



2018 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Contents

General Call Instructions	7
African Association for the Study of Religions	11
African Diaspora Religions Unit	14
African Religions Unit.....	17
Afro-American Religious History Unit.....	20
Animals and Religion Unit.....	23
Anthropology of Religion Unit	24
Arts, Literature, and Religion Unit	26
Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Unit.....	28
Arts Series	31
Augustine and Augustinianisms Unit.....	32
Baha’i Studies Unit	33
Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities Unit	35
Bioethics and Religion Unit	36
Black Theology Unit.....	38
Body and Religion Unit.....	41
Bonhoeffer: Theology and Social Analysis Unit	44
Buddhism in the West Unit	45
Buddhism Unit	46
Buddhist Critical-Constructive Reflection Unit.....	50
Buddhist Philosophy Unit.....	51
Childhood Studies and Religion Unit	53

Chinese Christianities Seminar	55
Chinese Religions Unit	56
Christian Spirituality Unit	58
Christian Systematic Theology Unit	59
Class, Religion, and Theology Unit	61
Cognitive Science of Religion Unit	64
Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Unit	67
Comparative Religious Ethics Unit	70
Comparative Studies in Religion Unit	72
Comparative Theology Unit	74
Confucian Traditions Unit	77
Contemplative Studies Unit	79
Contemporary Islam Unit	81
Contemporary Pagan Studies Unit	83
Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop and Religion Unit	84
Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Unit	87
Cultural History of the Study of Religion Unit	89
Daoist Studies Unit	91
Death, Dying, and Beyond Unit	93
Eastern Orthodox Studies Unit	94
Ecclesial Practices Unit	96
Ecclesiological Investigations Unit	98
Economics and Capitalism in the Study of Buddhism Seminar	100
Emerging Church, Millennials, and Religion Seminar	101
Employment Workshops	102
Evangelical Studies Unit	105
Exploratory Sessions	107
Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Unit	108
Films	110
Folklore and Religion Seminar	111
Gay Men and Religion Unit	113
Global-Critical Philosophy of Religion Seminar	116

Graduate Student Committee	117
Hinduism Unit	118
History of Christianity Unit	120
Holmes Welch and the Study of Buddhism in Twentieth-Century China Seminar	122
Human Enhancement and Transhumanism Unit	123
Indian and Chinese Religions Compared Unit	125
Indigenous Religious Traditions Unit	127
International Development and Religion Unit	129
Interreligious and Interfaith Studies Unit	131
Interreligious Reflections on Immigration Seminar	133
Islam, Gender, Women Unit	134
Islamic Mysticism Unit	137
Jain Studies Unit	139
Japanese Religions Unit	140
Karl Barth Society of North America	143
Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture Unit	144
Korean Religions Unit	146
Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Unit	148
Law, Religion, and Culture Unit	151
Lesbian-Feminisms and Religion Unit	153
Liberal Theologies Unit	155
Liberation Theologies Unit	157
Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Unit	159
Material Islam Seminar	160
Men, Masculinities, and Religions Unit	161
Middle Eastern Christianity Unit	163
Moral Injury and Recovery in Religion, Society, and Culture Unit	165
Mormon Studies Unit	167
Music and Religion Unit	169
Mysticism Unit	171
Native Traditions in the Americas Unit	173
Navarātri Seminar	175

New Materialism, Religion, and Planetary Thinking Seminar	176
New Perspectives on Religion in the Philippines Seminar	178
New Religious Movements Unit	180
Nineteenth Century Theology Unit.....	182
North American Hinduism Unit	183
North American Religions Unit	184
Open and Relational Theologies Unit	187
Pentecostal–Charismatic Movements Unit.....	189
Philosophy of Religion Unit.....	191
Political Theology Seminar	194
Practical Theology Unit	196
Pragmatism and Empiricism in American Religious Thought Unit	198
Psychology, Culture, and Religion Unit	200
Quaker Studies Unit	203
Queer Studies in Religion Unit.....	205
Qur'an Unit	207
Reformed Theology and History Unit	209
Religion and Cities Unit	211
Religion and Disability Studies Unit.....	213
Religion and Ecology Unit	215
Religion and Economy Unit.....	217
Religion and Families in North America Seminar.....	219
Religion and Food Unit.....	221
Religion and Humanism Unit	223
Religion and Migration Unit.....	224
Religion and Politics Unit	226
Religion and Popular Culture Unit	228
Religion and Public Schools: International Perspectives Unit	230
Religion and Science Fiction Unit.....	232
Religion and Sexuality Unit	234
Religion and the Social Sciences Unit	236
Religion and US Empire Seminar	237

Religion in Europe Unit	239
Religion in Premodern Europe and the Mediterranean Unit	241
Religion in South Asia Unit	243
Religion in Southeast Asia Unit	247
Religion in the American West Unit	249
Religion, Affect, and Emotion Unit	251
Religion, Attire, and Adornment in North America Seminar	253
Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Unit	254
Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Unit	256
Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Unit	257
Religion, Media, and Culture Unit	260
Religion, Memory, History Unit	262
Religion, Sport, and Play Unit	263
Religions in the Latina/o Americas Unit	264
Religions, Medicines, and Healing Unit	267
Religions, Social Conflict, and Peace Unit	269
Religious Conversions Unit	271
Religious Literacy College-Wide Project	273
Ricoeur Unit	274
Ritual Studies Unit	275
Roman Catholic Studies Unit	277
Sacred Texts and Ethics Unit	279
Sacred Texts, Theory, and Theological Construction Unit	280
Schleiermacher Unit	283
Science, Technology, and Religion Unit	285
Scriptural Reasoning Unit	287
Secularism and Secularity Unit	289
Sikh Studies Unit	291
Sociology of Religion Unit	293
Space, Place, and Religion Unit	296
Student Lounge Roundtable	298
Study of Islam Unit	300

Study of Judaism Unit	302
Tantric Studies Unit	304
Teaching Religion Unit	306
Theology and Continental Philosophy Unit	309
Theology and Religious Reflection Unit	310
Theology of Martin Luther King Jr. Unit	311
Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Unit	313
Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture Unit	315
Traditions of Eastern Late Antiquity Unit	316
Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogy Unit	318
Transnational Religious Expression: Between Asia and North America Seminar	319
Vatican II Studies Unit	320
Video Gaming and Religion Seminar	322
Wesleyan Studies Unit	323
Western Esotericism Unit	325
Wildcard Sessions	327
Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit	328
Women and Religion Unit	330
Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Unit	332
World Christianity Unit	334
Yoga in Theory and Practice Unit	337
Yogācāra Studies Unit	339

General Call Instructions

Deadline

The deadline for the Call for Proposals is **Thursday, March 1, 2018, 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time**.

Meeting Location

The 2018 SBL and AAR Annual Meetings will be held November 17-20, in Denver, Colorado. Registration and the Exhibit Hall will be located in the Colorado Convention Center. Academic sessions will be held in the Convention Center, Hyatt Regency, Embassy Suites, Sheraton Denver, Crowne Plaza, Grand Hyatt, Hilton City Center, and Hilton Garden Inn. Registration and housing for the Annual Meeting will open in early April.

Questions about the Call

The work of the Program Unit is coordinated by the Chair(s) and a Steering Committee who design the sessions and make the decisions about which proposals will eventually be on the program. Each proposal is carefully refereed, usually in an anonymous procedure (i.e., without the name of the proposer being provided to the referees). All proposals, abstracts, and completed participant information (as well as any questions you may have) should be sent to the individual(s) named in the Call; this occurs automatically in the [Program Administration Proposal, Evaluation, Review, and Submission \(PAPERS\) System](#). The deadline for proposal submission is **5:00 PM EST, Thursday, March 1**.

Please inquire with the appropriate [Program Unit Chair\(s\)](#) about the amount of time granted for your presentation and by what date the respondent (if any) must receive your completed paper.

Guidelines for Submitting Proposals

- **Step 1:** Find a topic in the [general Call for Proposals](#) or [Call of a specific Program Unit](#) that interests you.
- **Step 2:** Determine which type of proposal you wish to submit.
 - o **Paper proposal** — A paper written by you (and possibly a coauthor) that you will present in response to a theme within a [Program Unit's Call](#).
 - o **Papers session proposal** — A proposal of a complete session of different papers on a theme, complete with its own description, abstract, a presider, paper presentations, and (optionally) a respondent. Presenters in a papers session must submit their proposals to the papers session organizer, who in turn is responsible for inputting them into the [Program Administration Proposal, Evaluation, Review, and Submission \(PAPERS\) System](#).
 - o **Roundtable session proposal** — A proposal of a complete session, including a presider, list of panelists, and (optionally) a respondent; all of whom will speak (ex tempore) on a common theme.

- **Step 3:** Write your 1,000 word proposal and 150-word abstract. Paper sessions require a separate 1,000-word proposal and 150-word abstract for each paper in the session. The abstracts will be listed in the *Online Program Book*.
- **Step 4:** Submit your proposal via the method requested by the [Program Unit](#) no later than **Thursday, March 1. Most Program Units have elected to use the online PAPERS system only.** A [Participant Form](#) is required for any proposal submitted outside of the online [PAPERS system](#). Carefully note any audiovisual equipment you require before you submit your proposal.
 - o [PAPERS](#): Submit your 1,000-word proposal and 150-word abstract via the [Program Administration Proposal, Evaluation, Review, and Submission \(PAPERS\) system](#). **NB: Do not place your name or other identifying remarks in the body of the proposal field or abstract field in [PAPERS](#); this may endanger the anonymous review process of the Unit and acceptance of your proposal may be jeopardized.** Your name and contact information is sent automatically with the proposal so you do not have to submit a separate participant form. For help using the [PAPERS](#) system, please consult the [PAPERS User Manual](#) or if you still require assistance, email support@aarweb.org.
 - o **E-mail:** Submit your 1,000-word proposal and 150-word abstract within the BODY of ONE single e-mail to the contacts listed in the [Program Unit's call](#) (usually the Chairs). Click [here](#) to open the Participant Form for E-mail Submission. Please be sure you use the exact same title on the Participant Form for E-mail Submission as you do on the e-mailed proposal. Proposals received without the participant forms will be disqualified. Participant forms received without proposals or abstracts will also be disqualified. If you are requested by the Program Unit to submit a copy to both co-Chairs or Steering Committee members, follow the instructions listed. If no one person is specified, send your complete proposal to either one of the co-Chairs.
 - o **E-mail with Attachments:** Submit your 1,000-word proposal, 150-word abstract, and Participant Form as attachments in one single e-mail to the contacts listed in the [Program Unit's call](#) (usually the Chairs). Please click [here](#) to open the Participant Form for E-mail Attachment Submission for your participant form. Be sure you use the exact same title on the Participant Form for E-mail Submission as you do on the attached proposal you e-mail. Proposals received without the participant forms will be disqualified. Participant forms received without proposals or abstracts will also be disqualified.
- **Step 5:** Notification of your proposal's acceptance status for the Annual Meeting program will be sent by **April 2, 2018**.

Participation Requirements at the Annual Meeting

Membership is not required to submit a proposal in response to the Call for Proposals. However, **all participants accepted to the program must be current (2018) AAR members and registered for the Annual Meeting by June 30, 2018.**

Participants may appear no more than two times in any capacity (e.g., paper presenter, panelist, presider, or respondent). The only exception is a business meeting presider.

A person can have only one role in a session. You cannot preside and present a paper in the same session.

People can submit no more than two proposals in response to the Call for Proposals. This includes submitting the same proposal to two separate Units or two different proposals to two different Units.

Wildcard Sessions

[Wildcard sessions](#) are intended to be experimental, creative, or exploratory sessions that address an area of interest that does not naturally fall within the purview of an existing Program Unit. These sessions offer members direct access to the Annual Meeting program outside of the normal Program Unit structure.

Guidelines for Wildcard sessions:

Wildcard sessions are accepted through [PAPERS](#) only.

Wildcard sessions must use one of the prearranged session proposal formats (papers session or roundtable).

Make sure the wildcard session does not cover an area already covered by an existing [Program Unit](#). If a proposal fits within an established Program Unit's mission, the proposal will be forwarded to that Unit. If a proposal is submitted as a Wildcard session and also to another Program Unit, it will be eliminated from consideration as a Wildcard.

The Program Committee evaluates all Wildcard Session proposals. Notification of program acceptance will be announced by **April 2, 2018**.

Exploratory Sessions

All proposals for new Units must begin as [Exploratory Sessions](#). An exploratory session is a complete prearranged session that provides a platform for a group of members to announce a line of inquiry new to the AAR program and to seek out others interested in pursuing it further. The proposal can be for a paper, panel, or other creative type of session format. Exploratory sessions are submitted through the [PAPERS system](#), and must be submitted before **March 1, 2018**. Notification of program acceptance will be announced by **April 2, 2018**. Exploratory sessions that are accepted onto the program are then invited to submit an application for new unit status by **December 7, 2018**.

New Schedule for 2018

The AAR is experimenting with a new session schedule for 2018 and 2019 with 2.5 hour sessions in the mornings and a mix of 2 hour and 90 minute sessions in the afternoons. The new schedule will be:

Saturday, Sunday, and Monday

9:00 am-11:30 am (2.5 hours)

1:00 pm-3:00 pm (2 hours)

3:30 pm-5:00 pm (90 minutes)

5:30 pm-7:00 pm (90 minutes)

Tuesday

8:30 am-10:00 am (90 minutes)

10:30 am-12:00 pm (90 minutes)

The AAR encourages creative and innovative proposals for the shorter sessions. Some possibilities include: restricting a panel to two or three thirty-minute papers followed by discussion; posting papers in advance to focus on discussion rather than presentation; topical panel discussions; discussion of a book or film; a panel on teaching in the field; or workshop-style sessions. The ninety-minute format is perfect for hosting specialized conversations on an aspect of the field or "teaching" a topic to the audience.

Audiovisual Requests

The AAR recognizes the importance of using digital equipment during presentations. A limited number of meeting rooms are supplied with LCD projectors for connecting to a personal laptop or tablet. Additionally, some rooms will have the capacity to amplify audio from a presenter's device. AAR encourages participants to bring or share a personal or departmental laptop or tablet to run any PowerPoint, CD, or DVD presentation. Free wifi access will be available in some properties, but for bandwidth-intensive applications, please request "Internet Access" in the Other: box in the PAPERS system. In order to ensure quality, video presentations should be downloaded to a native device and not streamed over the internet when possible. **All AV requests must be received at the time of the proposal. Late requests cannot be accommodated.** See the [AAR Audiovisual Policy](#) for more information.

Questions about the Annual Meeting

Concerns of a general nature may be sent to annualmeeting@aarweb.org.

African Association for the Study of Religions

Call:

The African continent is one of the global locations where Christianity is increasing most rapidly. The history of Churches in Africa is contextualized by colonial encounters between European forms of Christianity and varieties of African religions, spiritualities, and traditional belief systems. This has produced various strains and adaptations of Christian ecclesiologies that are still emerging, distinctive, and in some instances dominated by traditional practices. While interest in studying enculturated forms of African ecclesiologies and their social, cultural, and political contextualizations enjoys increased study, for example, missiology, African Biblical hermeneutics and translation, African theology and philosophy, or Africana Studies, there remain many areas of interest and lines of inquiry. We, therefore, invite papers that focus upon churches in the African context and are also in conversation with African scholars of Christianity whether located in an African country or in its diaspora. Such papers could be theoretical treatments of the church in frameworks and models arising from African experience (e.g., church as family, church and mission in Africa, church and ancestors, etc.), or could be ethnographic studies of ecclesial structures and institutional realities in particular contexts or church communities. We are particularly interested in papers that address poverty, colonialism, the role of women, sexuality, and Christian/Muslim/African Traditional Religion relationships as they relate to the life of the church in Africa Christian/Muslim/ATR relationships.

- **Scripturalization and Orality in/as African Spirituality: A Preface to African Hermeneutics**
The African continent is one of the global locations where Christianity is increasing most rapidly. The history of Churches in Africa is contextualized by colonial encounters between European forms of Christianity and varieties of African religions, spiritualities, traditional belief systems. This has produced various strains and adaptations of Christian ecclesiologies that are still emerging, distinctive, and in some instances dominated by traditional practices. While interest in studying enculturated forms of African ecclesiologies and their social, cultural, and political contextualizations enjoys increased study, for example, missiology, African Biblical hermeneutics and translation, African theology and philosophy, or Africana Studies there remain many areas of interest and lines of inquiry. We, therefore, invite papers that focus upon churches in the African context and are also in conversation with African scholars of Christianity whether located in an African country or in its diaspora. Such papers could be theoretical treatments of the church in frameworks and models arising from African experience (e.g., church as family, church and mission in Africa, church and ancestors, etc.), or could be ethnographic studies of ecclesial structures and institutional realities in particular contexts or church communities. We are particularly interested in papers that address poverty, colonialism, the role of women, sexuality, and Christian/Muslim/African Traditional Religion relationships as they relate to the life of the church in Africa. Co-sponsored session with the African Association for the Study of Religions Unit and Ecclesiological Investigations Unit.

- Responses to Violence against African Diaspora Religions: Brazil and beyond
Religions of African origin, both on the continent and in the diaspora, have long been targeted, exoticized, and demonized by Protestant, Catholic, and even Muslim ritual communities that are often more closely aligned with the structures of political and economic power in a given society. In recent years, attacks on African-based ritual traditions have become increasingly violent with the growth of neo-evangelical religious movements. In Brazil, for example, Candomblé temples and Umbanda centers have been invaded and altars desecrated or destroyed. Leaders and practitioners of African-based religions have been attacked and some have died as a result of assaults that are almost always connected to neo-evangelical Protestant congregations whose teachings include the idea that Afro-Brazilian religions are a form of “devil-worship.” A profound anti-Blackness is at the root of these attacks on indigenous, African-based religious expressions; and as a highly visible white supremacy becomes increasingly normalized in the US context, it seems important to examine, critique and imagine effective responses. On the African continent, Evangelicals (particularly Pentecostal and Charismatic pastors) berate African Religions as "ancestral cults" and explicitly teach their members that they remain poor because of these religious traditions. In the midst of this disturbing picture, there have been some interesting reconciliative actions on the part of Christian congregations in Brazil who are appalled at the treatment of Afro-Brazilian ritual communities. Also, numerous grassroots protest marches in support of religious tolerance and respect for African-based religions have been organized by participants in Candomblé. While Brazil is one of the countries where violence against indigenous, African-based religions has been most marked, we are equally interested in presentations that explore this phenomenon (and creative responses to the violence) on the African continent itself and elsewhere in the diaspora. This session is a ROUNDTABLE and not a panel with formal papers. Please submit proposals for brief presentations (5-7 minutes); presentations will be followed by extended discussion among roundtable participants and the gathered audience. This session is co-sponsored with the African Diaspora Religions Unit.

Mission Statement:

The African Biblical Hermeneutics and the African Association for the Study of Religion invite papers that theorize on scripturalization, orature, and orality as a cultural way of life in African and African diasporic cultures. Papers can address specific themes including the epistemological, philosophical, socio-cultural, genre, linguistic, and performative aspects of orality; or even its relation to the general life styles and rhythms of the earth. Since these themes are also available for exploration from the biblical side, scripturalization provides that entry point. We would like contributions that develop the ontological and existential realities of African cultures as bases that generate fundamental theories for African and African diasporic hermeneutics and heuristics. We strongly urge interactions with African scholars such as Chinua Achebe, Ousseina Alidou, Ezra Chitando, Afe Adogame, Solomon Iyasere, Helen Mugambi, Isidore Okpewho, Ngugi Wa-Thiongo, etc.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:
PAPERS

African Diaspora Religions Unit

Call:

This is a call for papers/presentations for four separate sessions. There are two roundtables and two panels. Please see below for details and let us know clearly for which session you are submitting a proposal.

- **The Encounter of Digital Media and Ritual in African Diaspora Religions**
The African Diaspora Religions Group invites proposals that investigate and discuss the many ways people in diasporic traditions are increasingly using Skype, FaceTime, WhatsApp and other digital media sources to discuss ritual and perform rituals, thus engaging and working with people who are not in the same physical space. We are interested in presentations that examine a range of rituals from divination/discernment to possession, where the internet is used for significant spiritual work, education, and mentoring in African diaspora religions. We are also interested in presentations that will address the use of social media in the life of ritual communities – especially those whose members may live in different regions of the country or different parts of the world. As social media increasingly becomes part of the daily lives of many people around the globe, how are practitioners of African diaspora religions engaging and making meaning of their encounters on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, and other social media formats? How are forms of divination, ritual offering, and ritual healing reimagined via digital media/mobile apps? What are both the potentials and limitations of such practices? Finally, we also welcome presentations that explore the ethics around secrecy and the problem of (mis)representation of the religions in the context of a global society where people use social media and the internet as key sources of information.

This session is a ROUNDTABLE and not a panel with formal papers. Please submit proposals for brief presentations (5-7 minutes); presentations will be followed by extended discussion among roundtable participants and the gathered audience.

- **Responses to Violence against African Diaspora Religions: Brazil and beyond**
Religions of African origin, both on the continent and in the diaspora, have long been targeted, exoticized, and demonized by Protestant, Catholic, and even Muslim ritual communities that are often more closely aligned with the structures of political and economic power in a given society. In recent years, attacks on African-based ritual traditions have become increasingly violent with the growth of neo-evangelical religious movements. In Brazil, for example, Candomblé temples and Umbanda centers have been invaded and altars desecrated or destroyed. Leaders and practitioners of African-based religions have been attacked and some have died as a result of assaults that are almost always connected to neo-evangelical Protestant congregations whose teachings include the idea that Afro-Brazilian religions are a form of “devil-worship.” A profound anti-Blackness is at the root of these attacks on indigenous, African-based religious

expressions; and as a highly visible white supremacy becomes increasingly normalized in the US context, it seems important to examine, critique and imagine effective responses. On the African continent, Evangelicals (particularly Pentecostal and Charismatic pastors) berate African Religions as "ancestral cults" and explicitly teach their members that they remain poor because of these religious traditions. In the midst of this disturbing picture, there have been some interesting reconciliative actions on the part of Christian congregations in Brazil who are appalled at the treatment of Afro-Brazilian ritual communities. Also, numerous grassroots protest marches in support of religious tolerance and respect for African-based religions have been organized by participants in Candomblé. While Brazil is one of the countries where violence against indigenous, African-based religions has been most marked, we are equally interested in presentations that explore this phenomenon (and creative responses to the violence) on the African continent itself and elsewhere in the diaspora. This session is a ROUNDTABLE and not a panel with formal papers. Please submit proposals for brief presentations (5-7 minutes); presentations will be followed by extended discussion among roundtable participants and the gathered audience. This session is co-sponsored with the African Association for the Study of Religion

- **Charisma, Personality, and Power in African Religions**
With the Anthropology of Religions Unit, the African Religions Unit, and the Africa Diaspora Religions Unit, there is a proposed panel on Charisma, Personality, and Power in African Religions. This panel aims to explore the potential of charisma, as an anthropological and sociological concept, for the critical and comparative study of authority, personality, power and leadership in African religious settings. We invite papers that provide ethnographic, historical and/or theoretical insight into the meanings, performance, and workings of charisma in various religious traditions and communities on the continent and its diaspora. Papers that explore charisma in relation to other categories of power, such as gender, age, race, and sexuality, and in relation to political and institutional structures, are particularly welcome. This session is a panel with formal papers. Please submit proposals for 15 minute papers.
- **Decolonization as Healing**
With a wide range of other units, we plan to co-sponsor a session on the theme of decolonization as healing, recognizing that colonization in Africa and in other parts of our world has resulted in both historical and ongoing threats to health and wellbeing. We are looking for papers that address facets of this theme, including but not limited to: "Place, Land, and Environmental Degradation," "Decolonization/Restoration of Identities," "Vocabularies and Pragmatic Applications of Rituals and Ceremonies," "Reclaiming the Past, Imagining the Future," and "Tradition as Healer". Co-sponsored with the Religions, Medicines and Healing; African Diaspora Religions, African Religions; Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society; Body and Religion; Indigenous Religious Traditions; Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society; Native Traditions in the Americas; Religions in the Latina/o Americas; Religion in South Asia, Religion in Southeast Asia; and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism; and World Christianity

Units. Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the Call for Papers, and will speak to its broader implications for African American religious history. This session is a panel. Please submit a proposal for a paper or presentation. If your proposal is chosen, your paper will be circulated ahead of the conference and you'll be asked to give a brief (5-7 minute) summary of the paper during the conference session.

- **Mysticism in Religions of the African Diaspora**
How well does the term mysticism apply to the religions of the African diaspora? How has mysticism functioned in these traditions? Co-sponsorship with the African Diaspora Religions Unit and the Mysticism Unit.

Mission Statement:

Our unit explores broad geographies, histories, and cultures of people of African descent and the way they shape the religious landscape, not only in the Caribbean and the Americas, but also in Europe and Asia. We define “diaspora” as the spread and dispersal of people of African descent — both forced and voluntary — through the slave trade, imperial and colonial displacements, and postcolonial migrations. This Unit emphasizes the importance of an interdisciplinary approach which is central to its vision. The aim is to engage a wide range of disciplines and a variety of scholars who work on different aspects of African diaspora religions. It considers the linguistic and cultural complexities of the African diaspora, the importance of African traditional religions, Afro-Christianity, Afro-Islam, and Afro-Judaism, the way they have and continue to inform an understanding of Africa, and also the way they have and continue to shape the religious landscape of the Americas, Europe, and Asia.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)

Leadership:

Chair - Harding, Rachel E., University of Colorado, Denver, rachel.harding@ucdenver.edu

African Religions Unit

Call:

Our Unit encourages critical inquiry about religions originating in Africa as well as all those practiced there. Proposals should go beyond description; they should critically engage the conceptual tools and methods employed in analysis. The steering committee will evaluate the merit of each proposal based on the clarity of its thesis, the strength of the evidence referenced, and the quality of the conclusions drawn from it in terms of both style and substance. For the 2018 Annual Meeting, we invite papers as well as full panel proposals that respond to the following themes relevant to any region of the African continent:

- **Economic Modes of Religious Life in Africa**
For this panel we solicit papers that explore the intersections between religious and economic modes of social life in Africa both historically and today. How have economic systems and orientations developed in Africa vis-à-vis religious thought and practices, and how have religious traditions and communities developed vis-à-vis economic logics and broader systems of spiritual and material exchange? What are the critical relations between dominant forms of “religion” and “economy” in Africa, and how can alternative forms of religious and economic life be imagined?
- **Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding in Africa**
This panel examines the complex and manifold roles of religion in dynamics of conflict and violence, on the one hand, and peacebuilding and reconciliation, on the other hand. We welcome papers that critically discuss such dynamics in African cultures and societies, focusing on the roles of religious beliefs and values, religious practices and ritual, religious communities and leaders, faith-based organizations, etcetera.
- **Charisma, Personality, and Power in African Religions**
With the Anthropology of Religions Unit, the African Religions Unit, and the Africa Diaspora Religions Unit, there is a proposed panel on Charisma, Personality, and Power in African Religions. This panel aims to explore the potential of charisma, as an anthropological and sociological concept, for the critical and comparative study of authority, personality, power and leadership in African religious settings. We invite papers that provide ethnographic, historical and/or theoretical insight into the meanings, performance, and workings of charisma in various religious traditions and communities on the continent and its diaspora. Papers that explore charisma in relation to other categories of power, such as gender, age, race, and sexuality, and in relation to political and institutional structures, are particularly welcome. This session is a panel with formal papers. Please submit proposals for 15 minute papers.
- **Decolonization as Healing**
With a wide range of other units, we plan to co-sponsor a session on the theme of decolonization as healing, recognizing that colonization in Africa and in other parts of

our world has resulted in both historical and ongoing threats to health and wellbeing. We are looking for papers that address facets of this theme, including but not limited to: "Place, Land, and Environmental Degradation," "Decolonization/Restoration of Identities," "Vocabularies and Pragmatic Applications of Rituals and Ceremonies," "Reclaiming the Past, Imagining the Future," and "Tradition as Healer". Co-sponsored with the Religions, Medicines and Healing; African Diaspora Religions, African Religions; Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society; Body and Religion; Indigenous Religious Traditions; Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society; Native Traditions in the Americas; Religions in the Latina/o Americas; Religion in South Asia, Religion in Southeast Asia; and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism; and World Christianity Units. Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the Call for Papers, and will speak to its broader implications for African American religious history. This session is a panel. Please submit a proposal for a paper or presentation. If your proposal is chosen, your paper will be circulated ahead of the conference and you'll be asked to give a brief (5-7 minute) summary of the paper during the conference session.

