy, racial and gender equality, workers' rights, etc.) hold significant lessons for religious environmentalists about political strategy, the role of leadership, and alliances with non-environmental and secular groups?
 - Can explicitly political organizations learn from the religious or spiritual stress on humility, compassion, and self-understanding?
 - Is significant environmental change possible in the face of capitalism or the bureaucratic state (e.g., China)?
 - As scholars are we like engineers studying metallic strengths aboard the Titanic or a Jewish historian studying anti-Semitism in 1938 Germany? How do we combine academic objectivity/professionalism with the fact that we are all affected by and contribute to the environmental crisis?
 - What are the possibilities for environmental activism in our own lives?

The cost for the workshop is \$35, which includes the entire afternoon of sessions and a coffee break. Registration is limited to the first 100 participants.



Workshop Reservation Form

No.	Workshop	Day/Time	Cost
_____	THATCamp <i>The Humanities and Technology Camp</i>	Friday, November 21 9:00 am–5:00 pm	\$25
_____	Religion and Media <i>The History and Materiality of Religious Circulations</i>	Friday, November 21 11:00 am–6:00 pm	\$70
_____	Leadership <i>Best Practices in an Era of Contingent Labor</i>	Friday, November 21 1:00 pm–5:00 pm	\$75
_____	Rethinking Islamic Studies <i>Teaching Islamic Studies: Key Topics and Best Practices</i>	Friday, November 21 1:00 pm–5:00 pm	\$35
_____	Religion and Ecology <i>Religious Environmentalism and Environmental Activism</i>	Friday, November 21 1:45 pm–5:00 pm	\$35

Name _____

Email _____

AAR Member ID _____

Payment Method: Check (payable to “AAR”) Visa MasterCard American Express Discover

Card Number _____

Expiration Date (mo/yr) _____ CCID# _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Workshops fill up quickly and are first-come, first serve!

Return the form with payment by November 1, 2014 to AAR Registration and Housing, 825 Houston Mill Rd. NE, Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30329, fax to +1-404-935-5321, email reg@aarweb.org, or register online while completing the registration process at <https://www.aarweb.org/annual-meeting/registration-housing>. If you’ve already completed registration, please send in the form or simply email reg@aarweb.org.