Mission Statement:

The central aim of the African Religions Unit is to address and fulfill the Mission Statement of the American Academy of Religion with particular reference to the African continent as a vital part of our globalized, post-colonial world.

The African Religions Unit aims to provide a forum within the American Academy of Religion for the discussion of research on the multiplicity of religious traditions in Africa, methodological issues in the study of the religions of Africa, and African religious responses to ethical and social issues affecting the continent. The Unit encourages the participation of African and non-African scholars in the leadership of the Unit and in participation in its programs. It further actively seeks collaboration with other Units in the AAR, as well as with the African Association for the Study of Religions, in order to promote the study and understanding of religions in Africa in the wider academy.

The members of the African Religions Unit come to the study of the subject from a variety of schools of thought and methodological approaches, including but not limited to anthropology, history, history of religions, literary studies, sociology, and theology. The three major religious traditions under investigation are indigenous religions, Christianity and Islam, and the Group's leadership strives to create some balance in the attention paid to these three major traditions.

Website: <https://africanreligionsgroup.wordpress.com/>

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Amponsah, David, University of Missouri, amponsahd@missouri.edu

Chair - van Klinken, Adriaan, University of Leeds, a.vanklinken@leeds.ac.uk

Afro-American Religious History Unit

Call:

The purpose of this Unit is to recover the sources and histories related to the African-American religious experience, create a forum to explore critically and creatively the history of African-American religions, and infuse that knowledge into the study of religion within North America. The Unit is committed to the investigation of the diversity of African-American faith traditions and religious experiences.

The Afro-American Religious History Unit invites proposals that explore Black religious pluralism in the American West (broadly construed). For our 2018 annual meeting in Denver, we are especially interested in proposals that engage the following:

- New Religious Movements and the production of new religious ideas among African Americans in the American West.
- The American West as a geographic site for Black occult and spiritualist periodicals.
- Black Denver is a complex geographic locus for Black religious pluralism.
- Topics related to the intersection of incarceration, race and religion, with an emphasis on decriminalization.
- The occasion of the 50th anniversary of the desegregation of the United Methodist Church, and the impact of Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR).
- To mark the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination in Memphis, the Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr. Unit, the Afro-American Religious History Unit, and the Religion and Cities Unit plan to co-sponsor a session at the 2018 meeting. We are seeking papers that focus on surveillance of religious communities including socio-religious movements in cities, making connections to FBI surveillance of King in his last year. Papers that address the ways Black and Brown activists continue to be surveilled today (including the 2017 revelation of the FBI's construction of "Black Identity Extremists") and a critical analysis of historic and contemporary religious-theological responses to surveillance are welcomed.
- Celebrating monographs of religious history at milestone years such as Curtis Evans *The Burden of Black Religion*, (2008), Michael Gomez's *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South*, (1998), or Albert J. Raboteau's *Slave Religion: The Invisible Institution in the Antebellum South*, (1978).
- The legacy and work of David W. Wills, John E. Kirkpatrick 1951 Professor of Religion at Amherst College, on the occasion of his retirement. Proposals might include engagement with *Christianity in the United States: A Historical Survey and Interpretation*, (2005) or reflections on the practice of teaching African American religious history, and engagement with his seminal work *African-American Religion: A Documentary History Project*.
- Decolonization as Healing
With a wide range of other units, we plan to co-sponsor a session on the theme of decolonization as healing, recognizing that colonization in Africa and in other parts of

our world has resulted in both historical and ongoing threats to health and wellbeing. We are looking for papers that address facets of this theme, including but not limited to: "Place, Land, and Environmental Degradation," "Decolonization/Restoration of Identities," "Vocabularies and Pragmatic Applications of Rituals and Ceremonies," "Reclaiming the Past, Imagining the Future," and "Tradition as Healer". Co-sponsored with the Religions, Medicines and Healing; African Diaspora Religions, African Religions; Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society; Body and Religion; Indigenous Religious Traditions; Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society; Native Traditions in the Americas; Religions in the Latina/o Americas; Religion in South Asia, Religion in Southeast Asia; and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism; and World Christianity Units. Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the Call for Papers, and will speak to its broader implications for African American religious history. This session is a panel. Please submit a proposal for a paper or presentation. If your proposal is chosen, your paper will be circulated ahead of the conference and you'll be asked to give a brief (5-7 minute) summary of the paper during the conference session.

- The Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities (BREIC) Unit and the Afro-American Religious History Unit will co-sponsor one session with the Mormon Studies Unit. The units are collectively interested in papers that connect to the fortieth anniversary of the 1978 "Official Declaration 2," when Spencer W. Kimball extended the priesthood and temple blessings to all worthy male members of the LDS Church. Topics might include African American religious history, post-colonialism and globalization, Black or womanist theology, scriptural interpretation of race, or responses to the Declaration by non-LDS communities. We also especially seek papers that address the role and history of Latter-day Saint movements in Native communities; the LDS theology of Native peoples and responses within Native communities to the same; and historical opposition to the Indian Child Welfare Act.

Mission Statement:

The purpose of this Unit is to recover the sources and histories related to the African-American religious experience, to create a forum to explore critically and creatively the history of African-American religions, and to infuse that knowledge into the study of religion within North America. The Unit is committed to the investigation of the diversity of African-American faith traditions and religious experiences.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Manigault-Bryant, LeRhonda, Williams College, rhon.manigault-bryant@williams.edu

Chair - Martin, Lerone, Washington University, Saint Louis, lerone.martin@wustl.edu

Animals and Religion Unit

Call:

This Unit addresses issues in the study of animals and religion and seeks to engage religion scholars with the emergent field of animal studies. We welcome theoretically informed paper and panel proposals on all topics related to these themes. We particularly value papers that attend to real animals, alongside theoretical constructs, imagery, or representations pertaining to them. We especially seek proposals on the following topics in 2018:

- Animals, religion, and incarceration
- Jay Geller's *Bestiarum Judaicum*
Co-sponsored with Animals and Religion Unit and the Study of Judaism Unit.
- The religious/ethical aspects of pet-keeping among peoples of different regional/global cultures & ethnicities
- Tensions at the intersection of race, animals, and religion
- The death of animals
- A co-sponsored session with the SBL's new Animal Studies and the Bible Consultation

Mission Statement:

The purpose of this Unit is to advance scholarship by providing a forum for scholars whose work addresses relevant issues in the study of animals and religion, and to engage religious studies scholars with the emergent field of animal studies. The Unit emphasizes the theoretical implications of attention to animals for the study of religion and a diversity of approaches, including, but not limited to:

- Cultural and comparative history of religions
- Critical theory
- Ethnography and anthropology of religion
- Descriptions of the role(s) religious/theological traditions have played in mediating images of nonhuman animals
- Assessments of relationships between religious constructions of animals and those animals

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Clough, David, University of Chester, d.clough@chester.ac.uk

Chair - Ambros, Barbara, University of North Carolina, bambros@email.unc.edu

Anthropology of Religion Unit

Call:

We invite proposals from the full range of anthropological theories and methods exploring diverse traditions, regions, topics, periods, and encourage standpoints from across the discipline. We especially encourage individual and panel submissions that address:

- **Sensory Culture, Affect, Embodiment**
Including research that addresses bodies and what we put in them; the ways having particular bodies or sexualities shapes research encounters; the movement of bodies within and across time, space, political boundaries, genders, religions
- **Delegitimized, Dangerous, Restricted or Constrained Research Contexts**
Being denied access; solidarity on the margins; the precarity of the anthropologist in the field; the relation between research ethics and political or economic realities
- **Reflecting Empirically on the Category “Religion”**
How does the category of “religion” fail or benefit our work? What are the phenomenological, experiential, and practical reasons to invoke or challenge the category? How does work on/with non-religious, areligious, irreligious, secular, or spiritual communities affect our understanding of religion? Do alternative possibilities exist in anthropologies of ethics, morality, and the good?
- **Ethnographies of Environment and Ecology**
Sustainability, nature-culture entanglements, community responses to climate change. Religious entanglements with waste and pollution. Studies of the everyday ethics of recycling, community gardening, or other environmental efforts.
- **Charisma, Personality, and Power in African Religions**
With the Anthropology of Religions Unit, the African Religions Unit, and the Africa Diaspora Religions Unit, there is a proposed panel on Charisma, Personality, and Power in African Religions. This panel aims to explore the potential of charisma, as an anthropological and sociological concept, for the critical and comparative study of authority, personality, power and leadership in African religious settings. We invite papers that provide ethnographic, historical and/or theoretical insight into the meanings, performance, and workings of charisma in various religious traditions and communities on the continent and its diaspora. Papers that explore charisma in relation to other categories of power, such as gender, age, race, and sexuality, and in relation to political and institutional structures, are particularly welcome. This session is a panel with formal papers. Please submit proposals for 15 minute papers.

Mission Statement:

This Unit draws together scholars who utilize the methodological tools and theoretical perspectives of anthropology in the study of religion as a social and cultural phenomenon. Given the increasing importance of anthropology and ethnography for the academic study of religion, we serve the academy as an important forum for sustained discussion and critique of anthropological approaches that can connect scholars working on diverse traditions, regions, and eras who otherwise might not have the opportunity to learn from each other. Interested members are encouraged to join our (low volume) list-serv: <http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/AAR-Anthropology/info>

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Bielo, James, Miami University, bielojs@miamioh.edu

Chair - Zwissler, Laurel, Central Michigan University, lzwissle@chass.utoronto.ca

Arts, Literature, and Religion Unit

Call:

The Arts, Literature, and Religion Section seeks proposals that address a range of interconnections between religious and creative practice and understanding, with a preference for the topics below. We are especially interested in panel proposals and in modes of presentation that go beyond paper reading. Successful proposals will clearly articulate the primary thesis of the presentation and its contribution to the field. Proposals will integrate creative praxis and religion in meaningful ways.

- **Songwriting, Hymnody, Lyricism, and Chants**
This session will consider the creation of songs, lyrics, hymns, chants, anthems and other forms of orality and its connection to religion, art, and literature. Topics may include, but are not limited to: contemporary hymnody; communal singing traditions; creation of political chants; songwriting for sacred spaces; historical anthem and hymnal traditions; and visual representations of songs (including music videos).
- **The Art of Spiritual Proclamation, Religious Speeches, and Public Religious Addresses**
This session will consider the role public proclamations play in religious life. What can certain political speeches, like Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, or President Obama's 2008 "race speech" reveal about religion and spirituality? What is the role of public spiritual proclamation in non-religious settings? How do we read religion through the lens of the public address, political speech, or other acts of proclamation?
- **Children's Literature/Visual Art Featuring Children and Religion**
This session will consider any genre of writing or any forms of visual art with a focus on children. What do these written and visual cues reveal to us about children, religion, and spirituality?
- **Art, Religion, and Literature Pedagogy**
This session will focus on the pedagogy of interdisciplinary work and teaching in the fields of art, religion, and literature. What are best (or worst) practices for weaving together literature and art in a religion classroom? What are areas of caution for introducing religion into the literature classroom? We are interested in a rich and nuanced conversation for those who are new or highly experienced in bringing together these disciplines in a classroom setting.
- **Architecture and the Common Good**
This session will consider how the architecture and aesthetics of public spaces reflect, or fail to reflect, the common good of particular communities. How are public spaces (i.e. libraries, coffeehouses) used as sites to promote cultural and religious values? How

are public spaces used to monitor who has access to cultural and religious values? How do we “read” public space connected to religious ideas?

- **Landscape Art and Religion**
Art about the natural world is often cited as a source for religious reflection and contemplation. This session will consider the connection between landscape art/art engaging the natural world as a catalyst for theological and religious reflection. Various artists and genres of art welcomed, including contemporary and historical landscape artists, as well as self-taught and unknown artists.

We also welcome individual papers and/or panel proposals on any other topic in arts, literature, and religion.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to engage the critical issues at the intersection of religion, literature, and the arts. We are concerned with both the aesthetic dimensions of religion and the religious dimensions of literature and the arts, including the visual, performative, written, and verbal arts. Approaches to these two avenues of concern are interdisciplinary and varied, including both traditional methodologies — theological, hermeneutical, and comparative approaches associated with the history of religions — and emerging methodologies, those that emerge from poststructuralism, studies in material culture, and cultural studies.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Winfield, Pamela D., Elon University, pwinfield@elon.edu

Chair - Ni, Zhange, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, nizhange@vt.edu

Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Unit

Call:

We invite individual submissions with multidisciplinary engagement and reflection, as well as pre-organized sessions and panel proposals, on the following topics:

- **Asian American Responses to the Muslim Ban**
With varying possibilities for alignment and solidarity between Asian Americans and Muslim Americans in light of the Muslim Ban and increasing Islamophobia, what lessons and insights from Asian American theory, praxis, and historical experience may be relevant and productive to such engagements? We are especially interested in papers that address ideas of religious pluralism and interreligious solidarities.
- **Asian Americans and DACA**
Given the relation between Asian American communities and recent moves by the US administration to undo DACA protections, whether as members of targeted communities or as allies supporting protections for alternatively documented immigrants and their families, what lessons and insights from Asian American theory, praxis, and historical experience may be relevant and productive to such engagements? We are especially interested in papers addressing the specific challenges faced by women, trans, and other gender and sexual minorities who are targets of both government action and internal communal exclusions.
- **Asian Americans and Black Lives Matter**
From Asian American and Black solidarity movements historically, to theoretical, religious, and political reflection on the alignments and disjunctures between BLM and Asian American struggles for recognition and justice, what lessons and insights from Asian American theory, praxis, and historical experience may be relevant and productive to such engagements?
- **Asian Americans and Settler Colonialism, Frontiers, and Home Missions**
Given next year's Denver context, we invite papers highlighting historical and theoretical engagements around how the various currents of westward expansion, manifest destiny, and "settlerism" combined with religious thought and practice, with attention to impact upon and reflection from Asian American communities. We are especially interested in geographically attuned studies taking the western US into account.
- **War Making and Peacemaking in the US and Asia**
We invite papers considering Asian American positionality in light of US wars of aggression and persistent militarization in Asia, and in relation to forms of intra-Asian colonialism and imperialism. What lessons and insights from Asian American theory,

praxis, and historical experience may be relevant and productive to these broader geopolitical realities?

- **Asian American Religious Studies and Its Futures**
We invite papers addressing the current challenges and promises of Asian American reflection in religious studies and theology. What is the state of the field and what possibilities present themselves as futures?
- **Decolonization as Healing**
With a wide range of other units, we plan to co-sponsor a session on the theme of decolonization as healing, recognizing that colonization in Africa and in other parts of our world has resulted in both historical and ongoing threats to health and wellbeing. We are looking for papers that address facets of this theme, including but not limited to: "Place, Land, and Environmental Degradation," "Decolonization/Restoration of Identities," "Vocabularies and Pragmatic Applications of Rituals and Ceremonies," "Reclaiming the Past, Imagining the Future," and "Tradition as Healer". Co-sponsored with the Religions, Medicines and Healing; African Diaspora Religions, African Religions; Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society; Body and Religion; Indigenous Religious Traditions; Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society; Native Traditions in the Americas; Religions in the Latina/o Americas; Religion in South Asia, Religion in Southeast Asia; and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism; and World Christianity Units. Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the Call for Papers, and will speak to its broader implications for African American religious history. This session is a panel. Please submit a proposal for a paper or presentation. If your proposal is chosen, your paper will be circulated ahead of the conference and you'll be asked to give a brief (5-7 minute) summary of the paper during the conference session.
- Other issues pertaining to the study of Asian North American religion as outlined in our statement of purpose. We are especially interested in proposals that highlight non-Christian Asian American religions as well as proposals engaged in interreligious and comparative conversations.

Mission Statement:

This Unit (hereafter referred to as ANARCS) is one of the primary vehicles for the advancement of the study of the religions and practices of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States and Canada. As an integral player in the development of the emerging field of Asian-American religious studies, ANARCS has cultivated the work of junior and senior scholars from an impressive array of disciplines, including the history of religion, sociology, theology, philosophy, ethics, anthropology, psychology, education, and American and ethnic studies. ANARCS encourages new perspectives on Asian North American religious practices and faith communities, as well as innovative theoretical work that extends the concepts of empires, diaspora, transnationalism, globalization, im/migration, orientalism, adaptation, acculturation, race, ethnicity, marginalization, oppression, and resistance. In addition to this list of concepts, ANARCS will explore theoretical, philosophical, and theological concepts, such as aesthetics,

beauty, and love. ANARCS seeks to foster and mentor scholars (junior, senior, and nontraditional) through preconference sessions, gathering for meals, and maintaining a robust listserv.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Borja, Melissa, University of Michigan, mborja@umich.edu

Chair - Singh, Devin, Dartmouth College, devin.singh@dartmouth.edu

Arts Series

Call:

The AAR strives to engage with religion and religious studies not only through the spoken or written word, but also through material, visual, and auditory culture. As such, we regularly sponsor two to three arts installations or performances at the Annual Meeting. These have ranged from musical, theatrical, and dance performances to art and photography displays. The AAR would especially like to highlight art and artists of the Annual Meeting locale. If you have a proposal for such an Arts Series event, please submit it as a Roundtable Session proposal, including a short description of the work to be displayed or performed. Please include links to websites where the art can be viewed (if possible). Please include yourself as the presider of the session and as a panelist (as the system requires both for a roundtable session). If you wish to have a panel discussion of the event, submit the names of those panelists as well. For any questions, please contact annualmeeting@aarweb.org.

Anonymity:

Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Augustine and Augustinianisms Unit

Call:

Teaching Augustine and Augustine the Teacher

From his early days tutoring students in Rome to the bishopric of Hippo, Augustine devoted his life to teaching in various contexts and to differing publics. His writings over his career reflect this devotion. From his discussions on the inner teacher, to his advice on effective preaching, to his pastoral concerns with his congregation, to his engagements with his wider Greco-Roman context, and finally to his own autobiographical self-presentation, Augustine engages the theme of teaching in a variety of theological, philosophical, rhetorical, social, ethical, and political contexts. Papers are invited from all disciplines employing a range of methodologies examining all aspects of teaching in Augustine's works, including how insight into Augustine the teacher may or may not influence those who take upon themselves teaching Augustine.

Augustine on the Self

David Tracy's recent Festschrift *Augustine Our Contemporary. Examining the Self in Past and Present* invites us to reexamine the notoriously elusive theme of the self in Augustinian perspective. Created within the flow of time and longing for the eternity of God, Augustine's examination of the human person is a far from settled project that unsettles static conceptions in detailing a porous, fluid, and relational self. Here Augustine returns often to questions of the self in, for example, his attempts to plumb the depths of memoria, his examinations of the divine image, and finally his accounts of the fracturing of human life in sin and its remolding in Christ. Papers are invited from all disciplines employing a range of methodologies to examine all aspects of selfhood in Augustine that range from exegetical questions, to theological, philosophical, social, and political issues, to historical and contemporary retrievals of Augustine.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a forum for the historical and constructive study of issues relating to the thought of Augustine, including how it was received in various eras and how it might be a resource for religious thought today.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Drever, Matthew, University of Tulsa, matthew-drever@utulsa.edu

Baha'i Studies Unit

Call:

Constructive Resilience as Faith-Based Nonviolent Activism in the Face of Repression

Nonviolent responses to injustice and oppression, and nonviolent approaches to social change, have deep roots in religious thought and practice. Commitments to nonviolence can be found in virtually every religious tradition, even though such commitments have not always averted expressions of violence in the name of religion.

Contemporary theories of nonviolent social change increasingly distinguish contentious forms of nonviolent activism from constructive forms (Vinthagen, 2015; Schock, 2013). To date, however, academic discourse has focused largely on contentious forms of activism, due to propensities for narrative drama and conflict that are also reflected in media coverage and wider public discourse. As a result, constructive forms of activism have been widely ignored, under-researched, and under-theorized.

Constructive activism, as the concept is being used here, involves the creation of radical alternatives to socially oppressive systems and relationships. It is characterized by sustained efforts to construct new social norms, structures, and practices based on commitments to social justice. In this sense, constructive activism is more than reformist initiatives within a dysfunctional social order. It is an attempt to construct elements of a radically new social order.

Within a given movement, constructive and contentious forms of activism are sometimes pursued as complementary strategies, as was the case in the Gandhian independence movement (Gandhi, 1945). But a constructive program can also be pursued as an independent strategy (Sorensen, 2016).

Even when constructive programs are pursued as independent strategies, with no direct provocation of existing power structures, such programs are often met by violent repression because they can be perceived as an implicit challenge to vested interests supported by the status quo. Constructive programs must therefore be characterized by resilience – or constructive resilience – in the face of repression (Karlberg, 2010). This panel seeks to explore the concept of constructive resilience as a faith-based approach to social change in the face of repression.

Mission Statement:

The Bahá'í Studies Unit is devoted to the study of the Bahá'í religion in all its aspects: history, lives of its primary figures and their missions, sacred and authoritative texts, scholarly and popular literature, teachings, practices, expressions in art and social action, its public discourse, growth, issues of minorities within it, and its local and national communities, both as these aspects exist today and how the understanding of them has evolved over time. It studies these

aspects using the scholarly tools available, but is particularly interested in interdisciplinary approaches and integrated paradigms of scholarship. It seeks dialogue with researchers of other faith traditions and comparative research involving the Bahá'í Faith and other religious communities.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)

E-mail with Attachment (proposal is in attachment, not in body of e-mail)

Leadership:

Chair - Maneck, Susan, Jackson State University, smaneck@gmail.com

Chair - Stockman, Robert H., Indiana University, South Bend, rstockman@usbnc.org

Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities Unit

Call:

- The Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities (BREIC) Unit and the Afro-American Religious History Unit will co-sponsor one session with the Mormon Studies Unit. The units are collectively interested in papers that connect to the fortieth anniversary of the 1978 “Official Declaration 2,” when Spencer W. Kimball extended the priesthood and temple blessings to all worthy male members of the LDS Church. Topics might include African American religious history, post-colonialism and globalization, Black or womanist theology, scriptural interpretation of race, or responses to the Declaration by non-LDS communities. We also especially seek papers that address the role and history of Latter-day Saint movements in Native communities; the LDS theology of Native peoples and responses within Native communities to the same; and historical opposition to the Indian Child Welfare Act.
- BREIC also solicits papers for an open session focusing on biblical engagement by individuals and / or institutions within racial, ethnic, or indigenous communities. Of particular interest are essays and presentations exploring water and land rights; religious identity; migration; social settings, both marginal and mainstream; texts; and hermeneutical strategies, particularly those of an esoteric nature. In addition, we are looking to develop an experimental session that might go beyond the standard “read aloud paper” session.

Mission Statement:

This interdisciplinary Unit emphasizes traditions of reading and interpreting the Bible in racial, ethnic minority, and indigenous communities. We welcome perspectives utilizing such diverse methodologies as the history of religion, ethnography, literary studies, cultural or social criticism, and postcolonial studies in investigating how the Bible has been used in preaching, storytelling, religious education, transmission of values, and social movements in various historical periods.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Bridgeman, Valerie, Methodist Theological School in Ohio, vbridgeman@mtso.edu

Bioethics and Religion Unit

Call:

- **Religious Bioethics and Public Engagement**
Because of the public nature of bioethics, religious bioethicists have had more opportunity than most scholars of religion to engage audiences beyond the academy and religious institutions. Along with their secular colleagues, religious bioethicists are part of hospital ethics committees, serve on (and provide testimony to) national bioethics commissions, work as consultants, provide expert testimony in legal cases, and engage the general public through the media (interviews and written pieces in traditional and electronic media). The Bioethics and Religion Unit invites papers about public engagement, especially as it concerns bringing religious norms and discourse into dialogue with religious outsiders, both secular and practitioners of other faith traditions.
- **Revolutionary Bioethics: Bioethics, Religion, and International Development**
For a possible joint session with the Bioethics and Religion Unit and the International Development and Religion Unit, we seek papers concerning how questions about healthcare, health sciences, and health policy intersect with religious imaginaries in international development settings. In particular, how does bioethical theory and practice emerging from the global south challenge the dominant assumptions of mainstream bioethics? Papers of sufficient quality, including those that we are unable to include on the program, will be considered for inclusion in an edited volume in the Lexington monograph series, *Revolutionary Bioethics*. Revolutionary bioethics is a new series composed of scholarly monographs and edited collections organized around specific topics that explore bioethical theory and practice through the frameworks provided by feminist ethics, narrative ethics, and virtue ethics, challenging the assumptions of mainstream bioethics in the process. For details on the series see <https://goo.gl/okhqwQ>.

Mission Statement:

This Unit offers a unique venue within the AAR for addressing the intersections of religion, bioethics, and health/healthcare related matters. It encourages creative and scholarly examinations of these intersections, drawing on such disciplines as religious and philosophical ethical theory, theology, ethnography, clinical ethics, history, and law. It seeks to undertake this scholarly work by drawing on a variety of perspectives (e.g., Feminist/Womanist/Mujerista, cross-cultural, and interreligious) and to demonstrate the contributions that religious and ethical scholarship can offer to the critical exploration of contemporary bioethical issues.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Randels, George D., University of the Pacific, grandels@pacific.edu

Chair - Norling, Marcella, Orange Coast College, mnorling@occ.cccd.edu

Black Theology Unit

Call:

The Black Theology Unit invites individual papers and panel submissions on the topics identified below. We also encourage proposals on additional topics of interest that advance the discipline of Black theology.

- **Black Theology and American Civil Religion**
How does Black theology address and engage American civil religion, specifically its re-reading of American history, national symbols (e.g., flags), rituals, holidays, and monuments.
- **Black Theology as Public Theology**
What are the tasks, roles and priorities of Black theology as public theology? How might a Black public theology define the spiritual left?
- **Black Theology and Black Studies**
How do new forms of Black theology rethink the “theological” within a Black studies paradigm?
- **Race and Mental Health**
How does Black theology as a pastoral theology address issues of race and mental health?
- **James Cone’s *The Cross and The Lynching Tree***
James Cone’s revolutionary book *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (Orbis, 2011) won the prestigious 2017 Grawemeyer Award in Religion. We invite papers that critically engage this award-winning text. (Jointly sponsored with the Grawemeyer Award in Religion given by the University of Louisville and Louisville Presbyterian Seminary.)
- ***Sisters in the Wilderness*: Classic Landmark Work Twenty-Five Years Later**
This year marks twenty-five years since the publication of Delores S. Williams’ *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk* (Orbis, 1993). Drawing on the biblical figure of Hagar mother of Ishmael, cast into the desert by Abraham and Sarah, but protected by God, Williams finds a prototype for the struggle of African diasporic women. Hagar, an African slave, homeless exile, surrogate mother, serves as metaphor for an image of survival and defiance appropriate to Black women today. To commemorate the anniversary, we invite papers that address the interfaith/interreligious theological significance of this groundbreaking text then and today, and its role in the formation of womanist theological perspectives, epistemologies, methodologies, and pedagogies. Co-sponsored with the Black Theology Unit, the Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit, the Women of Color,

Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Unit, SBL Feminist Biblical Hermeneutics, and SBL Women in the Biblical World.

- **Hip Hop Culture and Black Theology**
The Black Theology Unit and Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop and Religion Unit invite individual papers and panel submissions for a co-sponsored session exploring the varied connections between Hip Hop culture and Black theology. Possible submission topics might include, but are not limited to the following: Hip Hop as prophetic critique, discourse and commentary, quest for meaning, memory and identity? How ought religion/race be theorized and discussed in the Trump era? What role does the sacred/profane binary play as a rhetorical strategy and political designator? How have rappers like Kendrick, Chance, and Lecrae created a space for “woke” rap? What is “Christian” or “Holy” Hip Hop? Pedagogically, how might we look at teaching Hip Hop and Black religion and theology? How have new media, (e.g., podcasts, YouTube, internet and radio shows such as the Breakfast Club) reconstructed Hip Hop culture and its future? How might we explore the intersections of White Evangelicalism onto mainstream Hip Hop culture?
- **Martin Luther King, Jr.**
This year marks fifty years since the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. We invite papers that examine the radical legacy of King, his significance to Black theology and the contemporary relevance of the Poor People’s Campaign.
- **Vincent Harding**
We invite papers that examine and assess the legacy of the late Vincent Harding as a “spiritual intellectual” and early contributor to Black theology.
- **Jews and Race**
Conversations with theologies of color. Co-sponsorship with the Black Theology Unit and the Study of Judaism Unit.
- **Additional Topics**
We are also interested in papers that address current topics in Black theology including but not limited to the following: spirituality and justice, empire, radical democracy, cultural trauma and effects of the visual in social media, Black eschatology, Black aesthetics and affect, Black theological pedagogy.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to further develop Black theology as an academic enterprise. In part, this is accomplished by providing opportunities for exchanges related to basic issues of Black theology’s content and form. In addition, the Unit seeks to broaden conversation by bringing Black theology into dialogue with other disciplines and perspectives on various aspects of African diasporic religious thought and life.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Proposals have a much greater chance of acceptance if they make clear the central thesis and main line(s) of argument of the proposed paper.

Leadership:

Chair - Clark, Adam, Xavier University, clarkadam@xavier.edu

Chair - White, Andrea C., Union Theological Seminary, awhite@uts.columbia.edu

Body and Religion Unit

Call:

The Body and Religion Unit aims to provide a forum for multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary conversations on issues of body and religion. We are especially interested in the overall question of “What is body?” We invite proposals or panels presenting diverse methodologies and understandings of the body, as well as traditional and alternative presentation styles. When reviewing your paper proposals, we particularly appreciate proposals that clearly articulate their methodological and theoretical frameworks, and its contribution to the field.

This year we are particularly interested in several topics:

- Mediating Bodies
- Body, Religion, and Film
- Judith Butler, Body, and Religion
We are interested in papers that discuss Judith Butler's contribution to body and religion studies.
- Bodies as Blueprint for Structures
- Embodied Pedagogy Teaching Tactics in Large Introductory Courses
We are interested in papers discussing teaching tactics that focus on ritual and embodied pedagogy in undergraduate courses (e.g. World Religions, Introduction to Religion, etc.). Co-sponsored with the Body and Religion Unit, the Ritual Studies Unit, and the Teaching Religion Unit. Proposals should:
 - State succinctly the context within which you used the strategy including: characteristics of your students, the institution and the course, when in the semester you use this tactic, and how long it takes;
 - State the pedagogical purpose of the strategy;
 - Describe the strategy itself in brief, clear language -- demonstrating a quick version of the tactic is encouraged;
 - State why and how the strategy was effective (or not effective) – i.e., how it supported (or failed to support in some way) student learning; and
 - Address potential challenges or obstacles -- i.e., avoiding cultural appropriation, avoiding the appearance of 'practicing' religion in public institutions, and potential ethical issues.
- Decolonization as Healing
With a wide range of other units, we plan to co-sponsor a session on the theme of decolonization as healing, recognizing that colonization in Africa and in other parts of

our world has resulted in both historical and ongoing threats to health and wellbeing. We are looking for papers that address facets of this theme, including but not limited to: "Place, Land, and Environmental Degradation," "Decolonization/Restoration of Identities," "Vocabularies and Pragmatic Applications of Rituals and Ceremonies," "Reclaiming the Past, Imagining the Future," and "Tradition as Healer". Co-sponsored with the Religions, Medicines and Healing; African Diaspora Religions, African Religions; Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society; Body and Religion; Indigenous Religious Traditions; Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society; Native Traditions in the Americas; Religions in the Latina/o Americas; Religion in South Asia, Religion in Southeast Asia; and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism; and World Christianity Units. Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the Call for Papers, and will speak to its broader implications for African American religious history. This session is a panel. Please submit a proposal for a paper or presentation. If your proposal is chosen, your paper will be circulated ahead of the conference and you'll be asked to give a brief (5-7 minute) summary of the paper during the conference session.

Mission Statement:

This Unit aims to draw together scholars working with different methodologies who address body as a fundamental category of analysis in the study of religion. The Unit provides a forum for sustained discussion and critique of diverse approaches to body and religion that can encompass scholars working on a wide range of traditions, regions, and eras.

The Body and Religion Unit maintains a listserv for announcements about conferences, new publications and other items relevant to the field. To subscribe (or for other listserv information) go to

<http://aarlists.org/listinfo/bodyreligion> and fill out the online form. Once subscribed you will be able to receive messages, control your subscription options, and access the archives.

- Subscription is open.
- The list of subscribers is private. The Body and Religion Unit does not share the list with anyone.
- Anyone can post messages. If you have a new publication, a conference, a workshop or other announcement relevant to the study of body and religion that you want to share, you can write a message to bodyreligion@aarlists.org.
- The listserv is moderated. The listserv moderator must approve every message to prevent spam.
- Traffic is low on this listserv.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Zubko, Katherine C., University of North Carolina, Asheville, kzubko@unca.edu

Chair - Schilbrack, Kevin, Appalachian State University, schilbrackke@appstate.edu

Bonhoeffer: Theology and Social Analysis Unit

Call:

The Bonhoeffer: Theology and Social Analysis Unit invites papers related to the thought, life and legacy of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, especially those addressing the following topics:

- Reflections on Bonhoeffer's book *Life Together* on the eightieth anniversary of its publication in 1938.
- The public dimensions of claims that we live in a "Bonhoeffer Moment" (In keeping with the conference theme of "Religious Studies in Public").
- Bonhoeffer and responsible preaching.
- Bonhoeffer, "truth-telling," religion, and humanism

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to explore the historical and contemporary interface between theology and public life within the context of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's legacy in theology. Together with professional societies affiliated in the study of Bonhoeffer's life and thought, the Unit has explored a variety of topics from medical ethics to political life in a global context.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Hale, Lori Brandt, Augsburg College, hale@augzburg.edu

Chair - Haynes, Stephen R., Rhodes College, haynes@rhodes.edu

Buddhism in the West Unit

Call:

This unit invites papers or session proposals on the following (but is open to other possibilities):

- Buddhism and secularism, secularity, and secularization
- Revitalizing Buddhism in the Modern World
With regards to shifting demographics, laicization, and institutional reform. Jeff Schroeder (University of Oregon). Co-sponsorship with the Buddhism in the West Unit, the Buddhism Unit, and the Japanese Religions Unit. Contact: jschroe9@uoregon.edu
- Buddhism and politics, political activism in the West
- Buddhism and material culture in the West
- Postmodern and/or post-meditation-centered Buddhisms
- Sexual abuse scandals among Buddhist teachers
- Buddhism and healing, drugs, addiction
- Buddhist pedagogy in the secular classroom
- Buddhism and transnationalism

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to:

- Provide a venue for new studies on Buddhism in non-Asian locales
- Facilitate communication and exchange between scholars working on Buddhism outside of Asia
- Offer a forum within which to collectively clarify the intellectual and methodological underpinnings of research on Buddhism in the West, and consider new possibilities in methods and approaches

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - McMahan, David, Franklin and Marshall College, dmcman@fandm.edu

Buddhism Unit

Call:

The Buddhism Unit welcomes proposals for papers sessions, individual papers, and roundtables in all areas of the study of Buddhism. To encourage greater exchange among the various subfields within Buddhist Studies, we are particularly interested in sessions that confront enduring problems in the study of Buddhism, raise important theoretical or methodological issues, and/or bring fresh materials or perspectives to bear on themes of broad interest.

This year, we ask you to keep in mind the new format of the AAR Annual Meeting and the Unit's new allotment of sessions—which is as follows (we will choose either Option A or Option B after we evaluate the proposals that come in):

- (Option A) Two 2.5-hour sessions, one 2-hour session, and three 90-minute sessions
- (Option B) One 2.5-hour session, one 2-hour session, and five 90-minute sessions (with either option) One additional 90-minute session through co-sponsorship with another unit

We invite proposals for 2.5-hour sessions, 2-hour sessions, and 90-minute sessions. In comparison to previous years, however, there will be a significant decrease in the number of 2.5-hour sessions available and a significant increase in the number of 90-minute sessions available. Please keep this in mind in formulating your proposals. As always, we encourage new and innovative formats.

Below are some of the themes that our members have proposed for next year. If you are interested in contributing to a proposal on one of these topics, please contact the organizer directly.

- Buddhist Universities in the United States
Kristin Scheible (Reed College) and José Cabezon (UCSB). Contact: scheiblk@reed.edu
- Author Meets Critics: José Ignacio Cabezon's *Sexuality in Classical South Asian Buddhism* (Wisdom Publications, 2017)
Sarah Jacoby (Northwestern University). Contact: s-jacoby@northwestern.edu
- Buddhist Narratives of Royalty and Rulers from around the Buddhist World
Papers involving Buddhist ethics are especially sought after; in addition to textual analysis, papers involving interdisciplinary approaches and visual materials are also encouraged. Dessi Vendova (Columbia University). Contact: d.vendova@columbia.edu
- Miniature Scriptures, Abbreviated Sutras, and Other Scripture-Related Religious Objects: Early and Medieval Popular Buddhism for Gaining Merit and Protection

Buddhism offers many historical examples of miniature scriptures and scripture-related objects for ritual and/or personal use, including character-based mandalas and mantras, small-size scriptures, objects containing only the titles of scriptures, short scriptures containing only the names of Buddhas, etc. Some were buried inside Buddha statues or miniature stupas. How were these small scriptures and objects used in ritual or personal empowerment? What are the socio-religious implications of these objects? Mariko Walter (ACANSRS). Contact: mnwalter@post.harvard.edu

- **Buddhist-Muslim Conflicts**
Conflicts between Buddhists and Muslims in both the contemporary period (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand), as well as in earlier periods. Possible co-sponsorship with the Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence unit and/or the Contemporary Islam unit. Michael Jerryson (Youngstown State University).
Contact: mjerryson@gmail.com
- **Arts of Citation in the Study of Buddhism**
Citation lies at the heart of the practice of Buddhist commentary, infusing textual, oral, and visual forms of meaning-making. In turn, scholars of Buddhism themselves have generated patterns of citation in interpreting Buddhist texts and practices. Over time, these patterns have shaped our understanding of what Buddhism is. This panel explores patterns and diversions in both Buddhist and Buddhological arts of citation to reveal complex dynamics of creativity and re-invention underlying these acts of repetition. Rae Dachille (University of Arizona). Contact: raedachille@email.arizona.edu
- **Cultures of Buddhist Meditation**
This panel will bring together research that addresses the specific modes in which meditation is and has been practiced in various corners of the Buddhist world, with the intention that thinking about and comparing Buddhism's diverse cultures of meditation should bring new perspective to questions of meditation's meaning and place within the tradition. David DiValerio (University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee).
Contact: divaleri@uwm.edu
- **Ahiṃsa (Non-Violence) and Metta (Loving-Kindness) Taught in the Classroom**
Tanya Storch (University of the Pacific). Contact: tstorch@pacific.edu
- **Rethinking the "Pure Land in the Human Realm" 人間淨土**
This panel will address two closely related topics. The first is correction of widespread scholarly misunderstandings of the idea of the Pure Land in the Human Realm as formulated by Taixu (1890-1947). The second is to see how heirs of Taixu such as Yinshun and Sheng Yen utilized the idea. Charles Jones (Catholic University of America).
Contact: jonesc@cua.edu
- **Revitalizing Buddhism in the Modern World**

With regards to shifting demographics, laicization, and institutional reform. Jeff Schroeder (University of Oregon). Co-sponsorship with the Buddhism in the West Unit, the Buddhism Unit, and the Japanese Religions Unit. Contact: jschroe9@uoregon.edu

- **Buddhism and the History/Historiography of Science**
New research in the history and development of scientific knowledge and inquiry within the Buddhist context. Relevant research would include topics at the intersection of Buddhism and the natural and social sciences (medicine, ecology, biology, psychology, linguistics, etc.), and research engaged with, or complicated by, theories and methods in the History of Science. Organizer: Devin Zuckerman (University of Virginia). Contact: dcz3fj@virginia.edu
- **Scripture and Debate on Vegetarianism and “Animal Ethics”**
This panel will address diverse Buddhist perspectives on meat-eating that situate vegetarianism within larger ethical frameworks and invest it with various degrees of moral significance. Panelists will present scholarship across Asian traditions from the ancient to the modern and represent both anthropological and text-critical methodologies. Anna Johnson (University of Michigan). Contact: annawj@umich.edu

Mission Statement:

This Unit is the largest, most stable, and most diverse forum for Buddhist studies in North America. We embrace the full historical range of the Buddhist tradition from its inception some two-and-a-half millennia ago to the present and span its entire geographical sweep — the Indian subcontinent, Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia, Central Asia, Tibet, Mongolia, China, Korea, Japan, and the West. In addition to being historically and geographically inclusive, we have made efforts to encourage methodological plurality. Papers presented in recent years reflect, in addition to the philological and textual approaches of classic Buddhology, the methods of intellectual history, institutional history, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, gender and cultural studies, art history, literary theory, and postcolonial studies. We will continue to encourage cross-disciplinary exchange. This Unit is the forum of choice for many established scholars. For some years now, we have also striven to provide a forum for younger scholars to aid them in establishing their careers. Under normal circumstances, at least one session at the Annual Meeting is devoted to four or five individual papers; often many or all of these are from graduate students or younger scholars making their first academic presentation at a national conference. In recent years, a growing number of foreign scholars have come to recognize this Unit as a valuable forum to submit proposals, including scholars whose primary language is not English. We wish to continue to promote communication with scholars abroad and to provide opportunities for younger scholars.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Ohnuma, Reiko, Dartmouth College, reiko.ohnuma@dartmouth.edu

Chair - Robson, James, Harvard University, jrobson@fas.harvard.edu

Buddhist Critical-Constructive Reflection Unit

Call:

The Buddhist Critical-Constructive Reflection Group explores how Buddhist thought and practice can address contemporary issues and how Buddhist modes of understanding can inform or be informed by academic studies (in Religious Studies, Philosophy, Ethics, Theology, Sociology, Economics, etc.). We invite paper or panel proposals on the following topics (or other topics) as they pertain to our mission to engage in Buddhist critical and constructive reflection:

- Buddhist identity/ies and multiple belongings
- Beyond modernism--secularize or re-traditionalize? How do Buddhists reconcile with histories of orientalism, racism, sexism, etc. that become pronounced in the modernization of Buddhism?
- Nationalism, genocide, and antifascism
- Sex, power, and Buddhism: authority and sexual ethics
- David Loy's works and the future of Buddhist activism
- Scholars' responsibility in bringing forth the voices of next Buddhist leaders
- Media and public understanding of Buddhist principles
- Buddhists in professions of care: MBSR, hospice care, and chaplaincy.

Mission Statement:

The Buddhist Critical-Constructive Reflection Unit explores how Buddhist thought and practice can address contemporary issues and how Buddhist modes of understanding can inform or be informed by academic studies (in Religious Studies, Philosophy, Ethics, Theology, Sociology, Economics, etc.).

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Hu, Hsiaolan, University of Detroit, Mercy, hhu@udmercy.edu

Chair - Brown, Sid, University of the South, sbrown@sewanee.edu

Buddhist Philosophy Unit

Call:

This Unit entertains individual paper proposals, but mostly encourages thematically integrated sessions. These sessions might focus on specific philosophical topics, on methodological issues, or on (a) recent publication(s) in the field (books, papers, etc.) or a classical text of particular importance. Sessions representing a diversity of methods to address a regionally-defined topic are also encouraged. There is particular interest in developing a papers session or roundtable proposal that would be suitable for co-sponsorship with another unit. If proposing a session, please provide suggestions for co-sponsorship.

Please note that beginning in 2018, the AAR is shifting to a set of new session formats. The new allocation for the Buddhist Philosophy Unit is either: A) One 2.5-hour and one 2-hour session; or B) One 2.5-hour and two 90-minute sessions. The choice of which option to use will be dictated by the number and types of panel proposals received. Either allocation allows an additional 90-minute session to be listed if co-sponsorship is secured.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Buddhist Existentialism
(Pierre-Julien Harter, pjharter@unm.edu)
- Buddhist Philosophy and Moral Realism
(Bharat Ranganathan, Bharat.Ranganathan.2@nd.edu)
- Chinese Madhyamaka Metaphysics
(Rafal K Stepień, rafal.stepien@philosophy.ox.ac.uk)
- Immanence and Transcendence in Buddhist Philosophy: Metaphysical, Ethical, and/or Soteriological Issues
(Pierre-Julien Harter, pjharter@unm.edu)
- Non- and Post-Human Beings and Realms
(Karin Meyers, karin.l.meyers@gmail.com)
- Object-Oriented Ontology and Buddhist Philosophy
(Takushi Odagiri, to30@duke.edu)
- Philosophy and the Pure Land
(Leah Kalmanson, kalmanson@gmail.com)
- Reexamining Attachment and Detachment in Buddhist Discourse(s)

(Tao Jiang, tjiang@rutgers.edu)

- Social Construction and Buddhist Philosophy
(Constance Kassor, constance.e.kassor@lawrence.edu)
- Tantric Doxographies: How Tantra-inflected Philosophers Distinguish between Traditions
Co-sponsored with the Buddhist Philosophy Unit and the Tantric Studies Unit.
(Daniel McNamara, dmcnamara4@wisc.edu)
- The Poetics of Philosophy and the Philosophy of Poetics
(M. David Eckel, mdeckel@bu.edu)
- The Verbal and the Visual: Shared Vocabularies in Buddhist Meditative Traditions
(Bruce Williams, bwilliam@library.berkeley.edu)

Persons wishing to organize a panel on a subject not listed above may also wish to contact one or both of the co-chairs.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a forum for the scholarly study of Buddhist philosophical thought in its various forms across all regions and traditions of the Buddhist world. We seek to develop tightly organized sessions that deal not only with intra-Buddhist philosophical issues — such as those involving major philosophical traditions and major thinkers and texts — but also with topics involving the relationship between Buddhist philosophy and other traditions of philosophical thought, both ancient and modern. The Unit likewise provides a venue to examine the relationship between Buddhist thought and Buddhist practice. We encourage work on the full range of Buddhist philosophy, including metaphysics, epistemology, soteriology, ethics, and philosophy of mind.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - McClintock, Sara L., Emory University, slmcli@emory.edu

Chair - Nance, Richard, Indiana University, richard.nance@gmail.com

Childhood Studies and Religion Unit

Call:

Childhood Studies in Religion solicits proposals for papers that engage the intersection of childhood and religion, broadly construed. We especially welcome papers from points of view other than a Euro-American, Christian perspective.

Specifically, we hope to organize sessions on:

- Children's existential concerns, including but not limited to death and dying, loneliness, failure to thrive, and complications related to attachment
- The inclusion of spiritual development as a measure of well-being by the World Health Organization
- Children's own views of spirituality, arising from direct work with children, especially in settings beyond churches and other formal religious spaces.
- *A Wrinkle in Time*
We invite proposals on Ava DuVernay's upcoming film adaptation *A Wrinkle in Time*, and other visual adaptations of young adult fiction. Papers may examine religion in these works in relation to various topics/issues, including (for example) race, gender, vulnerability, humor, pedagogy, agency, and ideology. Co-sponsored with the Childhood Studies and Religion Unit and the Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit's overall aim is to investigate the complex and multifaceted relation between religion and childhood. The specific goals of the Unit are as follows:

- Provide a forum for focused interdisciplinary and interreligious dialogue about the diverse relations of children and religion
 - Heighten academic interest in this topic in all fields represented in the AAR
 - Prepare scholars in religious studies to contribute to wider academic discussions about children and childhoods
 - Lend the voice of the academy to current questions of public policy and child advocacy
- The focus of the Unit is both timely and significant given the present concern for children across the globe and the rising interdisciplinary academic interest in childhood studies. The Unit functions as a forum at the AAR for advancing childhood studies as a new line of scholarly inquiry.

Go to <http://childhoodreligion.com/> for more details.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Stamper, Sally, Capital University, [sstamper@capital.edu](mailto:ssstamper@capital.edu)

Chinese Christianities Seminar

Call:

Developing the overarching theme of “Chinese Christianities” and building on the first three years, this fourth year of the seminar will focus on various ecclesiological boundaries. We welcome papers in the following or related areas:

- The relationship between various Chinese Christian groups (e.g., house church vs. TSPM, underground vs. CCPA, Catholic vs. Protestant).
- The rejection and resurgence of denominational/confessional identities (e.g., the local church, the post-denominational era, cultural Christians, Chinese American churches).
- Church unions and schisms, ecumenism and independency (e.g., Church of Christ in China, Lausanne/WCC, Sino-Vatican relations).
- Transnational and transregional networks (e.g., Cantonese or Wenzhou networks, house church networks).

Mission Statement:

This seminar provides a collaborative forum for scholars of different disciplines to engage in an academic discourse about the field of Chinese Christianities. Christianity is the fastest growing religion in mainland China today, and arguably the religion of choice for a growing number of diasporic Chinese. “Chinese” is an expansive term, including mainland China proper as well as a large, linguistically, and culturally diverse diaspora, and encompassing more than a fifth of the world’s population; the Han Chinese people are sometimes described as the world’s largest ethnic group. Hence, with the increasing critical mass of Chinese Christians, there has likewise been a growing academic interest in various instantiations of Chinese Christianities, as understood across geographies (e.g., mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Southeast Asia, North America, etc.) and groupings (e.g., house and state-sanctioned churches, Catholic, Pentecostal, etc.). Chinese Christianities both transcend and hinder a number of regional, social, religious, etc. boundaries. Over the course of these five years, this seminar will offer a unique opportunity for scholars to engage and to debate the implications of the multiplicity of Chinese Christianities with regards to the boundaries they engage.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Chow, Alexander, University of Edinburgh, alexander.chow@ed.ac.uk

Chinese Religions Unit

Call:

The Chinese Religions Unit invites proposals for paper sessions and panels on the following topics:

- Academic Ancestors in the Study of Chinese Religions
- Buddhist Marxists or Revolutionaries
- New Anthology on Buddhism and Medicine
(Authors Meet Critics panel)
- Islam in Pre-Modern China
Monotheism and “sinicization”
- Vernacularization of Religious Texts
- Regionalism in Chinese Religion
- What is a Temple?
- Shamanism across Chinese (and Korean?) History
- Digital Humanities in the Study of Chinese Religions
- Translation and Terminology in Chinese Religions
90-minute roundtable
- Excavated Manuscripts and Ancient Chinese Religions
- Rethinking the "Pure Land in the Human Realm"
(Primarily submitting to Buddhism Unit; panelists already lined up)
- Religions and Social Problems in Contemporary East Asian Literature
Japanese, Chinese and possibly other East Asian countries; co-sponsorship with the Chinese Religions Unit and the Japanese Religions Unit. Haruka Umetsu
Cho, harukaumetsu@g.harvard.edu

If you're interested in one of these topics, please contact the co-chairs about it. In preparing proposals, please note that the AAR is encouraging more 90-minute slots, so you might

consider organizing panels with that in mind. We also ask that you keep diversity (race, gender, seniority) in mind when putting panels together. We hope to see you in Denver!

Mission Statement:

This Unit is dedicated to the academic, comparative study of Chinese religions in all forms, both historical and contemporary. The Unit makes every effort to recognize Chinese voices in religious practice as well as scholarship, and applies rigorous standards of linguistic, cultural, historical, and social-scientific understanding to the study of religion in China.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Bryson, Megan, University of Tennessee, mbryson4@utk.edu

Chair - Sun, Anna, Kenyon College, suna@kenyon.edu

Christian Spirituality Unit

Call:

We seek proposals on these topics:

- A panel on the book *Eco-Reformation: Grace and Hope for a Planet in Peril* by Lisa Dahill
- The spirituality of the Psalms
- Spirituality and disability
- Spirituality and suffering
- Spirituality and end-of life issues
- Christian and indigenous spirituality (especially in the Western US)
- Ritual innovation and spirituality
- Aesthetics and spirituality

Mission Statement:

This Unit serves as a forum for scholars working in the interdisciplinary field of Christian spirituality. It is committed to the following:

- Developing, refining, and demonstrating appropriate methodologies for the academic study of spirituality.
- Exploring models for describing and facilitating interdisciplinary conversation on the nature of spirituality among religion scholars of all perspectives and religions.
- Initiating discussion in the field of global spirituality, both religious and secular.
- Articulating the connections between scholarship and spiritual practice.
- Ensuring diversity in denominational affiliation, gender, race, and ethnic backgrounds.
- Focusing on the retrieval and contemporary assimilation of issues of central interest to the field.

Our AAR sessions and panels are intended to expand dialogue, understanding, research, writing, and teaching in the area of spirituality in general, and of Christian spirituality in particular.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Young, Glenn, Rockhurst University, glenn.young@rockhurst.edu

Chair - Benefiel, Margaret, Shalem Institute For Spiritual Formation, margaret@shalem.org

Christian Systematic Theology Unit

Call:

The Christian Systematic Theology Unit invites proposals for individual papers or complete panels related to our theme of Freedom / Liberty / Liberation. We invite proposals to consider the nature of freedom, liberty, and liberation, including its foundations, criteria, constituent elements, and limits. In addition to core political and theological discussions, proposals may also be primarily psychological or cultural--although all should, of course, be considered in theological context.

Papers should be constructive or synthetic rather than merely historical or analytical in nature. We especially invite proposals related to the following sub-themes:

- Political religious freedom and its limits
- Current challenges to freedom in global politics and economics
- The relationship between freedom and solidarity in Catholic Social Thought
- The relationship between freedom and the common good
- The “freedom of the Christian”
- Individual freedom in ecclesial context
- Biblical notions of freedom as taken up by various theological traditions
- The nature of divine freedom
- The relationship between divine freedom and human freedom
- Liberation theology’s present tasks
- The relationship between human dignity and human freedom
- Academic freedom and the good of the university
- The nature of freedom itself

The Reformed Theology and History Unit and the Christian Systematic Theology Unit invite paper proposals for a co-sponsored session on the theological legacies of Karl Barth and Jonathan Edwards. We welcome proposals for analytical or constructive (but not purely historical) papers that treat these theologians’ accounts of issues surrounding freedom, liberty, and liberation. We especially welcome proposals that explore what these accounts could contribute to contemporary conversations in theology. We welcome proposals for analytical or constructive papers that treat these theologian’s accounts of freedom. We also especially welcome proposals that explore what these accounts could contribute to contemporary conversations in theology.

Mission Statement:

This Unit promotes new constructive work in Christian systematic theology that is in dialogue with the historical Christian theological traditions on the one hand and with all aspects of the

contemporary context on the other — intellectual movements, methodologies, multiple theological and religious perspectives, and ethical/social/political contexts.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Johnson, Junius, Baylor University, junius_johnson@baylor.edu

Chair - Coolman, Holly Taylor, Providence College, htc@providence.edu

Class, Religion, and Theology Unit

Call:

We would like to feature the following sessions for the 2018 AAR Meeting. The first session is our stand-alone for our Program Unit, the second, third, and fourth sessions would be co-sponsored.

- The Class, Religion, and Theology Unit invites individual papers that deal with the many connections between religion and work as an expression of class, including reproductive labor broadly conceived. Proposals might include (but are not limited to) the following questions:
 - How are religion and work related and what are the challenges for the study of religion and theology?
 - What does it mean for the practice of religion that 99 percent have to work for a living, and how does religion impact work?
 - What are the implications of the substantial growth of contingent academic labor for the future of the study of religion and the academy as a whole? How might more complex understandings of religion that take into account questions of power help shape more complex understandings of work, and vice versa?
 - Proposals that deal with Joerg Rieger and Rosemarie Henkel-Rieger's *Unified We Are a Force: How Faith and Labor Can Overcome America's Inequalities* (2016) are also welcome.

- The Class, Religion, and Theology Unit and Critical Approaches to Hip Hop and Religion Unit invite individual papers and panel submissions for a co-sponsored session exploring the varied connections between hip hop culture and class. Possible submission topics might include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - How does hip hop allow us to better understand capitalism's functions as a religion?
 - How does class allow us to better understand the political economy of hip hop?
 - The relationship between art and political activism/class consciousness.
 - Hip hop as a site for working class resistance.
 - Comparing hip hop and worker organizing as moral-cultural practices/embodied performances: the aesthetics of performative contestation against injustice (for example, how are strikes and hip hop performances aesthetically similar? or textual analysis of worker songs and hip hop lyrics).
 - Comparing worker organizing and hip-hop battles as practices of community formation (for example, the role of conflict in each, attention to power, etc.).
 - The complexities of racial justice in hip hop and class: each offers examples of contesting white supremacy and other examples of being co-opted by white supremacy.
 - Sanitation strike (in honor of MLK's last campaign): class struggle and hip hop can both be seen as refusing to be treated like refuse — resistance to dominant

social norms of who/what counts as "garbage"/worthless, making life/art out of what dominant social norms consider to be "waste."

- Emerging voices in hip hop and grassroots worker organizing.
- The Class, Religion, and Theology Unit and the Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Unit invite papers for a session focusing on the intersections between religion, culture, economics, and class in the struggle for/against public education. 2018 marks the fiftieth anniversary of several important moments in the struggle over public education in the United States. These anniversaries include the Poor People's Campaign (or Poor People's March on Washington), the expansion and repression of the Black Panther Party, the founding of the Young Lords Organization in Chicago, and the student "blowouts" (walkouts) in Los Angeles public schools that catalyzed the Chicano movement. Though not an exhaustive list, we welcome papers on the following topics that address intersections of religion, culture, economics, and class in the struggle over U.S. public education:
 - Privatization and racial re-segregation of schools
 - Education governance
 - School funding disparities
 - Bilingualism
 - Curricular conflicts
 - Religious studies and practice in schools
 - Undocumented youth education
 - Community school models
 - Causes/effects of achievement gaps
 - Retention and graduation disparities
 - The school-to-prison pipeline.
- Papers that address the impact of current US political/legislative environment on people with disabilities in light of studies in religion and regarding those who are most vulnerable (e.g., children, elderly, imprisoned, immigrants, migrants, LGBTIQ, homeless). For a co-sponsorship with the Class, Religion, and Theology Unit, the Religion and Disability Studies Unit, and the Religion, Memory, History Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to study class as a relational concept that needs to be explored in its complex manifestations, which will yield more complex understandings of religion and theology in turn. Avoiding reductionist definitions that occur when studying each class in itself or viewing class only according to stratified income levels or particular historical and sociological markers, this Unit will investigate how classes shape up in relation and tension with each other and with religion and theology. This Unit's investigations of class, religion, and theology also include intersections with gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and ecology.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Estey, Ken, Brooklyn College, kestey@brooklyn.cuny.edu

Chair - Rieger, Joerg, Vanderbilt University, j.rieger@vanderbilt.edu

Cognitive Science of Religion Unit

Call:

This Unit is dedicated to advancing cognitive scientific approaches to the study of religion in a critically informed, historically responsible manner. “Cognitive science” designates a broadly interdisciplinary approach to the study of the mind that integrates research from the neurosciences, psychology (including developmental, cognitive, evolutionary, and social psychology), anthropology, and philosophy. The main goal of this Unit is to bring together cognitive scientists, historians of religion, ethnographers, empirically-oriented theologians, and philosophers of religion to explore applications of cognitive science to religious phenomena, as well as religious insights into the study of the human mind. We wish to consider ways in which historical and ethnographic data can be used to test theories and discuss theoretical and methodological concerns that are directly relevant to study design and data interpretation. We are interdisciplinary, and welcome both theoretical and data-driven proposals from scholars.

Included with our unit’s general call for papers, we have also included several specific calls that some of our members have suggested. Those who are considering submitting a panel or paper proposal related to a call that is accompanied by specific contact information are invited (but not required) to contact that person to discuss the scope of the call’s inquiry and/or possible collaboration on a panel proposal or coordination of individual submissions.

- **Current Theories and Applications of the Cognitive Science of Religion (CSR)**
This call is broad in scope. Scholars using current theories in CSR (or theories that ought to be applied in CSR) and those who apply theories in CSR to derive qualitative or quantitative data are welcome to submit a paper.
- **Overviews on the State of the Field in the Cognitive Science of Religion**
The cognitive science of religion is heavily interdisciplinary and encompasses numerous research programs, from cognitive biases to costly signaling. For the 2018 AAR meeting, we solicit paper proposals that “zoom out” on the field of CSR and look for coherence or conflict between these different programs, or that simply assess where the field has come from and where it’s going. Which theoretical claims enjoy general consensus, and where do debates still rage? What frameworks could CSR benefit from incorporating that it currently overlooks? Are there recent advancements in the fields that feed into CSR – such as cognitive psychology, cross-cultural anthropology, ritual theory, or human ethology – that could augment our toolkits? Where are the overlaps and where are the disagreements between the cultural evolutionary approaches and the cognitive approaches to a general science of religion? Papers from both empirical practitioners and theorists, and from humanists and area specialists are welcomed. Contact: Connor Wood, Boston University, connorpw@bu.edu
- **What is Innateness? Evolution and Development in the Cognitive Science and Psychology of Religion**

What does it mean for a cognitive process or capability to be innate? Does this category only refer to fully realized functions at birth? in the first week? in the first month? How should theories about innateness address connections between innate and acquired capacities, and what are the implications for our understanding of the psychology and cognitive science of religion? Recent evidence from developmental cognitive psychology has upended our thinking about innateness. For example, the first longitudinal study of neonatal imitation, published in 2016, showed no evidence to support previous claims by Meltzoff and others. Yet human infants learn to imitate and both nonhuman primates and humans learn to acquire certain, socially relevant capabilities early in life. Are there ways to conceptualize innateness that help us make sense of what may be an innate readiness to acquire such capabilities? For example, does the innateness theory of Gary Marcus sufficiently address both the evolutionary and developmental aspects of acquiring language, morality, religious behaviors and affiliations, etc.? We are especially interested in integrative theoretical or empirical papers that address Marcus' theory and/or new approaches that draw on the evolutionary and developmental interaction literature in psychology and cognitive science (i.e., EvoDevo theories), with a clear connection to how these approaches help or hinder understanding of the origin, transmission, and practice of religion. This is a co-sponsored session with the Cognitive Science of Religion Unit and the Psychology, Culture, and Religion Unit. Contact: Michael Spezio, Scripps College, mspezio@scrippscollege.edu.

- Integrating the Humanities and Sciences in the Study of Religion
Contact: John Shaver, University of Otago, john.shaver@otago.ac.nz
- Cognitive Studies of Ritual and the Senses
In continuity with last year's focus on the aesthetics of ritual, we invite paper proposals from the full array of the cognitive science of ritual, from sound recognition and sensual perception to the study of ritual simulation, representation, and misrecognition. Co-sponsored with the Cognitive Science of Religion Unit and the Ritual Studies Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is dedicated to advancing cognitive scientific approaches to the study of religion in a critically informed, historically responsible manner. "Cognitive science" designates a broadly interdisciplinary approach to the study of the mind that integrates research from the neurosciences, psychology (including developmental, cognitive, evolutionary, and social psychology), anthropology, and philosophy. The main goal of this Unit is to bring together cognitive scientists, historians of religion, ethnographers, empirically-oriented theologians, and philosophers of religion to explore applications of cognitive science to religious phenomena, as well as religious insights into the study of the human mind. We wish to consider ways in which historical and ethnographic data can be used to test theories and discuss theoretical and methodological concerns that are directly relevant to study design and data interpretation.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - White, Claire, California State University, Northridge, clairejwhite81@gmail.com

Chair - Chilcott, Travis, Iowa State University, chilcott@iastate.edu

Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Unit

Call:

We seek papers that examine the intersections of religion and violence, with attention to the conditions under which religion lends itself to the justification and/or promotion of violence. Papers should demonstrate comparative or theoretical approaches. Below are our 2018 recommended themes within this framework:

- **Gender, Religion, and Violence**
We seek papers that address topics such as genocidal violence and the construction of masculinities, rape, and sexual violence as tools in conflicts and genocide, religiously inflicted and symbolic sexual violence, and the targeting and persecution of gender and sexual minorities. Co-sponsorship with the Comparative Approaches to Religion Unit, the Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Unit, the Women and Religion Unit, and the Men, Masculinities and Religion Unit.
- **Buddhist-Muslim Conflicts**
Examinations into conflicts between Buddhists and Muslims in both the contemporary period (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand), as well as in earlier periods. Possible co-sponsorship with the Buddhism Unit.
For people interested in submitting on this theme, please contact Michael Jerryson (mjerryson@gmail.com).
- **White Supremacy, the Alt-Right, and Religion**
In the wake of the Charlottesville protests and the rise of Neo-Nazi rhetoric, we seek papers that explore religious influences in the supremacist Alt-Right movement, its historical antecedents, and political theological approaches to such race/religion categories.
- **Religious Violence, Trauma, and Humanity's Search for Security**
Theological ideas, rhetoric, and symbolism are frequently harnessed to justify violent efforts to secure human life and/or to secure a particular group of humans' desired lifestyle(s). Religious violence can likewise erupt as both a cause and a consequence of the traumas – including, but not limited to, emotional violations, socio-cultural oppressions, and political injuries (both real and imagined) which are experienced by individuals, groups, and even entire societies. Yet experts in trauma studies and security studies rarely convene to discuss the impact of religion on their respective fields together. This panel aims to inspire such a discussion, and is particularly interested in the ways that the categories of “trauma” and “security” are complicated, interrogated, and challenged by the complexities of religious violence. Proposals may discuss historical as well as contemporary concerns, and may be constructed from the perspective of either trauma studies or security studies, or both fields collectively. Broad and creative thinking about the multivalent meanings and representations of “trauma,”

“security,” and “religious violence” – as both concrete and existential phenomena – is encouraged and solicited. Co-sponsorship with the SBL’s Violence and Representations of Violence in Late Antiquity Unit and the Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Unit. Interested members from both AAR and SBL should contact Chase L. Way at chase.laurelle.way@gmail.com.

- **Religion and the Convention on Genocide**
As we commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, we welcome papers that critically reflect on the legacy of the Convention and its relationship to religion as well as future directions for study. Topics may include, but are not limited to, the political uses of the Convention by religious groups, debates about the efficacy of the Convention to protect religious groups, the current status of religion as a "stable identity" amid other Convention protected groups, the contributions of religious studies to the reconceptualization of "genocide," and comparative approaches to the involvement and reaction of religious actors who have been indicted or convicted under the Convention. Co-sponsorship with the Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Unit and the Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Unit.
- *Exploring Moral Injury in Sacred Texts*
We plan to convene a pre-arranged roundtable, co-sponsored with the Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Unit and the Moral Injury and Recovery in Religion, Society, and Culture Unit, on Joseph McDonald ed., *Exploring Moral Injury in Sacred Texts* (Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2017).

Mission Statement:

Since the end of the Cold War, acts of religiously motivated violence have all too often become part of our quotidian existence. Scholars from various disciplines have attempted to account for these incidents, noting such issues as a resurgence of anti-colonialism, poverty and economic injustice, the failures of secular nationalism, uprooted-ness, and the loss of a homeland, and the pervasive features of globalization in its economic, political, social, and cultural forms. What are the religious narratives that help animate these violent actors? This Unit contends that the theories, methodologies, and frameworks for studying the expanding field of religion and violence remain under-explored and require interdisciplinary work and collaboration to provide greater insights into the complex issues involved. The sociology, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, evolutionary psychology, cognitive science, economics, and political science of religion all have provided great insights into the nature of religion and violence over the last few decades and all are arguably interdisciplinary by nature. This Unit provides a venue devoted specifically to interdisciplinary discussions of the subject. We hope to channel and enhance contributions from the historically delineated (albeit constructed) humanities, social sciences, and physical sciences. In that vein, we hope to hear papers presenting cross-disciplinary dialogue and research on the topic of religion and violence.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

E-mail with Attachment (proposal is in attachment, not in body of e-mail)

Leadership:

Chair - Jerryson, Michael, Youngstown State University, mjerryson@gmail.com

Chair - Velji, Jamel, Claremont McKenna College, jvelji@gmail.com

Comparative Religious Ethics Unit

Call:

This group encourages the submission of any individual paper, papers session, and roundtable proposals that make cultural and moral diversity central to ethical analysis. Themes especially welcome this year include:

- Urban Migration and Religious Ethics
For a co-sponsored panel with the Comparative Religious Ethics Unit and the Religion and Cities Unit, we are looking for papers that focus on urban migration and religious ethics. We would like to consider how diverse religious traditions have viewed cities and urban migration. How does the wave of recent global urban migration enhance or challenge religious ethics? We invite papers that address how religious ethics be utilized to respond to crises associated with mass urbanization.
- Comparative Moral Perspectives on Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing
- Political Argument and Religious Ethics
- The Ethics of Rebellion and Protest Across Traditions
- Comparative Perspectives on Human Dignity: Conceptions, Grounds, and Challenges
- Revisiting the Classics of Comparative Religious Ethics
- The Anthropology of Ethics
- Comparative Notions of Moral Naturalism: Deriving Moral Norms from Naturalistic Facts

Mission Statement:

While comparative assessment of the ethics of different religious groups is an ancient and widespread pursuit, the modern field of comparative religious ethics arguably dates from the founding of the *Journal of Religious Ethics* in 1973. (For the purposes of this statement, “ethics” as a subject will refer to reflection about how best to live as human beings; an “ethic” is one more or less determinate position on the best mode(s) of life.) While there have been a variety of motivations for the attempt to study “religious ethics” rather than or in addition to “Christian ethics,” one animating idea has been the growing recognition that people from numerous religions propound sophisticated and powerful moral visions, which possess intriguing similarities and differences and are not easily reducible to a common denominator. In addition, the variety and particular characteristics of such visions are historically and politically significant in the modern era of increasingly pervasive globalization. Indeed, comparative ethics may be desperately needed in our contemporary context of global interdependence, misunderstanding,

and mutual mistrust. There are thus ample grounds, both social and purely intellectual, to suggest that this ethical variety needs to be engaged directly via rigorous comparison. Comparative ethics makes such diversity central to its analysis, which includes three main aspects:

- Describes and interprets particular ethics on the basis of historical, anthropological, or other data
- Compares such ethics and requires searching reflection on the methods and tools of inquiry
- Engages in normative argument on the basis of such studies, and may thereby speak to contemporary concerns about overlapping identities, cultural complexity and plurality, universalism and relativism, and political problems regarding the coexistence of divergent social groups, as well as particular moral controversies

Ideally, each of these aspects enriches the others; for example, comparison across traditions helps generate more insightful interpretations of particular figures and themes. This self-conscious sophistication about differing ethical vocabularies and the analytical practices necessary to grapple with them is what makes comparative ethics distinctive within broader conversations in religious and philosophical ethics. Comparative ethics as envisioned here induces conversation across typical area studies boundaries by involving scholars of different religions; all sessions in this Unit are constructed with this goal in mind, so that data from multiple traditions will be brought to bear on any comparative theme.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Crane, Jonathan K., Emory University, jonathan.k.crane@emory.edu

Chair - Lee, Jung, Northeastern University, ju.lee@neu.edu

Comparative Studies in Religion Unit

Call:

- Ruins
Chris Parr (parrch@webster.edu) and Oliver Freiberger (of@austin.utexas.edu)
- Miracles
Ivette Vargas-O'Bryan (IVargas@austincollege.edu)
- Hagiography & Patronage
Massimo Rondolino (mrondoli@carrollu.edu)
- Trauma Responses by Multiple Religions
Dean Accardi (dean.accardi@gmail.com)
- Poison & Its Religious Valences
Eric Mortensen (ericdmort@yahoo.com)
- The Ethics of Comparison Roundtable
Oliver Freiberger (of@austin.utexas.edu)
- Visual Texts & the Construction of Lineages
Ivette Vargas-O'Bryan (IVargas@austincollege.edu)
- Holy Madness
David Divalerio (divaleri@uwm.edu)

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides the opportunity for significant cross-traditional and cross-cultural inquiry. We traditionally solicit paper sessions that provide occasions for comparative inquiry seriously engaging two or more religious traditions around a common topic and we ensure that critical reflection is given to the conceptual tools therein employed. We welcome co-sponsorship opportunities with other AAR units.

This Unit has a listserv (CompRel), which is used primarily for announcements, calls for papers, and discussions about panel proposals. If you wish to subscribe, please send a request to of@austin.utexas.edu.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

We do not consider individual paper submissions, only roundtables or papers sessions.

Leadership:

Chair - Freiburger, Oliver, University of Texas, of@austin.utexas.edu

Chair – Vargas-O’Bryan, Ivette, Austin College, ivargas@austincollege.edu

Comparative Theology Unit

Call:

This year our Call for Papers consists of three proposals for co-sponsored panel sessions and five proposals for standing-alone papers or panel sessions. Two themes that have been suggested in the Business Meeting will be developed next year in co-sponsorship with the Reformed Theology / Karl Barth Studies Unit (on comparative critiques of religion) and the Religion, Holocaust and Genocide Studies Unit (on genocide in comparative perspective).

- **Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Theology**
Since the 1990's two creative and innovative interreligious practices have emerged: Scriptural Reasoning and comparative theology, both of which place the reading of texts at the center of interreligious learning, though they do so in a different vein. Comparative theology is a solitary studious enterprise, while Scriptural Reasoning is a communal conversational practice. Scriptural Reasoning places sacred scriptures at the heart of its practice, while comparative theology focuses on theological and philosophical treatises. We welcome papers or panel proposals that examine the relation between comparative theology and Scriptural Reasoning. What are their different methods, hermeneutics, or theological approaches? What sort of knowledge does each produce? How do they challenge or complement one another? And how do they relate to other disciplines like the theologies of religions or the academic study of religion? Co-sponsored with the Comparative Theology Unit and the Scriptural Reasoning Unit.
- **Prisons, Incarceration, and Prison Literature**
The Comparative Theology Unit and the Sacred Texts, Theory, and Theological Construction Unit invite paper and panel proposals for a co-sponsored session on the theme of "Prisons, Incarceration, and Prison Literature". From imprisonments of religious figures like the Apostle Paul or Mahatma Gandhi to texts like Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* or Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Letters and Papers from Prison* or Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow* or Langdon Gilkey's *Shantung Compound*, theological and critical reflection on imprisonment, internment, and mass incarceration is a growing and pressing field of importance. This session seeks proposals that think about the interdisciplinary intersections of prison literature, sacred text, and comparative theory and theology. Proposals might consider: comparative work on sacred texts engaged by prison literature; mass incarceration and intersectional considerations of race, gender, and empire; emergent themes in comparing religiously-inflected prison literature; comparative theological reflections on genre; comparative theological reflections on imprisonment, internment and mass incarceration; engagement with contemporary critical theory on imprisonment and/or mass incarceration; engagement with critical theorists like Michel Foucault, Michelle Alexander, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, etc.; and other major related themes. We especially welcome proposals from scholars of sacred texts working in a wide range of religious traditions.

- Eastern Christian Approaches to Inter-Religious Dialogue and Comparative Theology: The Road Not Taken?

Contemporary developments in comparative theology and interreligious dialogue have been characterized by an almost exclusive emphasis on dialogue between Western forms of Christianity—both Roman Catholic and Protestant—with non-Christian religious traditions. Relatively fewer voices have been engaged in these disciplines from the traditions of Eastern Christianity (a broad term that includes Eastern Orthodox Christians, non-Chalcedonian Christians and Eastern Christian churches in communion with Rome). We welcome proposals from scholars of any religious tradition or none considering any aspect of interreligious conversation (Inter-Religious Dialogue and Comparative Theology) between Eastern Christian theologies/spiritualities/practices and non-Christian religious traditions. Co-sponsored session with Comparative Theology Unit and the Eastern Orthodox Studies Unit.

Other topics suggested in the Business Meeting of the Comparative Theology Group:

- Comparative Theology and Lived Religion
Religious scholars have turned to lived religion, but what would such a turn entail for comparative theologians? What would this imply methodologically? Would such a turn give rise to different theological questions? We call for papers that both address the methodological, hermeneutical and theological challenges involved in a turn to lived religion and papers that showcase such a turn.
- Liberation and Postcolonial Comparative Theology
- Inspiration, Revelation, and the Production of Sacred Texts.
- Comparative Theology and Eschatology
Comparative theologians have considered questions regarding creation, suffering, salvation/redemption and revelation. However, the theme of eschatology has remained under the surface. This panel seeks to overcome this lacuna and calls for papers that specifically address eschatology across traditions.
- A book panel of recent publications in the field of comparative theology discussing the question whether they are shaping a new generation of writing in comparative theology.

Mission Statement:

Comparative (interreligious) theology tries to be seriously theological, interreligious, and consciously comparative — all at the same time. It is, like other forms of theology as familiarly understood, primarily a matter of “faith seeking understanding” (or, more broadly, perhaps

“the practice of reflective meditative perception” or “insight”) and reflection on this faith as it has been enacted in doctrine, argument, meditation, ritual, and ethical behavior. Like other forms of theology, it is an academic discipline, but may also be about and for the sake of knowledge of God or, more broadly, the ultimate mystery toward which life points. In comparative theology, faith and practice are explored and transformed by attention to parallel theological dimensions of one or more religious or theological traditions, examined historically or in the contemporary context. As a discipline within the academy, this communal and intercommunal faith and practice are open to the analyses, comments, and questions of insiders to the involved traditions, and to scholars not necessarily defined by any such commitments who are nonetheless able and willing to explore the full range of dynamics of faith seeking understanding in a comparative perspective. Please contact any Steering Committee Member for further information on the Unit, including the most recent self-study and statement of purpose, or to be added to the Unit.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Moyaert, Marianne, VU University, Amsterdam, m.moyaert@vu.nl

Chair - Valkenberg, Wilhelmus, Catholic University of America, valkenberg@cua.edu

Confucian Traditions Unit

Call:

This unit is committed to the study of the diversity of religious traditions associated with Confucius and his followers, including areas where Confucian thought and practice intersect with those of other traditions. The unit embraces historical, philosophical, and dialogical approaches, and is not located in any single country or discipline.

This Unit invites proposals concerning any aspect of Confucianism from any geographical area in any historical field with any methodological orientation. Topics of particular interest this coming year are:

- Representations of Confucianism in contemporary China, or via contemporary institutions such as Confucius Institutes
- The Confucian diaspora, for example in countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore
- Confucianism in public life; or, Confucian conceptions of a public intellectual
- Debates during the Six Dynasties between Confucians, Daoists, and Buddhists over the character and relations of these traditions
- Periodization of Confucianism in modern history, including various obituaries of Neo-Confucianism
- Book discussion sessions on recently published studies of Confucianism

Prearranged roundtable and papers session proposals, including those on topics not listed above, have a much better chance of acceptance than individual paper proposals. Panels that are in the traditional two-and-a-half-hour format are welcome, but we also encourage applicants to propose panels in a 90-minute format, or the new 120-minute format. These can take the form of a mini-panel or a symposium on a particular text, author, or pedagogy. Underscoring that Confucianism is not just a Chinese phenomenon, we would also like to encourage people working on Confucian topics outside of China to send in proposals.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is committed to the study of the diversity of religious traditions associated with Confucius and his followers, including areas where Confucian thought and practice intersect with those of other traditions. The Unit embraces historical, philosophical, and dialogical approaches, and is not located in any single country or discipline.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Lee, Pauline, Saint Louis University, leepc@slu.edu

Chair - Stalnaker, Aaron, Indiana University, astalnak@indiana.edu

Contemplative Studies Unit

Call:

We welcome paper and panel proposals that address the following topics in comparative perspective, with emphasis on critical first-person approaches:

- The critical first-person component in Contemplative Studies research methodology. What does this look like?
- The dynamics of intersubjective contemplative practices
- Book Panel: *Introducing Contemplative Studies*, by Louis Komjathy (SUNY 2017)
- Relationship between kataphatic- and apophatic-style practices within a single tradition, with comparisons between tradition
- How can compassion be trained (cross-tradition approaches)?
- Varieties of breath practices across traditions

We also welcome panel proposals on any other topic related to Contemplative Studies.

Mission Statement:

This program unit aims to strengthen and develop contemplative studies as an academic field of inquiry, especially in the context of religious studies and the AAR. Our Unit provides a forum for:

- The investigation of contemplative practice and experience, considered inclusively and comprehensively
- Critical discussions on the field itself, including theoretical and interpretive issues
- The application of contemplative practice to academic life and university culture, including the possible contribution of “contemplative pedagogy” to teaching and learning

The Unit thus aims to gather together currently diffused groups as well as dislocated, marginalized, and underrepresented individuals in the academy. To this end, we encourage research that is topical, tradition-specific, comparative, and cross-cultural. We also invite scholars to investigate contemplative practice and experience in ways that traverse and transcend the boundaries of traditions, disciplines, and research methodologies. Visit our Website at www.sandiego.edu/cas/contemplativestudies.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Simmer-Brown, Judith, Naropa University, jsb@naropa.edu

Chair - Roth, Harold D., Brown University, harold_roth@brown.edu

Contemporary Islam Unit

Call:

For the 2018 meeting, we welcome proposals on any aspect of Islam in the contemporary world. We are especially interested in presenting research on the following themes:

- Democracy and authoritarianism, including democratic movements and sensibilities vis-a-vis the state, and Islamic reflections on political modernity, public life, freedom, and justice
- The politics of scholarship on Islam, including issues of academic freedom and Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS)
- Lived Islamic law, beyond textual formulations
- Race and racialization of Muslims
- Popular culture: visual and print media, art, film, music, fashion, materiality
- In conjunction with the meeting location in Colorado: Muslims in the Rocky Mountain region/"flyover" states/the Midwest

- American Islam Online
Exploring how Muslim community building and Islamic practices are uniquely shaped via social media platforms and online resources. Co-sponsorship with the Contemporary Islam Unit and the Religion, Media, and Culture Unit.

The Contemporary Islam Unit is committed to inclusion. Our unit requires pre-arranged sessions or panel proposals to incorporate gender diversity; diversity of race, ethnicity, and rank are also highly encouraged.

Our unit seeks to encourage and facilitate dialogue between panelists before, during, and immediately following individual presentations. To this end, it is essential that presenters commit to providing the full text of their presentation for pre-circulation among panel participants by the end of October.

If your proposal gets accepted and you agree to be on the program, we expect you to show up to participate in the annual meeting, barring unforeseeable exceptional circumstances. Please note that it is the policy of all Islamic Studies program units to ban no-shows at the Annual Meeting from the program for the following two years.

Mission Statement:

The mission of this Unit is to provide a venue for discussing emerging problems and developments within Muslim societies and Islamic studies during the past 200 years, particularly in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Salomon, Noah, Carleton College, nsalomon@carleton.edu

Contemporary Pagan Studies Unit

Call:

Contemporary Pagan Studies is an interdisciplinary unit, and we welcome submissions of theoretically and analytically engaged papers and panels relating to modern Paganism and Polytheism, employing scholarly analysis to discuss the topic from any relevant methodology or theoretical orientation. In addition to receiving paper or panel proposals on topics generally in the purview of Contemporary Pagan Studies, we especially welcome proposals that address the following themes:

- Comparative perspectives on the ethics of “harming none” in various contexts, both ancient and modern.
- The ethics of magic: for example, does “Harm None” actually do harm?
- Applications and critiques of method and theory in Contemporary Pagan Studies.
- Changing theologies in Contemporary Paganisms and Polytheisms.
- Constructing the Pagan as “other”, and constructions of “Otherness” within Paganism.
- The recent intersections and interactions of African Traditional Religions, African-derived religions, and Africana folk magic with Contemporary Paganisms and Pagan practice.
- Contemporary Paganism as a “church of the living room/back yard”.
- The Contemporary Pagan response to the growing Alt-Right.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a place for scholars interested in pursuing studies in this newly developing and interdisciplinary field and puts them in direct communication with one another in the context of a professional meeting. New scholars are welcomed and supported, while existing scholars are challenged to improve their work and deepen the level of conversation. By liaising with other AAR Program Units, the Unit creates opportunities to examine the place of Pagan religions both historically and within contemporary society and to examine how other religions may intersect with these dynamic and mutable religious communities.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Arthur, Shawn, Wake Forest University, arthursd@wfu.edu

Chair - Hale, Amy, Helix Education, amyhale93@gmail.com

Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop and Religion Unit

Call:

Baduizm: Race, Class, Gender, and Experiences of the “High Life” in Hip Hop Culture

“Badu is my last name, ‘izm’ is what should get you high and Baduizm [is] the things that get me high. Lighting a candle, loving life, knowing myself, knowing my creator, loving them both ... Using my melanin. Using my power, to get to where I need to go to do the creator’s work—that’s what I’m here for. And I’m still fly.” <http://bit.ly/2BO2Hfx>

For decades, Neo-soul goddess Erykah Badu has wed together Black women’s experience, new age and esoteric Black sensibilities, and an openness to altered states into a method of Baduizm. Beyond traditionally defined “isms,” Baduizm, as Badu describes, is here constructed as modes of potentiality of embodied subjectivity that takes serious the political, the religious, the performative, transcendence, and “loving life, loving myself.” In this respect, Badu is representative of long-standing literary, musical, “religious,” and academic efforts to “know thyself,” efforts guided by methods attentive to intersectionality, social and psychical concerns, individual and collective knowledge and needs, etc. that are integrative and celebrative of the complexity of culture and identity. Possible submission topics might include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Intersectionality, Hip Hop, and the Religious
- Music, the Self, and Transcendence
- The relationship between social sanctions (laws, social mores, etc.) and personal health and self-medication.
- The creative impact of substances (e.g. Marijuana) on hip hop cultural production.
- Hip Hop and Goddess Worship
- Mysticism/Esotericism, Hip Hop, and Altered/Altering States of Being/Consciousness
- Heterodox Methods Becoming Orthodox
For instance, the historical dismissal/illegality of Blackness, gender non-conformity, transness, queerness transmuting into normative preoccupation with the “method” of identity/identification.

Co-sponsored Sessions:

- The Class, Religion, and Theology Unit and Critical Approaches to Hip Hop and Religion Unit invite individual papers and panel submissions for a co-sponsored session exploring the varied connections between hip hop culture and class. Possible submission topics might include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - How does hip hop allow us to better understand capitalism's functions as a religion?
 - How does class allow us to better understand the political economy of hip hop?
 - The relationship between art and political activism/class consciousness.
 - Hip hop as a site for working class resistance.
 - Comparing hip hop and worker organizing as moral-cultural practices/embodied performances: the aesthetics of performative contestation against injustice (for example, how are strikes and hip hop performances aesthetically similar? or textual analysis of worker songs and hip hop lyrics).
 - Comparing worker organizing and hip-hop battles as practices of community formation (for example, the role of conflict in each, attention to power, etc.).
 - The complexities of racial justice in hip hop and class: each offers examples of contesting white supremacy and other examples of being coopted by white supremacy.
 - Sanitation strike (in honor of MLK's last campaign): class struggle and hip hop can both be seen as refusing to be treated like refuse — resistance to dominant social norms of who/what counts as "garbage"/worthless, making life/art out of what dominant social norms consider to be "waste."
 - Emerging voices in hip hop and grassroots worker organizing.

- Hip Hop Culture and Black Theology

The Black Theology Unit and Critical Approaches to Religion and Hip Hop Unit invite individual papers and panel submissions for a co-sponsored session exploring the varied connections between Hip Hop culture and Black theology. Possible submission topics might include, but are not limited to the following: Hip Hop as prophetic critique, discourse and commentary, quest for meaning, memory and identity? How ought religion/race be theorized and discussed in the Trump era? What role does the sacred/profane binary play as a rhetorical strategy and political designator? How have rappers like Kendrick, Chance, and Lecrae created a space for “woke” rap? What is “Christian” or “Holy” Hip Hop? Pedagogically, how might we look at teaching Hip Hop and Black religion and theology? How have new media, (e.g., podcasts, YouTube, internet and radio shows such as the Breakfast Club) reconstructed Hip Hop culture and its future? How might we explore the intersections of White Evangelicalism onto mainstream Hip Hop culture?

Mission Statement:

This Unit’s purpose is to provide a space for interdisciplinary, sustained, scholarly reflection and intellectual advancements at the intersections of religion and hip hop culture. We believe the

Unit will assist religious and theological studies to take more seriously hip-hop culture, while expanding the conversation of hip-hop culture beyond a thin analysis of rap music. To these ends, this Unit is marked by an effort to offer critical reflection on the multiplicity of the cultural practices of hip-hop culture. We also see something of value in advancing the field of religious studies through attention to how hip-hop might inform these various disciplines and methods. Understood in this way, scholarly attention to hip-hop will not transform it into a passive object of the scholar's gaze; rather, through our attention to hip-hop, it also speaks back to the work of the AAR, offering tools by which to advance theory and method in the field.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Miller, Monica R., Lehigh University, mrm213@lehigh.edu

Chair - White Hodge, Daniel, North Park University, dan@whitehodge.com

Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Unit

Call:

The CTDR group offers an interdisciplinary and international forum for analytical scholars of religion to engage the intersection of critical theory and methodology with a focus on concrete ethnographic and historical case studies. Critical theory draws on methods employed in the fields of sociology, anthropology, history, literary criticism, and political theory in order to bring into scrutiny all kinds of discourses on religion, spanning from academic to nonacademic and from religious to nonreligious.

This year we invite proposals on the following topics:

- The Legacy of Orientalism
On the 40th anniversary of Edward Said's *Orientalism*, we invite reflections on its impact on and contemporary relevance for questions of periodization, power, geography, and canon in Religious Studies.
- Race, Racialization, and the Classed Rhetorics of White Supremacy
- Theorizing Appropriations, Syncretisms, Bricolage, and Related Terms in the Study of Religion
For 2018 we are also sponsoring an author-meets-critics session on Jessica Johnson's new book, *Biblical Porn: Affect, Labor, and Pastor Mark Driscoll's Evangelical Empire*, for which we do not seek proposals.

Mission Statement:

The Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion (CTDR) Unit offers an interdisciplinary and international forum for analytical scholars of religion to engage the intersection of critical theory and methodology with a focus on concrete ethnographic and historical case studies. Critical theory draws on methods employed in the fields of sociology, anthropology, history, literary criticism, and political theory in order to bring into scrutiny all kinds of discourses on religion, spanning from academic to nonacademic and from religious to nonreligious.

This Unit seeks to provide a forum in which scholars of religion from a wide range of disciplines can examine and question their disciplinary presuppositions. The work of this Unit can be placed under three main rubrics:

- Critical investigation of the categories generated and employed by the discourses on religion, such as experience, the sacred, ritual, and the various 'isms' that can be found in classic and contemporary studies of religion
- Analysis of new and neglected theorists and works central to the critical study of religion, including those produced in cognate fields such as anthropology, political science, or literary theory

- Theoretically-informed examination of elided and often neglected themes in religious studies, including class, race, gender, violence, legitimation, and the material basis of religion

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Walker, David, University of California, Santa Barbara, dwalker@religion.ucsb.edu

Chair - McCloud, Sean, University of North Carolina, Charlotte, spmcclo@uncc.edu

Cultural History of the Study of Religion Unit

Call:

The Cultural History of the Study of Religion Unit seeks papers that examine the formation and transformation of “religion” and related categories in social, cultural, and political practice in different geographic and historical contexts and in relation to the scholarly study of religion as that study has evolved over time.

For the 2017 Annual Meeting, we particularly welcome proposals on the following topics:

- **Religion Goes Public**
In conversation with the 2018 AAR theme, “Religious Studies in Public”, this session will consider the parameters of “religion” in conjunction with those of “the public.” What are the constitutive features of the public that have supported the presumption that religion and publicness are antithetical? How do practices of publicness vary across history and across religious cultures? What is religion’s relation to the production of publics and counter-publics?
- **Re-Thinking the Study of Religion Core**
This session will focus on teaching and pedagogy and offer new models and specific strategies for revising “theory and method” religion courses for undergraduates, as well as situating such courses within the longer history of the study of religion. What intellectual histories do such courses reveal and occlude? What is the function of the core course within the formation of the discipline of religious studies more broadly?
- **Transforming Categories of “Indigenous” and “World” Religions**
This session will interrogate the various disciplinary and political purposes served by the construction of “Indigenous” persons and religions, particularly as a category opposed to that of “world religions”. For possible co-sponsorship with the Cultural History of the Study of Religion Unit and Indigenous Religions Unit.

As always, we welcome all papers that develop new archives for and interpretations of the cultural, intellectual, and institutional history of the study of religion.

This group regularly uses its sessions to develop new models for conference conversation. Toward that end, we ask that participants be prepared to write shorter papers for possible pre-circulation or short position papers for roundtable format. We also welcome suggestions for new conversational models.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is devoted to historical inquiry into the social and cultural contexts of the study of religion and into the constructions of “religion” as an object of scholarly inquiry.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Scott, J. Barton, University of Toronto, barton.scott@utoronto.ca

Chair - Pritchard, Elizabeth Ann, Bowdoin College, epritcha@bowdoin.edu

Daoist Studies Unit

Call:

The Daoist Studies Unit of the AAR invites proposals for individual papers and paper sessions concerning all aspects of Daoism from any period, geographical area, or methodological and theoretical approaches. We especially welcome proposals for 90-minute paper sessions (3-4 papers, presenter, and respondent). We also encourage applicants to explore alternative formats.

The following topics were proposed at the 2017 DSU business meeting in Boston. However, please feel free to propose panels on other topics as well:

- A continuing conversation between scholars of Daoist and Ritual Studies on ritual theories. Please contact Tobias Zuern (tzuern@wustl.edu)
- Studies of Daoist epigraphy. Please contact Gil Raz (gil.raz@dartmouth.edu)
- The theory and practice of Yoga in India and China: The term “yoga” is broadly defined to include bodily disciplines, hygienic regimens, inner alchemy, breathing techniques, body maps, pursuit of physical immortality, etc. Approaches can be historical, descriptive, theoretical, etc. The goal is to begin an informed exchange of information between scholars working on Indian yoga traditions and those working on comparable practices in China. Comparative proposals are welcome, as are proposals focusing on a single work, lineage, set of techniques, etc. from either India or China. Please contact Dan Lusthaus (lusthaus@fas.harvard.edu) and Michael Allen (msa2b@virginia.edu)
- Excavated manuscripts and Daoism in early China. Contact Adrien Stoloff (adrien_stoloff@brown.edu)

Questions about various formats and innovative possibilities, as well as help in building traditional paper or panel sessions, may be directed to the co-chairs.

Mission Statement:

The Daoist Studies Unit organizes the most consistent venue for sharing research on Daoist materials anywhere in the Western world. The DSU is guided by a vision with three main goals: to reach into the vast recesses of the largely unstudied Daoist tradition; to reach out in conversation with the wider American Academy of Religion; and to promote the Annual Meeting of the AAR as an international venue for sharing and vetting research by all levels of Daoism scholars.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Valussi, Elena, Loyola University, Chicago, evalussi@luc.edu

Chair - Choo, Jessey J. C., Rutgers University, j.choo@rutgers.edu

Death, Dying, and Beyond Unit

Call:

- *On Death and Dying: Kübler-Ross 50th Anniversary*
For 2018, we invite submissions for the 50th anniversary of the publication of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' seminal study, *On Death and Dying*, for a co-sponsored session with the Death, Dying, and Beyond Unit and the Psychology, Culture and Religion Unit. Submissions are welcome that engage the memory, theory, and legacy of her work on assisted dying, and hospice/palliative care.
- Given recent debates over the work of monuments in popular culture, we invite submissions that address memorializing the dead, building monuments to the dead, and memory and death. We also invite submissions that engage with death and the environment in terms of extinction, climate change, endangered species, and preserving fossils. In either case, this panel seeks papers that will engage with the themes of death, permanence and extinction.

Mission Statement:

This Unit was formed to address all manner of scholarly discussion relating to death. While death is the single certainty in every life, a myriad number of ways exist to study and approach it. Our aim is to provide an outlet for the scholarly discussion of all issues relating to death, the dying, the grieving, the dead, and the afterlife. We are open to all methodologies, religious traditions, and topics of inquiry.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Cann, Candi, Baylor University, candi_cann@baylor.edu

Chair - Lewis, A. David, MCPHS University, a.lewis@mcphs.edu

Eastern Orthodox Studies Unit

Call:

- **The Icon**
As theological witness, devotional object, political symbol, and art commodity, the icon has been revered as sacred, valued as masterpiece, and appropriated for civic and political purposes. We welcome proposals that consider any of the icon's diverse meanings and functions from late antiquity to the present day, including but not limited to: the theology of the icon; icon and Orthodox spirituality; the iconographic vocation; aesthetics; ritual and liturgical practices; delineation of sacred space; history and memory; semiotics; political and national identities; controversial images and forms of iconoclasm; iconicity and authenticity; and the icon and the modern world of art.
- **Maximus the Confessor: Ancient Wisdom for Contemporary Times (Pre-arranged session)**
Maximus the Confessor (d. 662) is widely regarded as one of the greatest of early Christian theologians, and recent decades have witnessed an enormous revival of scholarly interest in his thought. This *pre-arranged* panel of speakers brings together experts on Maximus to discuss the significance of his work for contemporary theological, historical and cultural conversations, especially issues related to anthropology, the cultivation of a virtuous life and Maximus's seminal role in the history of modern theology and philosophy.
- **Eastern Christian Approaches to Inter-Religious Dialogue and Comparative Theology: The Road Not Taken?**
Contemporary developments in comparative theology and interreligious dialogue have been characterized by an almost exclusive emphasis on dialogue between Western forms of Christianity—both Roman Catholic and Protestant—with non-Christian religious traditions. Relatively fewer voices have been engaged in these disciplines from the traditions of Eastern Christianity (a broad term that includes Eastern Orthodox Christians, non-Chalcedonian Christians and Eastern Christian churches in communion with Rome). We welcome proposals from scholars of any religious tradition or none considering any aspect of interreligious conversation (Interreligious Dialogue and Comparative Theology) between Eastern Christian theologies/spiritualities/practices and non-Christian religious traditions. Co-sponsored session with Comparative Theology Unit and the Eastern Orthodox Studies Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit focuses on the critical study of the theology, culture, history, and practices of the Eastern Christian churches, including their mutual interaction and engagement with Western Christian and non-Christian groups.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Shevzov, Vera, Smith College, vshevzov@smith.edu

Chair - Gallaher, Brandon, University of Exeter, b.gallaher@exeter.ac.uk

Ecclesial Practices Unit

Call:

We are interested in papers that address the theoretical, theological and methodological challenges and possibilities of attending to digital media in ethnographic research for ecclesiology, as well as examples of theological ethnography with a focus on digital media. We are particularly interested in papers that attend to how individuals and communities actively create their Christian identity both in Church and the wider society through their use of digital media.

- **Mediated Faith: Digital Media, Christian Life, and Theology**
Digital technologies that are embedded in the fabric of everyday life also influence Christian practice in fundamental ways. Because digitization effects faith, theology and ecclesial practices at both the personal and a community levels, digital media must be attended to when doing ethnographic studies of contemporary Christian life and churches. In this call, we are looking for papers that use ethnographic methods to analyze how both individuals and communities actively construct their ecclesial and theological identities in relation to digital media.

Mission Statement:

Ecclesial Practices provides a collaborative space at the intersection of ethnographic and other qualitative approaches and theological approaches to the study of ecclesial practices. This might include churches, other (new, emerging, para-church, and virtual) communities, and lived faith in daily life. International in scope, the unit encourages research contributing to a deeper understanding of “church in practice” in a global context, including decolonization and postcolonial theologies. The unit encourages ongoing research in the following areas:

- Empirical and theological approaches to the study of ecclesial communities (churches, congregations, and emerging communities), especially as interdisciplinary efforts to understand lived faith and practice extending from them
- Studies of specific ecclesial activities, e.g. music, liturgy, arts, social justice, youth work, preaching, pastoral care, rites of passage, community organizing
- Studies of global contexts of lived faith in relation to ecclesial communities, for example, decolonizing and postcolonial theory and theology
- Discussions of congregational growth and decline, new church movements, and ecclesial experiments connected to shared practices in a worldly church
- Explorations of Christian doctrine in relation to the potential implications of empirical and qualitative research on ecclesial communities and lived faith for discerning, defining, and challenging standard theological genres such as systematics and doctrine, as well as inviting new ways to understand normative logics
- Discussions of methodological issues with regard to qualitative research on theological topics, especially related to ecclesial communities and lived faith

- Discussions (both substantive and methodological) of the implications of new technologies and digital cultures for ecclesial communities and lived faith

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Idestrom, Jonas, Church of Sweden Research Unit, Uppsala, Sweden, jonas.idestrom@svenskakyrkan.se

Chair - Wigg-Stevenson, Natalie, University of Toronto, natalie.wigg@utoronto.ca

Ecclesiological Investigations Unit

Call:

- **Ecclesiology and Gender: Human Equality and the Unity of the Church(es)**
In this session, we consider how gender questions influence division and dialogue, both between church(es) and within officially united churches and denominations. Such questions include the role of women and men in our communities, including ordination, the growth in experience of non-binary gender and transgendered persons, and questions of “gender ideology” and differing understandings of gender across contexts and cultures. We invite papers that explore how attempts to promote equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for all members of our churches have influenced the unity of these communities. These could include both continuing questions regarding the role of women in our churches, and more recent questions regarding how newer understandings of gender have affected the churches. We are interested in papers that explore the interplay between ecclesial concern to preserve the churches' theology and practices, and attempts to respond to new phenomena as signs of the times, and how those experiences affect unity between and within churches.
- **The Church and Courage**
As the AAR focuses upon the role of religion in the public sphere, we invite papers that focus upon the virtue of ecclesial courage in the public sphere. In 2018, we look back fifty years to the meeting of the Latin American Catholic Bishops at Medellín that solidified a public role for a church of and for the poor. At the same time, in an increasingly fractious and polarized world, we see opportunities and challenges for the churches to be courageous in their public mission. We invite papers that help us better understand the theologies of courageous churches in the public sphere, whether historical treatments of past successes and failures, reports of contemporary cases that provide examples of the church courageous, or constructive proposals that explore courage in relation to mission, structure, or other themes in ecclesiology.
- **Scripturalization and Orality in/as African Spirituality: A Preface to African Hermeneutics**
The African continent is one of the global locations where Christianity is increasing most rapidly. The history of Churches in Africa is contextualized by colonial encounters between European forms of Christianity and varieties of African religions, spiritualities, traditional belief systems. This has produced various strains and adaptations of Christian ecclesiologies that are still emerging, distinctive, and in some instances dominated by traditional practices. While interest in studying enculturated forms of African ecclesiologies and their social, cultural, and political contextualizations enjoys increased study, for example, missiology, African Biblical hermeneutics and translation, African theology and philosophy, or Africana Studies there remain many areas of interest and lines of inquiry. We, therefore, invite papers that focus upon churches in the African context and are also in conversation with African scholars of Christianity whether located in an African country or in its diaspora. Such papers could be theoretical

treatments of the church in frameworks and models arising from African experience (e.g., church as family, church and mission in Africa, church and ancestors, etc.), or could be ethnographic studies of ecclesial structures and institutional realities in particular contexts or church communities. We are particularly interested in papers that address poverty, colonialism, the role of women, sexuality, and Christian/Muslim/African Traditional Religion relationships as they relate to the life of the church in Africa. Co-sponsored session with the African Association for the Study of Religions Unit and Ecclesiological Investigations Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is a part of the Ecclesiological Investigations International Research Network, which seeks to serve as a hub for national and international collaboration in ecclesiology, drawing together other groups and networks, initiating research ventures, providing administrative support, as well as acting as a facilitator to support conversations, research, and education in this field. Hence the Network exists to promote collaborative ecclesiology. The Network's five fundamental aims are as follows:

- The establishment of partnerships between scholars, research projects, and research centers across the world
- The development of virtual, textual, and actual conversation between the many persons and groups involved in research and debate about ecclesiology
- Organizing and sharing in colloquia, symposia, and conferences
- Encouraging joint teaching and exchanges of postgraduate students and faculty
- The Unit seeks to publish the best fruits of all such collaboration in our new Palgrave Series, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue, as well as in the journal Ecclesiology (Brill), published in association with the Network. The Network is a "network of networks" serving a "church of churches." See www.ei-research.net/ for more information.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Latinovic, Vladimir, University of Tübingen, vladimir.latinovic@uni-tuebingen.de

Chair - Flanagan, Brian, Marymount University, brianflanagan1@gmail.com

Economics and Capitalism in the Study of Buddhism Seminar

Call:

The seminar in Economics and Capitalism in the Study of Buddhism has developed three themes for paper topics for 2018:

- Economics of Buddhist Utopias: Then and Now
- Creative Imaginations in Asia's Past, Present, and Future
- How Buddhists Have Responded to Capitalist Situations, Realities of Wealth and Excess, and Altering Institutions

These represent a wide range of possible topics for study, reflecting the multidimensional character of the seminar's topic. We solicit submissions from a wide range of scholarly specializations.

Mission Statement:

The seminar will allow an extended and focused examination of the historical background of Buddhism in networks of exchange, under colonialism—the previous global socio-economic system—and the present-day effects of global, or late, capitalism with its ability to transcend traditional national boundaries. In the same way that previous eras saw transcontinental and transoceanic patterns of trade as agencies in the transmission and transformation of Buddhism, there is an integral connection between the ability of contemporary consumer capitalism to make a presence in societies over the entirety of the globe and the technological changes that have contributed to increasingly globalized systems of communication and travel. There are two major areas of inquiry that the seminar explores. The first is the economic formation of Buddhism as an institution, such as the ways that Buddhism is represented, commodified, and marketed in capitalist society. The second area of inquiry is the ways that economic relations and capitalism have influenced the conception of Buddhism as an object of academic study.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Rambelli, Fabio, University of California, Santa Barbara, rambelli@eastasian.ucsb.edu

Chair - Payne, Richard K., Graduate Theological Union, rkpayne1@mac.com

Emerging Church, Millennials, and Religion Seminar

Call:

The Emerging Church has often been criticized for a public face that is largely white and male. We seek papers that address the question of gender in the Emerging Church. What are the possibilities for leadership for people who are non-cis-gendered males? Has the Emerging Church been active in the struggle against a hetero-normative patriarchy? In what ways does gender impact the practices of the Emerging Church? What are the successes and failures of the Emerging Church as it relates to gender? Additionally, we seek papers that likewise talk about this issue for the millennial generation. What trends and examples show millennial attitudes and actions regarding gender? How do millennial attitudes about gender relate to their attitudes about church and religion? In what ways does gender play a role in emerging spiritualities among millennials? Our unit publishes papers in advance, thus papers should be substantive contributions on the subject of 5000+ words and will be due in mid-October to be circulated.

Mission Statement:

The Emergent/ing Church has gained tremendous notoriety in both the popular media and among religious people and scholars. This Research Seminar seeks to begin an interdisciplinary discussion about the Emergent/ing Church in light of other cultural and religious shifts like the rise of the "nones" and the shift in religiosity among the millennial generation. To this end we wish to investigate the Emergent/ing Church by bringing together Philosophy of Religion, Practical and Feminist Theology, American Religious History and Sociology of Religion approaches. We seek to explore how this movement is affecting the religious landscape and its potential to change Evangelicalism, the larger movement of Christianity and the Western European and North American religious environs in general. We anticipate the production of an edited volume from the papers produced as a result of this seminar which will provide a critical analysis of the movement from a Religious Studies perspective.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Reed, Randy, Appalachian State University, reedrw@appstate.edu

Chair - Zbaraschuk, Michael, Pacific Lutheran University, zbarasgm@plu.edu

Employment Workshops

Call:

In an effort to offer additional programming and networking opportunities for our members, the Employment Center will host a Workshop Series during the 2018 Annual Meeting.

Are you seeking opportunities to mentor? Do you have learning, insight, or technology tips to share? Are you a wizard with social media and personal branding? Do you have an ability to create a CV from a résumé? Do you have specific advice for creating a successful portfolio and navigating the job market? Please consider leading a 60 to 90 minute workshop or intimate roundtable for 6 to 15 individuals that engages members pursuing academic and non-academic careers. We would love to have you!

Successful proposals from previous years included the following sessions:

- Alt-Ac Employment in Religious Studies and Creative Careers in Church and Faith-Based Non-Profits
- Developing a Public Voice and Making a Living from It
- Envisioning Academic Alternatives
- Job Transitions over 40 with a Ph.D.
- Marketing Matters for Academics: It's Not Just a Corporate Thing!
- Online Pedagogies and Leveraging Online Experience in the Job Market
- Religious Studies and Nonprofit Management

If you are interested in submitting a workshop or roundtable proposal, please submit a proposal through the AAR's PAPERS system at the following address: <https://papers.aarweb.org/content/employment-workshops>

For an example of a successful proposal, please consult the 2016 Annual Meetings Program Book (pp. 16-17), or consider the language in any of the three workshops featured on this website advertising a set of regional workshops: <http://www.phdlifetransitions.com/>

All sessions will be advertised in the online and print program books.

Have questions? Contact Employment Services at careers@aarsbl.org.

Anonymity:

Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Ethics Unit

Call:

Aligned with the 2018 Conference AAR theme, our call for papers focuses on the responsibilities, civic duties, and risks facing scholars of religion in light of this current political climate, which is marked by racist, xenophobic, and classist policies and practices.

- **Gentrification, Justice and Immigration Issues in Denver, CO and Other Cities**
Papers that discuss historically Black and Latino communities that represent different religious and diasporic traditions that are being adversely affected by gentrification. In addition, co-present with gentrification are serious concerns about issues of labor and the conditions of workers in Denver and other cities
- **Religious Ethics and Diverse Publics**
Papers that re-imagine the purposes and tasks of intellectual/academic life and broader social engagement. Increasingly, there are persons working in various sectors beyond traditional academic tracks whose work creates knowledge and greater insights into social practices. This conversation would invite persons (independent scholars, cultural workers, tenured and untenured scholars associated with universities to help broaden the academy's understanding of the many publics that need to be engaged).
- **Ecological Ethics within Diverse Religious and Theological Traditions**
Papers regarding themes such as ecowomanism, ecofeminism, gender and economic studies, Muslim feminist thought, etc.
- **Ethics of Afro-Pessimism**
Afro-pessimism has emerged as interpretive frame to address perennial and pernicious presence of American racism and for some scholars, regulates Blacks to the status of non-human. This discourse has significant implications for religion, ethics and society.
- **Breaking White Supremacy**
The Ethics Unit, the Theology of Martin Luther King Jr. Unit and the Liberal Theologies Unit invite papers that discuss Gary Dorrien's 2017 book *Breaking White Supremacy: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Black Social Gospel* for a co-sponsored session at which Gary Dorrien will be a respondent. Papers might address such topics as the importance of Breaking White Supremacy in understanding the Black social gospel and continuing the work begun in Dorrien's *The New Abolition: W.E.B. DuBois and the Black Social Gospel* (2015); the theological insights of the civil rights movement and the way those insights inform, critique, and are critiqued in contemporary settings by the Movement For Black Lives; the claim that the civil rights movement ultimately failed to break white supremacy, and the implications of that claim for communities working to break white supremacy today; and contribution of *Breaking White Supremacy* considered against the backdrop of Dorrien's body of scholarly work.

Mission Statement:

This is an established Unit that has served scholars concerned in the field, others interested in the intersection of ethics, and other disciplines within the academy over an extended period of years. We believe it is inconceivable for any comprehensive study of religion to be undertaken without serious attention to the ethical teachings that are an integral part of every known religion. This Unit seeks to serve the AAR by providing a forum for the ethical interests and issues all religious traditions address. We provide the opportunity for intellectual and academic exchange through the discipline of ethics. We encourage younger scholars and work to have a diversity of perspectives and methodologies represented from various religious traditions.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Day, Keri, Princeton Theological Seminary, keri.day@ptsem.edu

Chair - Ringer, Christophe D., Chicago Theological Seminary, christophe.ringer@ctschicago.edu

Evangelical Studies Unit

Call:

Keeping with the theme of the previous year—focusing reflection on the definition and description of Evangelicalism with regards to its public posturing and relationship to questions of race and ethnicity—as the nature of Evangelicalism remains increasingly contestable, the Evangelical Studies group wishes to focus more sustained attention on the question of who gets to define Evangelicalism. It is primarily defined as a Western, American phenomenon, or does its global, wide-ranging ethnic diversity define it? What role do political and media descriptions play in our understanding of Evangelicalism, its relative “whiteness”? And what role do the wider academic disciplines play in helping to nuance and understand this movement in light of historical, sociological, and theological description? Added to this is a growing complexification over many prominent figures leaving Evangelicalism, including the current President of the American Academy of Religion. And yet, who gets to define the movement, and what power resides within the definition and description of a term so intricately tied to “evangel,” the “gospel,” or “good news.” In addition to this, how to evangelical theologies of resistance factor into the wider understanding of Evangelicalism.

We will hold two sessions, and possibly a third with co-sponsorship from SBL’s Bible and Practical Theology group on the best ways to methodologically define Evangelicalism, whether biblical, theological, historical, demographic, anthropological, sociological.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is one of a very few academic professional groups specifically created for the academic study of evangelical theology without a confessional requirement for membership or participation and that seeks to be diverse with regard to gender, denomination, ethnicity, and culture. The Unit seeks to construct sessions at each Annual Meeting that address crucial issues both within the evangelical communities of North America and the world and between evangelicals and non-evangelical religious movements and theologies. The Unit sponsors sessions with theological, historical, and/or sociological foci. The Unit’s goal has always been to stay on the “cutting edge” of evangelical thought and to cross boundaries between evangelical and non-evangelical religious communities in order to create dialogue and constructive mutual understanding.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)

Other

Leadership:

Chair - Sexton, Jason, University of California, Berkeley, jason.s.sexton@gmail.com

Chair - Bacote, Vincent, Wheaton College, vincent.bacote@wheaton.edu

Exploratory Sessions

Call:

All proposals for new Units must begin as Exploratory Sessions. An exploratory session is a complete prearranged session that provides a platform for a group of members to announce a line of inquiry new to the AAR program and to seek out others interested in pursuing it further. The proposal can be for a paper, panel, or other creative type of session format. Exploratory sessions are submitted through the PAPERS system, and must be submitted before **March 1, 2018**. Notification of program acceptance will be announced by **April 2, 2018**. Exploratory sessions that are accepted onto the program are then invited to submit an application for new unit status by **December 7, 2018**.

Anonymity:

Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Unit

Call:

Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection is co-sponsoring a call for the following topic with the Religion in Europe Unit:

- The use of feminist and gender theory in analyzing the challenges and responses of religious communities in Europe: In addition to concerns over religious or legal regulation of women's attire, this can include religious debates over wider gender issues of equal rights and meaningful participation in decision-making, safety, the recovery of hidden/forgotten/suppressed female historical narratives, and the work of interreligious women's coalitions, for a possible co-sponsored session with the Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Unit and the Religion in Europe Unit.

In addition, we seek papers addressing the following:

- **Feminist Work as Energizing Forces in the Contemporary World**
In the field of physics, energy is the property that must be transferred to an object in order to perform work on, or to heat, the object. It can be converted in form, but not created or destroyed. Additionally, an energy transformation is the change of energy from one form to another. Energy transformations occur everywhere every second of the day. There are many different forms of energy such as electrical, thermal, nuclear, mechanical, electromagnetic, sound, and chemical. Animal bodies and their respective brains live in a relationship of energy exchange that fuels sentience. So also, energy exchange has been imagined in cultural landscapes that are populated with creative spirits (e.g. daemons, muses, Big Magic [Elizabeth Gilbert]), the excesses of gift economies, the rise and fall of social effervescence, emergence and network theory, and the generative enthusiasms of embodied artistry, writ large. In the face of increased climate volatility, which is itself a matter of energy exchange, precarious energetic relationships to ecology and economy are increasing as well. Borrowing from these naturalistic perspectives, FTRR invites feminist religious scholars and theorists to consider the notion of "energy" as a potential metaphor for understanding, advancing, and identifying the various ways religious feminist work transforms and energizes the public sphere.
- Specifically, we seek responses to the following question: How do feminist religious practices, methods, and theories act as energizing forces or conduits in the public sphere? We seek papers that address this question in light of three themes: ecology, economy, and relationships. A secondary level of analysis we also consider is how does this energy metaphor promote new understandings of feminist religious public work in the era of alt right movements, climate change deniers, alternative facts, and the alarming resurgence of sexual violence against women? Are there ways of connecting

transformative, energizing feminist public work to traditional religious terms: Spirit, Love, Compassion, and Truth?

Mission Statement:

This Unit has consistently provided programmatic space for a wide variety of feminist theories, including feminist theology, queer theory, continental feminist theory, feminist political theory, etc., as these intersect with a broad understanding of “religious reflection”, including institutional religious settings, or intersections of religion and culture, religion and aesthetics, religion and the body, and religion and nature. As the 21 century commences, FTRR will plan to invigorate feminist analyses of religious discourse within a global setting. Urgent concerns include forms of religious violence and climate crises, among others.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Keller, Mary, University of Wyoming, mkeller@uwyo.edu

Chair - White, Carol Wayne, Bucknell University, cwhite@bucknell.edu

Films

Call:

Every year the AAR screens 8-12 films at the Annual Meeting, ranging from documentaries made by members as part of their research to blockbuster Hollywood films which impact the public understanding of religion. If you wish to screen a film at the Annual Meeting, please submit your proposal as a Roundtable Session and include a short description of the film, runtime, name of the director, and year it was released. Please include yourself as the president of the session and as a panelist (as the system requires both for a roundtable session). If you wish to have a panel discussion after the film, submit the names of those panelists as well. Preference will be given to films that tie into AAR Program Unit sessions, relate to the Presidential theme, or the Annual Meeting locale.

For any questions, please contact annualmeeting@aarweb.org.

Anonymity:

Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Folklore and Religion Seminar

Call:

In addition to paper proposals which generally apply the perspectives and methodologies of Folkloristics as a discipline to the study of religion, this year the Folklore and Religion Seminar particularly welcomes paper submissions focused on the following specific themes:

- **Public Sector Folklore and Vernacular Religion**
Folklore studies has long been actively engaged with the public sphere, and with the representation and promotion of our discipline, its perspectives, and its subject matter in public forums. A substantial number of folklorists work outside of exclusively academic settings – in national and regional museums, Folklife Centers, regional arts or heritage management programs, state folklife programs, as well as serving as consultants for corporate communities. Programs like the Public Sector Track in the University of Oregon or Western Kentucky University’s Folklore Programs demonstrate the unique store of theoretical frameworks and practical training in public outreach and engagement offered by folkloristics. In light of the AAR’s newly expanded mission statement – which now includes “to enhance the public understanding of Religion” as an articulated goal – and the conference theme for 2018 (Religious Studies in Public) Folklorists offer a substantial and meaningful contribution to this conversation. The Folklore and Religion seminar seeks submissions that explore the intersections of Religious Identity and Public Sector Folklore. In particular, we welcome papers that discuss specific instances of outreach to vernacular religious movements and communities, or that explore the benefits and challenges of heritage management, traditional arts, or cultural preservation programs focused on religious beliefs, practices, or material cultures.
- **Cannabis Culture, Folklore, and Religion**
Folklorists – at least according to Elliot Oring (1986) – have a proclivity for studying phenomena that might be described as “marginal” (in relation to the centers of power and privilege). Since at least 1920 – with the publication of Eugenio Gomez Maillefert’s “La Marihuana in Mexico” in the *Journal of American Folklore* – folklorists have found fertile ground in the vernacular speech, material culture, foodways, narratives and beliefs of the marginalized cultures and counter-cultures associated with the (heretofore) illegal use of cannabis products. Scholars of Religion and Folklore alike have found similarly rich territory to mine in exploring traditional ceremonial or healing practices involving cannabis drawn from Asia, the Middle-East, and the Caribbean. Indeed, hundreds of articles in *Religious Studies* and *Folklore Journals* reference cannabis and its attendant – often marginalized -cultures. But what happens to these intersections when the marginal becomes the mainstream? With the enactment of Amendment 64 legalizing recreational cannabis use in Colorado (along with attendant measures adopted in several other states), Denver has seen the emergence of the first International Church of Cannabis, a kosher deli that cures its gravlax with THC, and

fierce ongoing debate between local pastors and ministers about the relative morality of legalization. To capitalize on the location of our 2018 meeting, the Folklore and Religion seminar welcomes papers and presentations that explore the intersection of Cannabis culture and Vernacular Religious traditions. Papers that explore emergent communities (like the Church of Cannabis) or those with a long history of ritual cannabis consumption are equally encouraged. We would also welcome papers that discuss the relation between cannabis consumption and trance, numinous, or ecstatic states; questions of taboo (including debates about marijuana's kosher status); and especially explorations of vernacular religious responses (positive and negative) to drug legalization.

The ultimate direction taken by the Folklore and Religion Seminar at the 2018 Annual Meeting will depend upon the number and quality of submissions in each category. Submissions that mediate or unify these themes are especially welcomed as well.

Mission Statement:

Folklore Studies has led and leads the way in directing scholarship on the expressive culture of religious communities, the methodological challenges of ethnographic work within those communities, and research and analysis of the religion of ordinary people diachronically and synchronically. Uniquely representing the theoretical and methodological perspectives of folkloristics on the study of religion, as well as consistently spotlighting the contextual material that folklorists see as significant evidence of religious belief and practice, this AAR Seminar allows a more permanent place at the annual meeting for the study of religion as associated with such topics as food, costume, vernacular art, architecture, material culture, medical and healing beliefs, narrative and song, performance, etc., as well as topics relevant to applied folkloristics such as the "paranormal" and the "supernatural."

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Primiano, Leonard Norman, Cabrini University, primiano@cabrini.edu

Chair - Wehmeyer, Stephen, Champlain College, swehmeyer@champlain.edu

Gay Men and Religion Unit

Call:

The Gay Men in Religion Group presents our 2018 Call for Papers that addresses the following questions/themes:

- **AAR Theme**
The theme for the 2018 Annual Meeting is “Religious Studies in Public: The Civic Responsibilities, Opportunities, and Risks Facing Scholars of Religion.” In keeping with the theme, we invite papers that address the intersections of gay men’s religious and sexual lives and how we construe and navigate various “publics”.
- **Religious Exemptions/Freedom**
We invite paper proposals that continue to explore the challenges posed by religious exemption laws and how they affect LGBT persons. We also welcome papers that explore conservative organizations’ (e.g., Focus on the Family, or the American Family Association) representations of homosexuality—particularly gay male sexuality—as a threat to religious freedom—and how gay male conceptions of freedom/liberty might compare and contrast with queer conceptions of liberty.
- **The Rise of Conservatism, Homonationalism and Islamophobia among LGBTs**
We invite paper proposals that explore the global emergence of conservatism, nationalism and/or Islamophobia among LGBTs. In the United States, we are seeing a surge in white gay men openly embracing forms of racist behaviour. We also think of author and former Breitbart journalist Milo Yiannopoulos, leader of Germany’s right-wing party Alternative für Deutschland Alice Weidel, and—although already more than fifteen years ago—Dutch right-wing politician Pim Fortuyn (assassinated in 2002), and other LGBT politicians or activists that combine conservatism, nationalism and/or Islamophobia. Papers could respond to questions such as: How do conservatism, nationalism and Islamophobia interrelate? Do we see these developments among LGBTs more broadly or only/mainly among certain white gay men—and how can we make sense of this? How do these developments relate to how radical Islamists take sexual freedom and diversity as a major symptom of western liberalism that they condemn? Do these movements point to the bankruptcy of progressive/left, globalist LGBT policies? How are (LGBT) theologians and scholars of religion to respond?
- ***Moonlight* in the Spotlight**
The movie *Moonlight* won rave reviews and awards for its complex presentation of Black male sexuality. We invite papers that would situate *Moonlight* and its representations of Black male sexuality in religious contexts.
- **African American and Afro-Latin Gay Male Diva Worship: Black Divas as Religious Text**
We invite papers that explore the religious or quasi-religious relationship between

African diasporic gay men (particularly African American and Afro-Latin gay men) and “Black Divas” (e.g., Beyoncé, Rihanna, RuPaul etc.).

- **Religion and Indigenous Gay Sexualities**
We welcome papers that address the intersection of gay sexualities (dissident, non-normative, non-conforming) and religious identity or subjectivity in indigenous cultures/societies—past and present—and how the meaning of subjects that engage in heterodox or antinomian acts is constructed, negotiated, and contested by hegemonic religious discourses, or by its connection to indigeneity.
- **BDSM as Theology**
We welcome papers that explore how BDSM (Bondage & Discipline, Domination & Submission & Sadism & Masochism) can be used as a lens to analyze theological concepts or religious practices and/or vice-versa.
- **Pre-Arranged Panel: *Un/Familiar Theology***
We have pre-arranged a book review panel on Susannah Cornwall's new book *Un/Familiar Theology: Reconceiving Sex, Reproduction, and Generativity* (T&T Clark, 2017). Through engagement with theologies of adoption, pro-natalism, marriage, and queer theology, Susannah Cornwall figures developments in models of marriage and family not as distortions of or divergences from the divinely-ordained blueprint, but as developments already of a piece with these institution's being. Much Christian theological discussion of family, sex and marriage seems to claim that they are (or should be) unchanging and immaculate; that to celebrate their shifting and developing natures is to reject them as good gifts of God. However, models of marriage, family, parenting and reproduction have changed and are still, in some cases radically, changing. These changes are not all a raging tide to be turned back, but in continuity with goods deeply embedded in the tradition. Alternative forms of marriage and family stand as signs of the hope of the possibility of change. Changed institutions, such as same-sex marriage, are new beginnings with the potential to be fruitful and generative in their own right. In them, humans create new imaginaries which more fully acknowledge the interactive nature of our relationships with the world and the divine. We are looking forward to this pre-arranged panel, and while we are not considering proposals for this panel, we do invite a range of proposals on queer theory, texts, and theological construction. Co-sponsored by the Gay Men and Religion Unit and the Sacred Texts, Theory, and Theological Construction Unit.
- **The Future of Gay Male Studies in Religion**
We welcome paper proposals that respond to the question, “What is the future of gay male studies in religion?” We also welcome papers that propose future directions in gay male studies in religion.

- **Open Call**

In addition, we are invite paper or panel proposals that fit within the mission of the Gay Men and Religion Group.

Mission Statement:

The Gay Men and Religion Unit:

- Provides scholarly reflection and writing on the intersections of gay male experience, including sexual experiences, with religious traditions and spiritual practices
- Fosters ongoing contributions by gay men to religious scholarship in all its forms
- Critically challenges homophobic scholarship and religious teaching, on the one hand, and aspects of the LGBTQI equality movement that promote assimilation and normalization, on the other
- Engages a variety of theoretical and political discourses, which critique essentialist notions of gay male identity
- Promotes recognition of the diversity of men-who-have-sex-with-men across time and throughout the world and investigates both the common and the particular among such persons—including their discourses around sexuality and around religion.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection.

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Sneed, Roger A., Furman University, roger.sneed@furman.edu

Chair - Derks, Marco, Utrecht University, marcoderks@hotmail.com

Global-Critical Philosophy of Religion Seminar

Call:

We invite paper submissions for a seminar session on "philosophies of the cosmos." Submissions, ideally, will advance new categories, questions, and content for global-critical philosophy of religion that is not already represented in theistic philosophy of religion. We are specifically interested in papers that engage five sub-questions: (1) What is the cosmos, if anything? (2) Where does the cosmos come from, if anywhere? (3) Where is the cosmos going, if anywhere? (4) How does the cosmos get there, if by any way (predestination, intervention, hierophany, experience)? (5) What obstacles lie in the way of the cosmos, if any ("evil")?

Mission Statement:

Recent years have witnessed the publication of several new proposals for a philosophy of religion that is religiously inclusive and critically informed. But there is to date no such textbook for philosophy of religion—no textbook that thoroughly integrates non-theistic religious philosophies and critically engages the methodological and theoretical issues of religious studies. This seminar intends to research and write such a textbook. Our seminar is constituted by area-specialist scholars of religion, comparativist philosophers of religion, critical theorists of religion, and traditional (analytic) philosophers of religion. These constituencies will work together over the next five years (2015-2019) to identify the comparative categories and critical terms for global-critical philosophy of religion, to populate these categories with the arguments and ideas of a diversity of religious traditions, to take up critical issues pertaining to cross-cultural comparison and philosophy of these arguments and ideas, and to develop the blueprint and content for an innovative new undergraduate textbook in global-critical philosophy of religion. We will also seek to publish independently the essays that are contributed to each working session of the seminar.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Knepper, Timothy D., Drake University, tim.knepper@drake.edu

Chair - Kopf, Gereon, Luther College, kopfg@luther.edu

Graduate Student Committee

Call:

- **The World Needs Us: Serving the Public Sphere Through the Study of Religion**
The world needs us. Within increasingly polemical, insular, and sometimes hostile public conversations, scholars of religion offer vital insights and interrogations into the issues that touch the heart of political and public discourse: the value and freedom of the human person, the extent of human responsibility to the natural world, the place of religious belief within political bodies, the ethical responsibility to give voice to the marginalized and oppressed, etc. In this forum, a panel of scholars will explore the many ways to serve the public sphere through the study of religion. What is the place of the religious scholar within public discourse around hot-button issues, civic and political life, etc.? The Graduate Student Committee invites proposals that reflect on experiences or potential avenues for scholars of religion to serve the public sphere. Please send proposals of no more than 200 words, plus CV to Rachel Toombs at rstoombs@gmail.com. This forum proposal does not count toward the two-proposal submission limit with the PAPERS system.

Mission Statement:

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)

E-mail with Attachment (proposal is in attachment, not in body of e-mail)

Leadership:

Chair - Toombs, Rachel, Baylor University, rachel_toombs@baylor.edu

Hinduism Unit

Call:

- Narrative and Mahabharata
Raj Balkaran (raj.balkaran@gmail.com)
- Pedagogy
Raj Balkaran (raj.balkaran@gmail.com)
- Hinduism & Politics
John Nemec (jwn3y@cms.mail.virginia.edu)
- Continuities and Discontinuities in Hinduism: Premodern and Modern
John Nemec (jwn3y@cms.mail.virginia.edu)
- Hinduism and Religious Experience
June McDaniel (McdanielJ@cofc.edu)
- Comparative Hagiology
Patton Burchett (peburchett@wm.edu)
- Dance as Metaphor and Practice: Religion, Body, and the Arts
Miranda Shaw (mshaw@richmond.edu)
- Robert Orsi: Hinduism Response to History & Presence
Nancy Martin (nancy2martin@earthlink.net)
- Hinduism as a Minority Religion
Patton Burchett (peburchett@wm.edu)
- Hinduism and K-12 Education
Shubha Pathak (pathak@american.edu)
- Hinduism and Sexualities
Jessica Vantine-Birkenholtz (jvanbirk@illinois.edu)
- Hinduism as Force for Change: Applying Indigenous Categories
Peter Gottschalk (pgottschalk@wesleyan.edu)
- Imagining Others in Hindu Literature

Shubha Pathak (pathak@american.edu)

- Hindu Humor
Shubha Pathak (pathak@american.edu)
- Can You Be Proud to Be a Hindu without Being Hindutva?
Asha Shipman (asha.shipman@yale.edu)
- Ethics of Violence
Patton Burchett (peburchett@wm.edu)

Mission Statement:

This Unit was established in 1997 with the mission of providing a forum within the AAR for the academic study of Hinduism as a distinctive world religious tradition including, but not limited to the geographical region of South Asia. The Unit seeks to foster research on all periods and registers of Hindu texts and practices through the presentation of new data, critical analysis, and interpretative strategies, based on textual, sociohistorical, ethnographic, philosophical, theological, and theoretical studies. We are particularly interested in forging connections between the study of Hinduism and other areas of religious studies, and we welcome proposals from scholars in the field that can provide such connections.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Burchett, Patton, College of William and Mary, peburchett@wm.edu

Chair - Pathak, Shubha, American University, pathak@american.edu

History of Christianity Unit

Call:

The History of Christianity program unit continues to encourage chronological depth and geographic breadth in the study of Christian histories. Generally, unless otherwise noted, we invite papers and papers sessions that address the issues suggested in this Call for Proposals across time periods. We also continue to invite papers on topics and periods not explicitly mentioned in this Call.

The centenary of the 1918 “Spanish” Flu Pandemic prompts an inquiry into Christian imaginative responses to crises (epidemiological, environmental, political, military, economic, etc.) that disrupt settled life ways, catalyze large-scale human migratory movement, reinforce parameters (purity, pollution, borders, etc.), and press issues of theodicy and teleology.

The inauguration of the new Museum of the Bible in the U.S. capital marks a muscular assertion of the Hebrew and Christian Bible’s place in history. We invite explorations of:

- The role of museums as sites of performance, memory, reification, interrogation of Christian history, traditions, and scripture
- The Bible as artifact, icon, and living and contested text, against the backdrop of competing institutional, cultural, economic, and political interests with the onset of digital technology
- Bible Societies and Bible translation and reception in global contexts
- The Bible in popular religious musical culture and hymnody.

Riffing on Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo’s magisterial multi-volume *Historia de los Heterodoxos Españoles* (History of the Spanish Heterodox) of a century ago, we invite approaches to Christian history that foreground non-orthodox movements and figures, especially as these have proved constitutive of the religious and political center or exemplify national and cultural diversity or imbed within particular or global settings. How might a History of Heterodox Christianity mirror or contest received narratives of orthodox triumph and prefigure current and projected configurations? The scope of heterodoxy may also include significant and violent outliers (e.g., the People’s Temple of Jonestown, David Koresh in Waco, etc.).

In keeping with our unit’s World Christian History approach, we invite explorations of the response of Christian groups within and outside China (especially the Overseas Chinese) to the immense political, economic, and cultural changes wrought by the onset, maturation, and transformation of the Chinese Communist Revolution of 1948. We seek papers that cluster historical ruminations in one period- Late Antiquity, Medieval, Early Modern, Modern, Postmodern. As a deliberate location for ongoing work on recent interpretive energies in one era, we envision this as a site for forefronting creative, in-depth approaches. Full panel proposals, especially those integrating shared theoretical material, are especially encouraged.

Mission Statement:

The mission of this Unit is to deepen and broaden the study of the Christian past by presenting innovative and engaging research on the history, culture, and development of Christianity from its origins to the present, while at the same time promoting interdisciplinary dialogue among the fields of history, religious studies, ritual studies, art history, anthropology, and historical theology. We have a strong commitment to providing a showcase for the work of both younger and established scholars in the field.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Beckman, Trish, St. Olaf College, beckman@stolaf.edu

Chair - Ramirez, Daniel, Claremont Graduate University, daniel.ramirez@cgu.edu

Holmes Welch and the Study of Buddhism in Twentieth-Century China Seminar

Call:

We welcome papers on any aspect of the life and work of Holmes Welch, as well as papers that discuss topics relating to modern Chinese Buddhism or another field within the context of Welch's work. As this is the final year that our seminar will meet, we particularly welcome papers that suggest future directions for the field of Modern Chinese Buddhism in the light of Welch's legacy. The format of the seminar meeting will be paper presentations followed by comments from a discussant. In the final section of the seminar meeting we will have a brief postmortem discussion on the five-year seminar as a whole, and discuss possible future projects drawing upon the work that we have accomplished here.

Mission Statement:

This seminar will celebrate the significant scholarly contributions made by Holmes Welch (1924-1981) to the study of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, and also explore how we might advance the field beyond the boundaries and scope of his original ideas through the use of new sources and methodologies. Revisiting and expanding Welch's scholarship is urgently needed, since his work continues to function as both a standard resource for specialists and as an authoritative summary of Chinese Buddhism during this era for non-specialists. The final goal of this seminar is to produce a critical collected volume covering the major aspects of Welch's work, in which contributors will update his findings and approaches with their own cutting-edge scholarship. The publication of this volume will roughly coincide with the upcoming fiftieth anniversaries of the publications of Welch's volumes *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism* and *The Buddhist Revival*.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Hammerstrom, Erik, Pacific Lutheran University, hammerej@plu.edu

Chair - Scott, Gregory Adam, University of Manchester, gregory.scott@manchester.ac.uk

Human Enhancement and Transhumanism Unit

Call:

Enhancement Technology: How Can Religion Scholars Help Prepare the Public?

This Unit welcomes papers on any aspect of the relationship between religion and human enhancement through technology or on transhumanism. We seek perspectives from a variety of religious traditions and encourage relational, feminist, queer, postmodern, and postcolonial analyses. Original research is a priority. Papers may identify and critically evaluate any implicit religious beliefs, practices, and values that might underlie the development and use of human enhancement technologies or the key claims, goals, values, and assumptions of transhumanism. For example, papers might explore the relationship between enhancement and core doctrines or practices of religious traditions, asking how religion might challenge a culture of enhancement or how the growing use of enhancement technology might challenge or reshape the religions of the future. Papers may provide critical and constructive assessments of an envisioned future that places confidence in nanotechnology, cognitive science, moral bioenhancements, genetics, robotics, and information technology to achieve enhanced human capacities or extend the human lifespan.

In view of the 2018 AAR theme (“Religious Studies in Public: The Civic Responsibilities, Opportunities, and Risks Facing Scholars of Religion”), we are particularly interested in papers that consider the public role of religion scholars in response to the expanding role of human enhancement technologies. We welcome examinations of what it means to be human and responsible in deliberations about enhancement usage.

Mission Statement:

“Transhumanism” or “human enhancement” refers to an intellectual and cultural movement that advocates the use of a variety of emerging technologies. The convergence of these technologies may make it possible to take control of human evolution, providing for “desirable” physical, moral, affective, and cognitive enhancements and the amelioration of aspects of the human condition regarded as undesirable. These enhancements include the radical extension of healthy human life. If these enhancements become widely available, it would arguably have a more radical impact than any other development in human history — one need only reflect briefly on the economic, political, and social implications of some of the extreme enhancement possibilities. The implications for religion and the religious dimensions of human enhancement technologies are enormous and are addressed in our Unit. We are interested in encouraging and providing a forum for a broad array of diverse scholarly input. To be placed on a very occasional mailing list, contact Calvin Mercer, East Carolina University, mercerc@ecu.edu .

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - DeBaets, Amy Michelle, Oakland University, adebaets@oakland.edu

Chair - Cole-Turner, Ronald S., Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, coleturn@pts.edu

Indian and Chinese Religions Compared Unit

Call:

- Theory and Practice of Yoga and Bodily Disciplines in India and China
We are taking the term “yoga” in a broad sense, to include bodily disciplines, hygienic regimens, inner alchemy, breathing techniques, body maps, pursuit of physical immortality, etc. Approaches can be historical, descriptive, theoretical, etc. The goal is to begin an informed exchanged of information between scholars working on Indian yoga traditions and those working on comparable practices in China. Comparative proposals are welcome, as are proposals focusing on a single work, lineage, set of techniques, etc. from either India or China. Co-sponsored session with Indian and Chinese Religions Compared Unit, the Daoist Studies Unit, the Tantric Studies Unit, and the Yogacara Studies Unit.
Dan Lusthaus, Harvard University (lusthaus@fas.harvard.edu)
Michael Allen, Univ. of Virginia (msa2b@virginia.edu)
- Commentarial Techniques
As a continuation of our previous session on “The Art of Commentary,” we also invite submissions on commentarial techniques as found in India and/or China. How do commentators perform what they wish to accomplish? Comparative proposals are welcome, as are proposals focusing on a single commentary or set of commentaries from either India or China.

For these topics, individual paper proposals are preferred to full session proposals. Questions may be directed to either of the co-chairs.

Mission Statement:

This Unit addresses two significant gaps in current scholarship on Chinese and Indian religious traditions. The first gap is in historical scholarship. India and China have been the two mother cultures of South Asia and East Asia. Historically, the two were connected through the transmission and transformation of Buddhism from India to China. This remarkably fruitful incorporation and assimilation of a foreign system of thought and cultural practice into another well-established civilization is one of the first of its kind in the human history of cross-cultural exchanges, especially at such a magnitude. Unfortunately, there has been inadequate scholarly attention paid to how Indian Buddhism — and its central Asian variants — introduced new issues and imaginations to the Chinese people and how the Chinese managed to appropriate the alien tradition into their own intellectual milieu, hence deeply enriching and reshaping the indigenous Chinese culture. Second, we also seek to redirect some of the attention of the comparative study of religion and philosophy away from the default Western-centered approach. India and China are profoundly important civilizations, both historically and contemporarily. Despite the historical connection of Buddhism, the differences in their cultural products — whether religious, linguistic, philosophical, artistic, or material — are so striking

that comparing them would highlight the true richness, plurality, and diversity of human creativity and cultural productivity.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Allen, Michael, University of Virginia, msa2b@virginia.edu

Chair - Lusthaus, Dan, Harvard University, lusthaus@fas.harvard.edu

Indigenous Religious Traditions Unit

Call:

This Unit focuses on theoretical, methodological, and conceptual issues in the study of indigenous religious traditions the world over. Though particularly interested in interdisciplinary approaches to the study of indigenous religions, we are primarily grounded in the “history of religions” approach as it concerns the analysis of indigenous traditions. The Unit is also concerned with the interface of indigenous religious traditions and modernity, colonial and postcolonial conditions, and local and global forces that shape the practice of indigenous traditions and their categorizations.

We welcome Indigenous paper and panel proposals particularly relating to any of the following five 2018 Denver AAR proposals:

- Universal vs. Local in Indigenous Methodology, Translation, and Religion Roundtable
- Indigenous Religious Resistance to Globalized Resource Extraction Panel
- Indigenous Migratory, Nomadic and Urban Religion Panel
- Transforming Categories of “Indigenous” and “World” Religions
This session will interrogate the various disciplinary and political purposes served by the construction of “Indigenous” persons and religions, particularly as a category opposed to that of “world religions”. For possible co-sponsorship with the Cultural History of the Study of Religion Unit and Indigenous Religions Unit.
- Decolonization as Healing
With a wide range of other units, we plan to co-sponsor a session on the theme of decolonization as healing, recognizing that colonization in Africa and in other parts of our world has resulted in both historical and ongoing threats to health and wellbeing. We are looking for papers that address facets of this theme, including but not limited to: “Place, Land, and Environmental Degradation,” “Decolonization/Restoration of Identities,” “Vocabularies and Pragmatic Applications of Rituals and Ceremonies,” “Reclaiming the Past, Imagining the Future,” and “Tradition as Healer”. Co-sponsored with the Religions, Medicines and Healing; African Diaspora Religions, African Religions; Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society; Body and Religion; Indigenous Religious Traditions; Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society; Native Traditions in the Americas; Religions in the Latina/o Americas; Religion in South Asia, Religion in Southeast Asia; and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism; and World Christianity

Units. Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the Call for Papers, and will speak to its broader implications for African American religious history. This session is a panel. Please submit a proposal for a paper or presentation. If your proposal is chosen, your paper will be circulated ahead of the conference and you'll be asked to give a brief (5-7 minute) summary of the paper during the conference session.

Mission Statement:

This Unit focuses on theoretical, methodological, and conceptual issues in the study of indigenous religious traditions the world over. Though particularly interested in interdisciplinary approaches to the study of indigenous religions, we are primarily grounded in the "history of religions" approach as it concerns the analysis of indigenous traditions. The Unit is also concerned with the interface of indigenous religious traditions and modernity, colonial and postcolonial conditions, and local and global forces that shape the practice of indigenous traditions and their categorizations.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Estrada, Gabriel, California State University, gabriel.estrada@csulb.edu

Chair - Alles, Gregory D., McDaniel College, galles@mcdaniel.edu

International Development and Religion Unit

Call:

The International Development and Religion Unit invites proposals for individual papers and panels that address the intersection of international development and religion, broadly conceived. For the 2018 Annual Meeting, where the Presidential Theme is “Religion and Public Life,” we especially invite proposals engaging the following:

- **Revolutionary Bioethics: Bioethics, Religion, and International Development**
For a possible joint session with the Bioethics and Religion Unit and the International Development and Religion Unit, we seek papers concerning how questions about healthcare, health sciences, and health policy intersect with religious imaginaries in international development settings. In particular, how does bioethical theory and practice emerging from the global south challenge the dominant assumptions of mainstream bioethics? Papers of sufficient quality, including those that we are unable to include on the program, will be considered for inclusion in an edited volume in the Lexington monograph series, Revolutionary Bioethics. Revolutionary bioethics is a new series composed of scholarly monographs and edited collections organized around specific topics that explore bioethical theory and practice through the frameworks provided by feminist ethics, narrative ethics, and virtue ethics, challenging the assumptions of mainstream bioethics in the process. For details on the series see <https://goo.gl/okhqwQ>.
- **Islam in Development Contexts**
How do Islamic principles such as zakat affect development programming? What is “Islamic” about Islamic charities doing aid and development work? How does this intersect with public funding and/or programming?
- **Religion, Development, and Public Policy**
How has a greater attention to religion shaped a shift in thinking in the post-Washington consensus era? How has a greater attention to religion shaped government policy in development? How has the greater dialogue about religion in development affected other policy areas, such as gender, education, and/or health?

Mission Statement:

Since its establishment as an academic discipline in the 1960's the field of International Development Studies (IDS) has evolved from a fragmented topic, contained within the many silos of different academic departments, into an interdisciplinary field that draws on knowledge from across the social sciences and humanities. While this is true for many of the social sciences and humanities; religious and theological studies are two silos that until recently have found it a challenge to contribute to this growing conversation. The International Development and Religion Unit was established at the AAR in 2009 as one avenue through which religious and

theological studies could engage in this emerging constructive dialogue with development studies.

The primary objective of our Unit is to use the AAR's interdisciplinary and international reach as a focal point to gather scholars from across the humanities and social sciences, including those outside the AAR, who are engaged in the study of the space and place of religion in the context of economic, political and socio-cultural development in the global south.

We wish to support theoretically robust and practically oriented research that interrogates the post/de/colonial, theological, religious and missionary assumptions and mentalities of the global confluence of international development and religion in the developing world, including, but not limited to the investigations of current faith-based NGO's and their projects in the field, practioner-based research and reflection from the field and the encounter between private and public religion(s) in the developing world.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)

E-mail with Attachment (proposal is in attachment, not in body of e-mail)

Papers of sufficient quality will be considered for publication in an edited volume on the same theme for the Routledge Research in Religion and Development book series. (see <http://ow.ly/FGEJb>)

Leadership:

Chair - Duncanson-Hales, Christopher, University of Sudbury, theolog3n1@gmail.com

Chair - Tomalin, Emma, University of Leeds, e.tomalin@leeds.ac.uk

Interreligious and Interfaith Studies Unit

Call:

The Interreligious and Interfaith Studies group invites paper and panel proposals that examine, from multiple disciplinary perspectives, the encounter of institutions and individuals who approach and embody religion in different ways. We welcome proposals that are interdisciplinary, incorporate alternative pedagogies of presentation, make use of new media, and reflect the dialogical nature of this field. We also welcome proposals that engage the Presidential theme for AAR 2018. In particular, this year we invite papers in the following areas:

- **Interreligious Studies and Structural Inequity**
To what extent does Interreligious Studies participate in Christian privilege and white supremacy, and how can this emerging field be attentive to intersectionality in creating new frames and models of interreligious engagement? Does the field make room for theologically conservative or humanist participation, or for participants who belong to multiple religious communities? As this field emerges, where are the resources and whose voices are heard?
- **Religious Studies and Interreligious Studies**
Do Religious Studies and interfaith engagement offer different methodologies or models for the understanding of religions? In what ways do these represent competing or complementary paradigms? How is this conversation influenced by the relationship between classroom teaching and co-curricular initiatives? Papers might explore and question the binaries that are often invoked in this conversation: empirical/experiential; emic/etic; scholar/practitioner; scholarship/advocacy.
- **Nationalism and Interreligious Conflict**
How does nationalism create conflict between religious communities? What is the role of interreligious coalitions in mediating conflict? How do religious communities and persons become embedded in nationalisms? We particularly invite case studies.
- **Risky Business: Activism, Education and Interfaith Organizing**
Where are the intersectional conflicts of interfaith activism? What are the physical, emotional, social, and professional risks of engaging in certain types of activism? Does advocating for religious voices in the public square run the risk of undermining religious freedom? How can we prepare interreligious educators for the risks associated with interfaith activism?
- **Interreligious Families and the Virtue of Resilience**

Mission Statement:

This Unit creates a space for critical interdisciplinary engagement with interfaith and interreligious studies, which examines the many modes of response to the reality of religious

pluralism (theological, philosophical, historical, scriptural, ethical, praxological, and institutional). This Unit will:

- Expand and enrich the modalities of interreligious and interfaith discourse in a diverse set of academic disciplines that have grappled with religious pluralism
- Give voice to what has already been happening for years at the cutting-edge of institutional and pedagogical innovation and at the intersection of the academy and civic engagement in many disciplines

Our intention is that this Unit will encourage the rigorous analysis necessary to establish the contours of this emerging field. A crucial first step involves systematic attention to common terminology (interfaith, interreligious, engaged pluralism, multifaith, multireligious) and the intersection of these terms with the disciplinary approaches that are increasingly using this language (interfaith just peacemaking, comparative theology, and scriptural reasoning). Similarly, we will encourage critical analysis of both national and international interfaith organizational models and other praxis-oriented responses to religious pluralism.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Peace, Jennifer Howe, Andover Newton Theological School, jpeace@ants.edu

Chair - Ziad, Hodayra, Institute for Islamic, Christian and Jewish Studies, hodayra@gmail.com

Interreligious Reflections on Immigration Seminar

Call:

The Interreligious Reflections on Immigration Seminar invites proposals for papers that address religion and immigration, broadly conceived, that engage two or more religious traditions. This is the fifth and final year of the Seminar, which has reached its goal to produce a follow-up volume to *Strangers in This World: Multi-Religious Reflections* (Fortress Press, 2015): *The Meaning of My Neighbor's Faith: Interreligious Reflections on Immigration*, ed. Alexander Y. Hwang and Laura Alexander (Lexington Books, 2019). This final year of the seminar seeks abstracts that addresses immigration and religion from any scholarly perspective—for example, philosophical, economic, political, theological, historical, and sociological. We are especially interested in proposals that address issues that were not addressed in the first two edited volumes, *Strangers in This World* and *The Meaning of My Neighbor's Faith*.

Mission Statement:

The overall purpose of this seminar is to promote interreligious and interdisciplinary dialogue and reflection on immigration, broadly conceived. Globalization and the ever-increasing movement of individuals and groups across multiple types of borders are fertile ground for theological and religious exploration. The issue of immigration and religion is especially timely. This seminar continues the work of scholars of diverse religious, cultural, ethnic, racial, and gender identities whose collaborations resulted in the publication of *Strangers in this World: Multi-Religious Reflections on Immigration* (Fortress Press, early 2015). This new seminar will work towards publication of a follow-up volume and coordinate with other related AAR program units to help address the growing interest and need for more religious reflections on immigration.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Alexander, Laura, University of Nebraska at Omaha, lealex@unomaha.edu

Chair - Hwang, Alexander Y., Xavier University, hwangalex@yahoo.com

Islam, Gender, Women Unit

Call:

For 2018, we will conduct a workshop session that explores the “state of the field” in the study of women and gender in relation to Islam and Muslim contexts. Our objective is to invite critical reflection on emerging methods, trajectories, and challenges in various subfields of the field including approaches to gender as a category of thought and the “mainstreaming” of its consideration in scholarship on Islam and Muslims. Drawing on pre-circulated papers spanning a broad range of topics and subfields, the session will use each paper to examine how the field of Islam and gender is developing and its relationship to other fields, including Islamic Studies and Religious Studies more broadly.

In keeping with our commitment to non-traditional programming, the session will be organized as a workshop, with pre-circulated readings (made available for advance reading on the AAR website in fall 2018) and discussion tables formed around those readings.

Therefore, IGW is not accepting proposals for standard conference papers or for prearranged paper panels. Rather, we solicit proposals from those who would like an article or chapter length piece of their writing that has already been published or otherwise completed/drafted in full to serve as a basis for one table’s discussion at the session. Topical area is open, as the specificities of each paper will be discussed in the broader context of the field.

Proposals to IGW for this session should:

- Include an abstract of the piece
- Explain clearly how the piece might help to initiate a discussion on development on the field of the study of women and gender in relation to Islam and Muslims
- Indicate the length of the full piece
- Indicate its status in the publishing process (if published, details; if under review, where; draft, etc.) and whether it forms part of a larger project
- Suggest possible facilitators for discussion of the piece at the workshop

Note: After reviewing proposals, IGW will request from finalists the full text of papers/articles in early March 2018 before making final selections. Though only work that can be circulated for review is eligible, authors will be able to revise the text before it is posted on the AAR website for participants in September 2018.

Although we have a strong preference for scholars proposing their own work, we are also willing to consider proposals to serve as table facilitator for a discussion of another scholar’s published work. Should such a proposal be accepted, we would then also encourage the author to attend and participate in the session.

After final selection of the texts, themed tables will be announced broadly, and facilitators for

each table will be solicited. Workshop attendees will be asked to sign up for the themed table at which they will participate and will have advance access to the designated text beginning in September 2018.

- **Pedagogy**

This year, a co-sponsored session with the Islam, Gender, Women Unit and the Teaching Religion Unit will focus on teaching practices, strategies, and challenges in teaching about Islam, gender, and women. The session will be organized around a brief presentation (5-6 minutes) from each session participant of a particular technique, classroom exercise, text, assignment, syllabus, or assessment that they have found effective in their particular institution setting. These brief presentations will serve as the foundation for subsequent discussion by session attendees seated at small discussion tables, where attendees may share their own pedagogical experiences and tools. Therefore, for this co-sponsored session, IGW and Teaching Religion are not accepting proposals for standard full-length conference papers or for prearranged paper panels. Rather, we invite proposals for presentations (5-6 minutes) that engage specific pedagogical strategies, texts, and tools used in undergraduate classrooms. We welcome proposals from instructors who teach a range of courses (that is, proposals need not be limited to courses in Islamic Studies).

Mission Statement:

The Islam, Gender, Women (IGW) Unit uses non-traditional programming to address meta-questions of the study of gender and women in relation to Islam and Muslims, to support the mentoring and development of its scholars, and to create resources and scholarly networks to advance the field. The name IGW signals that the study of gender and women is an essential subfield of the larger study of Islam and Muslims while shifting attention away from the “woman question in Islam” and toward the study of gender. Our unit examines the relational formation and subversion of genders, while still taking into account “women” as they are interpellated by complex social and symbolic systems.

IGW brings together scholars at all career stages, including those working outside the academy. It supports scholarly reflexivity in a collaborative and collegial setting, discussing methods/approaches and the professional dimensions of research and teaching in the field. It fosters collective consideration of the aims, evolution, and lacunae of the field as a way to nurture new lines of inquiry. Our non-traditional programming, such as workshops and mentoring/networking sessions, aims to strengthen rather than compete with the work of related program units, prevent the segregation of scholarship on gender and women into one unit, encourage sustained “mainstream” engagement with questions of gender and women, and expand opportunities for collaboration and conversation with and among other units.

Anonymity: For our review of workshop session proposals, proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs and steering committee members prior to final acceptance or rejection. This is a necessary feature of our review

process, since we select promising proposals and review full papers (in draft form) prior to making our final selections. For other session types, proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection. For the deliberation process among chairs and steering committee members to select proposals, we have decided to make each other's comments visible to one another in order to encourage conversation amongst us about the proposals and their merits.

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Howe, Justine, Case Western Reserve University, justine.howe@case.edu

Chair - Hidayatullah, Aysha, University of San Francisco, ahidayatullah@usfca.edu

Islamic Mysticism Unit

Call:

Islamic mysticism is a broad rubric, one that allows us to engage in areas such as Sufism, Isma'ili and broader Shi'i esoteric thought, aspects of Islamic philosophy, and allegorical interpretations of the Qur'an. The study of Islamic mysticism also allows our members to engage Islamic materials from many different parts of the world including, but not limited to Persianate regions, the Arab world, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, and North America.

The Islamic Mysticism Group solicits paper and panel proposals for the 2018 AAR Annual Meeting. While all proposals related to Islamic mysticism are welcome, special consideration will be given to the following topics formulated at the 2017 AAR Islamic Mysticism Group business meeting:

- Approaches to Hagiographies
- Alternative Spiritualities
- Sufism, the Healing Arts, and Medicine
- Occult Sciences
- Mysticism and Ecology
- Mysticism and Humor
- Sufism, Politics, and Empire
- Mysticism and Political Dissidents
- Sufism and Secularism
- Mysticism, Gender, and Authority

We also welcome potential papers and panels that thoughtfully incorporate the theme for the 2018 Annual Meeting: "Religious Studies in Public: The Civic Responsibilities, Opportunities, and Risks Facing Scholars of Religion".

As a new explicit requirement of our unit, a successful pre-arranged session or panel proposal must incorporate gender diversity. Diversity of race and ethnicity, theoretical method, and rank are also highly encouraged. If your proposal is accepted and you agree to be on the program, we expect you to show up to participate in your session at the annual meeting, barring unforeseeable exceptional circumstances. Please note that the Islamic studies program units have a policy according to which no-shows may be barred from the program for the following year.

Mission Statement:

Islamic mysticism is a broad rubric, one that allows us to engage in areas such as Sufism, Isma'ili and broader Shi'i esoteric thought, some aspects of Islamic philosophy, and allegorical interpretations of the Qur'an. The study of Islamic mysticism also allows our members to

engage Islamic materials from many different parts of the world including, but not limited to Persianate regions, the Arab world, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, and North America.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Rozehnal, Robert, Lehigh University, ror2@lehigh.edu

Chair - Dakake, Maria Massi, George Mason University, mdakakem@gmu.edu

Jain Studies Unit

Call:

The Jain Studies Steering Committee, in consultation with other interested scholars, has decided on the following topics as possible themes for its one session and/or co-sponsored sessions in 2018:

- The Multiple Facets of Jain Stotras: Hymns as Devotional and Ritual Technology
Contact Lynna Dhanani, lynna.dhanani@yale.edu
- Contemporary Jain Donations to Academia
Contact Christopher Key Chapple, cchapple@lmu.edu
- Commemorating the Birth Centenary of Acharya Mahaprajna (in 2020)
Contact Samani Rohini Pragya, rosamani@fiu.edu

Mission Statement:

This Unit began in 2009 in recognition of the burgeoning state of the field and its relative neglect in the AAR. Originating in India in the first millennium BCE, Jainism — historically as dominant a South Asian religious tradition as Buddhism and Hinduism and, in the light of current demographics, a disproportionately powerful presence in the cultural and economic life of India — is a world religion now extending far beyond South Asia to East Asia, Europe, North America, Africa, and Australia. Given the increasing focus of scholarly attention on Jainism both in India and around the globe, this Unit provides a venue in North America for scholars of Jainism to meet regularly and exchange ideas.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Vose, Steven, Florida International University, svose@fiu.edu

Chair - Kelting, Mary Whitney, Northeastern University, m.kelting@neu.edu

Japanese Religions Unit

Call:

We invite papers sessions, individual papers and roundtables in all aspects of Japanese religious practice and thought, both historical and contemporary. To facilitate greater exchange within and beyond Japanese Religions, we prefer proposals that include explicit reflection on the study of religion more broadly. Creative formats are encouraged (film, organized discussion, pre-circulated papers/texts, workshop, etc.). We also strongly encourage considering balance in terms of gender, and areas of specialization and time periods, as well as balance between graduate students, junior scholars, and senior scholars. In submitting proposals, please follow the AAR guidelines carefully. First-timers are encouraged to contact the co-chairs for additional advice (Asuka Sango at asango@carleton.edu; Levi McLaughlin at lmclaug2@ncsu.edu). Next year's Annual Meeting theme is "Religious Studies in Public: the Civic Responsibilities, Opportunities, and Risks Facing Scholars of Religion." But of course, we do not need to be limited to this theme.

Also, we would like to draw attention to an important change in the AAR's session allotment. Our unit used to have two 2.5 hour sessions. However, starting from 2018, we will be given two options: (a) one 2.5-hour session and one 2-hour session; or (b) one 2-hour session and two 90-minute sessions. So, we are hoping to sponsor more 90-minute sessions this year to allow more participants.

Below are possible topics proposed by our members this year. We also welcome proposals on other topics as well.

Possible topics for AAR 2018:

- Religion in the Public Sphere in Japan
Jessie Starling, jessie.starling@gmail.com
- Buddhism and Charity
Timothy Benedict, tobenedi@princeton.edu
- Emergent Religion/New Religions
Levi McLaughlin, lmclaug2@ncsu.edu; Kristina Burhman, kbuhrman@fsu.edu
- Religion and the Constitution
Ryūichi Abe, rabe@fas.harvard.edu
- Religion, Criminality, and Hostile Publics
Kristina Burhman, kbuhrman@fsu.edu
- Issues on the Forthcoming Imperial Abdication

Mark Blum, mblum@berkeley.edu

- Religions and Social Problems in Contemporary East Asian Literature
Japanese, Chinese and possibly other East Asian countries; co-sponsorship with the Chinese Religions Unit and the Japanese Religions Unit. Haruka Umetsu Cho, harukaumetsu@g.harvard.edu
- The Responsibility of Religion Scholars in the Japanese Public
Numerous people formulated this suggestion; please email Asuka Sango, asango@carleton.edu, and she will put you in touch with others who are interested
- Buddhist and other religious universities, scholarly networks, and religious education in Japan
Numerous people formulated this suggestion; please email Asuka Sango, asango@carleton.edu, and she will put you in touch with others who are interested
- Past, Present, and Future of Transreligious Endeavors in Japan
Michel Mohr, mmohr@hawaii.edu
- Japanese Buddhism and War Responsibility
Kuni Terasawa, kunihiko.terasawa@wartburg.edu
- Masculinity in Modern Japanese Religions
Rebecca Mendelson, rebecca.mendelson@duke.edu
- Representations of Anger: The Frightening/Demonic in Japanese Religion
This might include visual (icon, art), performance, or conceptual (text, other)
Cynthea Bogel, cjbogel@gmail.com
- Revitalizing Buddhism in the Modern World
With regards to shifting demographics, laicization, and institutional reform. Jeff Schroeder (University of Oregon). Co-sponsorship with the Buddhism in the West Unit, the Buddhism Unit, and the Japanese Religions Unit. Contact: jschroe9@uoregon.edu
- A film screening followed by a panel discussion on the following films:
 - *An (Sweet Bean)* (2015), directed by Kawase Naomi
Asuka Sango, asango@carleton.edu
 - *The Departure* (2017), directed by Lana Wilson
Justin Stein, steinjustin@gmail.com

Mission Statement:

This Unit is a forum for scholars of different disciplines — including textual, historical, anthropological, sociological, ritual, artistic, and other areas of study using different approaches — to present their research findings on various theories and forms of Japanese religious life in the past and in the contemporary setting, within Japan and other areas of the world.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - McLaughlin, Levi, North Carolina State University, lmclaug2@ncsu.edu

Chair - Sango, Asuka, Carleton College, asango@carleton.edu

Karl Barth Society of North America

Call:

In honor of the 100th anniversary of the publication of Barth's *The Epistle to the Romans*, the Karl Barth Society of North America is beginning a multi-year series of sessions dedicated to this book and its legacy.

For the 2018 meeting, the Barth Society welcomes proposals related to Barth's discussion of Romans 1-4 in the first or second edition of *The Epistle to the Romans*. Proposed papers could:

- Offer critical reflection upon Barth's remarks about the text of Romans 1-4 in the volume;
- Examine Barth's commentary on Romans 1-4 in *The Epistle to the Romans* in light of Barth's later writings;
- Consider Barth's claims about Romans 1-4 in light of contemporary biblical scholarship;
- Bring Barth's discussion of Romans 1-4 into conversation with the insights of others theologians.

Proposals on related topics also will be considered.

Mission Statement:

The Karl Barth Society of North America exists to encourage a critical and constructive theology in continuity with the work of Karl Barth.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - George Hunsinger, george.hunsinger@ptsem.edu

Chair - Katherine Sonderegger, ksonderegger@vts.edu

Chair - Paul D. Molnar, molnarp@stjohns.edu

Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture Unit

Call:

- **Where is God? – Kierkegaard and the Denigration of Public Discourse**
The present age, as Kierkegaard would say, is going badly; so badly, in fact, that what we appear to be witnessing is nothing less than what one might call the self-cannibalization of our democracies. Unsurprisingly, religion, particularly as a discourse of absolute truth and power — or God — is part of this cannibalization. How then, might Kierkegaard help us to understand the activity, the transcendence, of God in an age in which we behold the inequities engendered by racism, sexism, the forces of capitalism, and the denigration of public discourse accompanying these problems? What role does God have in an age where resistance to the deterioration of the values that make us human must find a place? For this session, we invite proposals that address the ways in which drawing on the resources that Kierkegaard provides throughout his authorship allows us to respond to the question “where is God?” as we address the denigration of public discourse in our imperiled, present age. This includes proposals that put Kierkegaard’s insights into conversation with other thinkers more directly concerned with the intersection of religion and politics (e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr., Stanley Hauerwas, Emmanuel Levinas, Richard Rorty, Hannah Arendt, Jürgen Habermas, Martha Nussbaum, Edward Said, Michel Foucault, Cornel West, Judith Butler, Saba Mahmood).
- **Kierkegaard and Cinema**
Kierkegaard avidly appreciated and thoughtfully critiqued the performative, literary and visual arts such as opera and music, drama and poetry, sculpture and painting, etc. If we take seriously — in all its manifold meanings and variations — his insistence that he was “a kind of poet”, and if we consider the profound artistry required in the production of his authorship, we might also think of him as an artist in his own right, one keenly aware of and able to utilize art forms that were, in his time, considered to be both refined and oriented toward the masses. For this session, we invite papers that seek to extend the Kierkegaardian consideration of art and culture to cinema, an art form that is both refined and popular today. Papers might focus on particularly Kierkegaardian (or anti-Kierkegaardian) films or filmmakers; a Kierkegaardian critique of the art of film; the silence of silent films; the interweaving of word and music in the “talkies”; cinema as mass art; possible Kierkegaardian contributions to the ongoing debate over film authorship (from auteur theory to the death of the author); the significance of cinema for aesthetic, ethical, and/or religious life; the depiction of faith and faithful lives in film; the movie industry, the box office, and “leveling”; the nature of the relationship between films and the lives or “life-views” of their creators (producers, directors, and other filmmakers); or, in general, the presence and importance of, or future potential for, Kierkegaardian themes in cinema.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to explore the significance of the religious thought and ethics of Kierkegaard for contemporary culture in its various aspects — social, political, ecclesiastical, theological, philosophical, and aesthetic.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Kulak, Avron, York University, akulak@yorku.ca

Chair - Robinson, Marcia C., Syracuse University, mrobin03@syr.edu

Korean Religions Unit

Call:

The Korean Religions Unit welcomes proposals for papers sessions, roundtable sessions, and individual papers. Proposals in all areas of Korean Religions will be considered, but we are especially interested in working around the theme of Religion and Public Life in Korea.

We wish to utilize the new AAR presentation option of two 90-minute sessions for our unit, which will allow us two papers sessions of two to three presenters each, and an additional option of a roundtable session of up to four presenters. We therefore look forward to your active contribution of proposals.

Subtopics proposed by interested AAR members are listed below, along with the contact information of each prospective organizer. If you would like to contribute to a panel proposal or roundtable proposal on one of these topics, please contact the organizer directly.

- New religions in Korea (Don Baker ubcdbaker@gmail.com)
- Religion and state/religious institutions and civic responsibility (Yeon-seung Lee yslpk88@gmail.com)
- Roundtable: Religion and LGBT communities (Tim Lee t.lee@tcu.edu)
- Heresy and orthodoxy (Heidi Park heekyu.park@ewha.ac.kr)
- Korean Yogacara Buddhism (Charles Muller acmuller@l.u-tokyo.ac.jp)

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a forum for the scholarly exchange of ideas on the religions of Korea. It addresses all aspects of religions and religious experiences of Korea — past and present and traditional and modern. The Unit investigates Korean religions in all its diversity, including social, cultural, historical, political, and philosophical, giving full weight to the complexity of religious phenomena in Korea. The Unit encourages conversations that compare aspects of Korean religions with those of other religious traditions, as well as theoretical conversations about religion that are grounded in Korean religions. In order to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of Korean religions, the Unit welcomes scholars from both in and outside of Korean religions and fosters a dialogue among scholars from different religious traditions as well as different disciplinary approaches to religions.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Torrey, Debernieri, University of Utah, djtorrey@gmail.com

Chair - McBride, Richard D., Brigham Young University, Hawaii, rick_mcbride17@hotmail.com

Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Unit

Call:

The Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Unit and the Class, Religion, and Theology Unit invite papers for a session focusing on the intersections between religion, culture, economics, and class in the struggle for/against public education. 2018 marks the fiftieth anniversary of several important moments in the struggle over public education in the United States. These anniversaries include the Poor People's Campaign (or Poor People's March on Washington), the expansion and repression of the Black Panther Party, the founding of the Young Lords Organization in Chicago, and the student "blowouts" (walkouts) in Los Angeles public schools that catalyzed the Chicano movement. Though not an exhaustive list, we welcome papers on the following topics that address intersections of religion, culture, economics, and class in the struggle over U.S. public education:

- Privatization and racial re-segregation of schools
- Education governance
- School funding disparities
- Bilingualism
- Curricular conflicts
- Religious studies and practice in schools
- Undocumented youth education
- Community school models
- Causes/effects of achievement gaps
- Retention and graduation disparities
- The school-to-prison pipeline

The Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Unit invites papers for a session focusing on the intersections between religion and state violence. 2018 marks the fiftieth anniversary of several important moments in the struggle against war and police violence within the U.S.A. These anniversaries include the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.; the Poor People's Campaign, which resisted U.S. police violence and the war against Vietnam; the expansion and repression of the Black Panther Party, and the founding of the Young Lords Organization in Chicago. 2019 will also mark the 50th anniversary of the first Chicano youth conference, led by the Denver-based Crusade for Justice, which mobilized young people to resist police brutality and the war against Vietnam. Though not an exhaustive list, we welcome papers on the following topics that address intersections of religion and violence sanctioned by the U.S. or Canadian governments:

- Latinx religious engagements with policing or resistance to police brutality (such as the Movement for Black Lives)
- Religious engagements with penal institutions, prison reform movements, and prison abolitionism
- Conflict and collaboration in faith-based advocacy for prisoners and detained migrants
- Latinx religious engagements with the "war on terror"

- Effects of U.S. and Canadian military spending, military bases, and policies upon Latino/a religion in the Americas
- Religious engagements with the School of the Americas Watch
- Latinx religion and the "War on Drugs"

The Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society unit seeks papers on themes pertinent to Latinxs and indigeneity. 2019 will mark the 50th anniversary of El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán, the pro-indigenous manifesto adopted at the First Chicano National Youth Conference in Denver, Colorado. The document's emphasis on indigeneity and collective self-determination speak to powerful legacies of the Chicana/o movement, and continue to issue an urgent call for social and political change. Proposals that focus on Latinxs and indigenous realities as expressed within U.S. and Canadian context are strongly encouraged. Suggested topics include but are not limited to:

- Indigenous wisdom and spiritual practices
- Land rights and political sovereignty of First Nations peoples
- Free trade and its impact on Latinx and Indigenous communities
- Latinx and Indigenous refugees in the U.S.A. and Canada
- Indigenous displacement, migration, citizenship, and borders
- Cultural preservation and spiritual capital
- Representations of indigeneity in Latinx media
 - This session will be paired with an evening screening of the Guatemalan film *Ixcanul* (2015)

The Religion, Sport, and Play Unit and the Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Unit will co-sponsor a session on sport and play as sites of resistance, liberation, assimilation, and complicated spiritualities from explicitly Latinx and Latin@ perspectives. Successful proposals will address historical or contemporary cases and contribute to a range of disciplinary perspectives, diverse religious traditions, methodological approaches, and critiques. Proposals should clearly state the main argument of the paper and summarize evidence used to support the argument.

Anyone who wishes to organize a panel on a subject not listed above may also contact one or both of the co-chairs to propose the panel.

Mission Statement:

This Unit examines, through systematic study and reflection, the social locations, religious beliefs, and practices of the rich and diverse multicultural backgrounds of Latinas/os in the United States. The Unit recognizes that this is an interdisciplinary enterprise in view of the cultural and religious roots and sources of Latinos/as, including heritages from Europe, indigenous nations of the Americas, Africa, and Asia. The traditions emerging out of the mixture of these cultures throughout the Americas continue to undergo further development and innovation in the North American context, producing the distinct phenomena of Latino/a

theologies and religions. It is this rich and deep religious/theological-cultural-social-political complex that is the focus of this Unit.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Cruz, Jeremy V., St. John's University, New York, cruzi@stjohns.edu

Chair - Guerra, Lauren Frances, University of California, Los Angeles, laurenguerra18@gmail.com

Law, Religion, and Culture Unit

Call:

As always, the Law, Religion, and Culture Unit welcomes proposals for individual papers, papers sessions, and roundtable panel proposals, including author-meets-reader sessions, on any aspect of the cultural, historical, critical, and comparative study of the intersections of law and religion in Asia, Africa, Europe, or the Americas, including legal categories in religious traditions, the treatment of religion within legal traditions, human rights, and freedom of religion. We welcome explorations of “formal” law that directly intersects with states, and “informal” law that does not.

This year, our Unit particularly invites proposals that address the following broad themes:

- **Process, Procedure, and Administration in Religious Law**
Traditionally, scholarship on religious law has tended to focus on the content of legal rules (doctrine) and on traditions of interpretation (jurisprudence). Far less attention has been paid to the administrative structures, processes, and procedural norms of religious legal traditions. This panel invites papers that consider the administrative, procedural and bureaucratic features of religious law in specific places and times. Questions to be considered include: Who or what is granted recognition or standing (e.g., animals, nature, other religious groups, deities)? What counts as evidence? How are judgments made, appealed or enforced? In what ways are religious and civil legal institutions co-constituting? How has the administration and organization of religious law changed across spaces and times?
- **The 25th Anniversary of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (RFRA)**
We seek papers analyzing the impact of the RFRA on religion and society, including the ways individuals and communities have marshaled and adapted themselves to it.
- **Religion and Law outside the Courts**
We are interested in papers on non-elite and vernacular uses of law and religion.
- **Law, Religion, and Public Lands/Spaces/Water**
We call on papers or panel proposals on law, religion, and public lands, spaces, and waters. Co-sponsored session with the Law, Religion, and Culture Unit and the Religion and Ecology Unit.
- **The Relationship between Right-Wing Politics, Religion, and European Identity**
This topic can be either historical or contemporary and could include discussions of negotiating boundaries of/within Europe (e.g., regional or separatist movements), the relationship between religion and foundational laws/constitutions, and the exploitation of religious terms (internally or externally) in relation to the far-right. Co-sponsored session with the Law, Religion, and Culture Unit and the Religion in Europe Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is interested in the cross-cultural, interdisciplinary, and comparative studies of the interrelationships of law and religion. The terms “law” and “religion” are broadly conceptualized and our interests have extended to include ancient and contemporary contexts and a wide variety of critical approaches. We hope to instigate consideration of religion and law issues at the AAR beyond issues concerning religious freedom and the United States Constitution.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Amesbury, Richard, Clemson University, ramesb@clemson.edu

Lesbian-Feminisms and Religion Unit

Call:

- **The Digital and Lived Lesbian Feminist: Erasure, Solidarity, and the Sacred**
The Lesbian-Feminisms and Religion Unit seeks papers that consider the intersection of the digital world and the sacred in the lives of women. How are lesbians, feminists, and lesbian-feminists finding home and spaces of solidarity on the internet? How is the digital used as a space of activism? How are they encountering harassment in digital spaces? Where are points of erasure? How can the sacred be created in digital spaces and how do lesbian-feminists contribute to its creation? How is lesbian-feminist identity cultivated and taught digitally? Additional thematic papers on lesbian-feminisms will also be considered.
- **Methodologies, Epistemologies, and Ontologies: Doing Womanist Theory and Praxis**
With the growth of disciplines and our changing world, this session questions how identities, philosophies, and methodologies continue to develop over time, giving voice to the intersectional experiences of women with particular attention to the role of womanist thought. Moving from binary gender constructs is emerging as part of many conversations in women and religious studies. How do we unearth different ways of knowing and locations of doing womanist engagement in its multiple iterations in the academy and the world? What are options regarding directions that womanist thought, theory, and praxis is moving? What is the nature of the various methodologies, and intersections, and what are the parameters for who gets to use this vocabulary. This session invites persons to propose a round table or panel. Papers will be posted prior to the meeting, with presenters offering a summary of their paper to allow time for greater dialog. Joint paper session with the Lesbian-Feminisms and Religion Unit and the Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit.

Mission Statement:

For over twenty-five years, this Unit has employed feminist perspectives to explore the multiple dimensions of lesbian interaction with religion, providing one of the few consistent academic settings where discussions on lesbian issues in religion and feminist perspectives on lesbian issues take place. Whether pursued through religious studies, social-scientific, historical, or theological methods during the approach to the academic study of religion, lesbian-feminist scholarship challenges hegemonic discourse within gay, lesbian, and queer movements that function to privilege queer theory as capable of eclipsing theories and methodologies that are explicitly feminist in the face of entrenched patriarchy and self-consciously lesbian in the face of persistent maleness and heteronormativity. Along with the obvious concern for both historical and contemporary issues pertaining to gender and sexuality, a longstanding feature of the scholarship of this Unit has been analysis of race/class/postcolonial critiques. The Unit handles important, diverse, and timely themes, providing a theoretical space for probing and further

developing the openings and opportunities afforded by changing sociopolitical and theoretical contexts.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Other

Chair - Milligan, Amy, Old Dominion University, amilliga@odu.edu

Chair - Wolff, Michelle, Duke University, mw73@duke.edu

Liberal Theologies Unit

Call:

The Liberal Theologies Group invites papers for two co-sponsored sessions at the 2018 Annual Meeting:

- **Breaking White Supremacy**
The Ethics Unit, the Theology of Martin Luther King Jr. Unit and the Liberal Theologies Unit invite papers that discuss Gary Dorrien's 2017 book *Breaking White Supremacy: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Black Social Gospel* for a co-sponsored session at which Gary Dorrien will be a respondent. Papers might address such topics as the importance of Breaking White Supremacy in understanding the Black social gospel and continuing the work begun in Dorrien's *The New Abolition: W.E.B. DuBois and the Black Social Gospel* (2015); the theological insights of the civil rights movement and the way those insights inform, critique, and are critiqued in contemporary settings by the Movement For Black Lives; the claim that the civil rights movement ultimately failed to break white supremacy, and the implications of that claim for communities working to break white supremacy today; and contribution of Breaking White Supremacy considered against the backdrop of Dorrien's body of scholarly work. Liberal Theologies Unit will be handling this call.
- **Trust, Power, and Dialogue in Schleiermacher and Liberal Theology**
The Liberal Theologies Unit and the Schleiermacher Unit invite paper proposals that attend to the interplay between trust, power, and/or dialogue which invites new reflection, both historical and constructive, in post-truth times. Possible topics can include: communal dialogical practices promoting trusting truthful relations; cultivation of the affective and virtues promoting community; analyses of power and dialogical theories; pedagogies cultivating communal practice; gender and race; and theories of truth. We especially welcome papers that engage the thought of Friedrich Schleiermacher and the theologians situated broadly in relation to liberal theologies while making an argument that attends to the current political, cultural, and/or religious situations we face. Schleiermacher's letters, sermons, hermeneutics, and/or *staatslehre* may prove especially productive for this constellation of topics, though we welcome engagement with any part of his work and/or theologians building on his legacy.

Mission Statement:

Liberal theology in all its varieties has been a robust intellectual and religious presence from the early modern period to the present. The theologians involved with this Unit, who come from many different universities and religious schools in North America and from abroad, are committed to continuing this tradition. Our focus is plural — we look across religious traditions. It is interdisciplinary — we welcome the participation, among others, of historians, political scientists, anthropologists, sociologists, and philosophers engaged with questions of vital moment to liberal theologies. Our gaze is to the future; we are determined to develop new

perspectives, new ways of speaking, and new combinations of ideas that will better address the intellectual and social circumstances in which we find ourselves.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Morice Brubaker, Sarah, Phillips Theological Seminary,
sarah.morice.brubaker@ptstulsa.edu

Liberation Theologies Unit

Call:

- **Extra, Extra! The End is Here: Apocalypse 2018**

From the tangible mortality of our planet through the resurging threats of nuclear devastation, the threat of the “end” of life as we know it colors contemporary experience. Outrage media trumpets impending cataclysm. Prophecies incite swaths radical violence. Are we living in the end times? If so, the end of what? Can or will liberation follow? The ideas of uncovering/revealing at the heart of the word “apocalypse” call attention to the epistemological, political, and practical shifts that accompany the apocalyptic. What, if anything, is or should be uncovered or revealed today? Is the apocalyptic something to be embraced or feared — encouraged or quieted?

The liberation theologies group invites papers that consider apocalypse or apocalypse with respect to our current world situation. From theoretical reappraisals of the liberative salience of “apocalypse” as a theological category to strategic appropriations of apocalyptic rhetoric by activists, we welcome any approach, context, tradition, or variation. We especially welcome papers that approach the topic with concern for gender, race, coloniality, sexuality, identity, ideology, politics, power, economics, class, rhetoric or persuasion, violence, ecology, relationality, or any other aspect of lived experience.

- **Community Organizing: Theologies, Practices, Liberation**

The Practical Theology Unit and the Liberation Theologies Unit welcome papers and panel proposals for a co-sponsored session critically exploring the theologies embedded in practices of and calls for liberation in community organizing worldwide. We welcome critical engagements not only from scholars, but also from community activists and social organizers in both faith-rooted and not faith-rooted organizations. Topics may include studies of organizations fighting climate change, racisms, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, restrictive immigration policies, sexism, labor injustices, voter suppression, land ownership, the re-emergence of white supremacist power, gentrification, religious conflict, and more. We particularly welcome proposals seeking to explicitly engage these struggles building power networks across identity lines (interfaith, interracial, transnational, etc). The Liberation Theologies Unit encourages crossover dialogue — between contexts, between disciplines, and between religions — and reflection on the implications of liberationist discourse for the transformation of theology, both its methods and substance. We welcome proposals arising out of or engaging all religious or ritual traditions including, but certainly not limited to: indigenous religions, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Christianity, traditional African religions, and Buddhism. We encourage broad interpretation of the terms of the call and creative, constructive proposals for liberation theologies in the 21st century.

Mission Statement:

This Unit asks, “What does liberation theology mean in and for the twenty-first century?” We encourage crossover dialogue — between contexts and between disciplines — and reflection on the implications of liberationist discourse for the transformation of theology as a whole, both methodologically and theologically.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Hofheinz, Hannah, Ecumenical Theological Seminary, hhofheinz@etseminary.edu

Chair - Slabodsky, Santiago H., Hofstra University, santiago.slabodsky@hofstra.edu

Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Unit

Call:

In 2018 the 70th Anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations will be celebrated. The preamble to this document points to a global aspiration of a common good shaped by freedom, justice and peace. In the 1518 Heidelberg Disputation, Luther states that a theologian of the cross calls a thing what it is. In this year's call for papers we invite reflections that contest global manipulation of freedom, justice and peace to the benefit of certain actors and at the cost of others. We are especially interested in vantage points that illumine the misuse of Reformation themes and offer a corrective in service of a common good that is publicly accountable and theologically sound.

Martin Luther and the Global Lutheran Traditions Unit together with the Wesleyan Studies Unit invite proposals for a co-chaired session at the 2018 AAR:

Lutheran and Wesleyan/Methodist faith traditions have both experienced strained unity, if not division, at regional, national and global levels over issues about human sexuality as well as other contemporary issues. We invite papers that explore how these two traditions experience and deal with these issues, and address the manner in which historic, moral, doctrinal, and polity commitments (including ecclesiologies) offer different nuances to these tensions. We are especially interested in papers that address this from a global, queer or other perspectives with attention to the themes of holiness and unity.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to provide an avenue for a comprehensive conversation on both Lutheran history and thought in the global context. In so doing, it is able to draw on an immensely rich tradition that goes far beyond Lutheran parochial interests as it includes the relationship to other Christian traditions as well as cultures in the global South.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Kvam, Kristen E., Saint Paul School of Theology, kriskvam@spst.edu

Chair - Jorgenson, Allen G., Wilfrid Laurier University, ajorgenson@wlu.ca

Material Islam Seminar

Call:

The Material Islam Seminar invites submissions for a pre-circulated paper session on Islam and the Human Body. We welcome engagements with the body in terms of ritual, body adornment and modification, ethics and etiquette, bodily display, or other modalities of rethinking the Islamic body.

Mission Statement:

The Material Islam Seminar is an interdisciplinary initiative bringing a variety of theoretical, methodological, and historical perspectives to the study of Islam and material culture, broadly conceived as encompassing spatial formations, objects, relics, embodiments, arts, crafts, and material forms of popular culture. The seminar aims to foster interdisciplinary dialogue between the fields of art and architectural history, archeology, performance theory, folklore, practice theory, studies of space and the body, affect theory, and material religion. This seminar will be a forum through which all of these approaches and others can be represented and brought together in conversation leading to new directions, methodologies, and theories relating to the mutual imprimatur of material culture and Islam. The seminar intends to explore these various approaches to Islamic materiality, not only to demonstrate what they can contribute to Islamic Studies, but also how the particularities of Muslim cultures can advance the study of religion and materiality more generally. The Material Islam Seminar will convene annually at the AAR for five years (2014-2019) to discuss pre-circulated papers on specific thematic topics including the challenges and opportunities of interdisciplinary research, the interplay between discourse, practice, and objects, and the circulation of objects and aesthetics in particular historical contexts.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - GhaneaBassiri, Kambiz, Reed College, ghaneabk@reed.edu

Chair - Bigelow, Anna, North Carolina State University, anna_bigelow@ncsu.edu

Men, Masculinities, and Religions Unit

Call:

- We seek proposals that explore the intersection between religions and practices, rituals, and ideas/representations of healthy bodies with regard to gender, sexuality, masculinity and femininity. Specifically considering the connection or disconnection between bodily practice and religious practice (for e.g. but not limited to yoga, prayer, sex, pilgrimage, sports, grooming, magical rites, sartorial choices etc.)
- We seek proposals that examine Sarah Imhoff's *Masculinity and The Making of American Judaism* (Indiana University Press, 2017) for panel discussion and critique. We are especially interested in responses from diverse traditions and worldviews.
- Gender, Religion, and Violence
We seek papers that address topics such as genocidal violence and the construction of masculinities, rape, and sexual violence as tools in conflicts and genocide, religiously inflicted and symbolic sexual violence, and the targeting and persecution of gender and sexual minorities. Co-sponsorship with the Comparative Approaches to Religion Unit, the Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Unit, the Women and Religion Unit, and the Men, Masculinities and Religion Unit.
- Premodern Masculinities
This session aims to explore the performance of masculinities or the construction/representation of normative and subaltern masculinities in premodern Europe and the Mediterranean. Participants will examine the diversity of masculinities within Jewish, Christian, and Islamic communities and the varied ways that gender and masculinity intersect with religious, ethnic, and cultural identities. We seek scholars of premodern gender and masculinity to propose papers on the performance of masculinities or the construction/representation of normative and subaltern masculinities in premodern Europe and the Mediterranean. We welcome individual or preformed panel proposals that explore the diversity of masculinities within Jewish, Christian, and Islamic communities and the varied ways that gender and masculinity intersect with religious, ethnic, and cultural identities. For a co-sponsored panel with the Men, Masculinities, and Religion Unit and the Religion in Premodern Europe and the Mediterranean Unit. (Preformed panels should include 2-3 papers and a respondent for a 90-minute session; we welcome panel proposals without a designated respondent and will assign a respondent if the proposal is accepted.)

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a forum within which the phenomenon of masculine gender – as identity, practice, discourse and structure – is examined, building on scholarship in masculinity, gender, and queer studies, and using the range of methodologies found in the broad field of religious

studies. This Unit engages in the critical study of men and the performance of masculinities in culturally and religiously specific settings and traditions.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

E-mail with Attachment (proposal is in attachment, not in body of e-mail)

Chair - De Sony, Amanullah, University College, Cork, amanullah.desondy@ucc.ie

Chair - Jones, Linda G., University of Pompeu Fabra, linda.jones@upf.edu

Middle Eastern Christianity Unit

Call:

- Rethinking Middle Eastern Christians in the 21st Century: Movements, Migrations, and the Future

Many Middle Eastern countries have faced political stress in the twenty-first century, which has included the Iraq War (2003), the Arab Spring (post-2010), the Syrian Civil War (since 2011), and the ongoing struggle of Palestinians against occupation. Middle Eastern Christian communities with long historical roots in the region are adapting to the circumstances in new ways; the circumstances of warfare, social reform, and political change are faced by Christian communities with new technologies of social media, connecting them to international participants of many sorts, such that local matters involve remote agents. In these globalized conditions, Christian communities of the Middle East and their emigrant counterparts abroad are experiencing change. The Middle Eastern Christianity Unit and the World Christianity Unit are inviting paper proposals that address contemporary change involving Middle Eastern Christians. Proposals may focus on any Middle Eastern Christian community (whether in situ, or abroad) from any academic field of study. Successful proposals will provide a clear thesis, identify specific sources of study, and comment on the relevant theories and methodologies of the analysis. While the topic of the paper may be narrow, the argument should aim to capture a sense of a broader current “outlook” among an identifiable Middle Eastern Christian group or groups—whether it be a church denomination (*e.g.*, Maronites), an organization (*e.g.*, Middle East Council of Churches), an immigrant community, or a social movement.

- Religious Conversions and Middle Eastern Christianity

Religious conversion has been a topic of interest in Middle Eastern Christianity since the rise of Islam. Hagiographies, heresiographies, polemics, apologetics, martyrdoms: many genres of religious literature in the Middle East have cast conversion narratives in different moulds. And modern scholarship has sought to explain and analyze conversion, seeking to answer historical questions about demographics (for instance) to try to chart the diminishment of Middle Eastern Christian communities under Islamic civilization. The Middle Eastern Christianity unit is issuing a call for papers that analyze religious conversion of all sorts involving Middle Eastern Christians, whether it be individuals or groups, converting into our out of the faith, in all historical periods. Paper proposals must state a clear thesis, identify a specific body of evidence, and explain the theoretical and methodological approaches that are used to interpret the evidence. The committee particularly welcomes proposals of theoretical relevance that build upon existing studies (such as, *e.g.* Richard Bulliet’s) and that seek to explain broader trends or phenomena of conversion in Middle Eastern Christianity.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is devoted to the study of developments within Coptic, Armenian, Chaldean/Assyrian, Syrian, Maronite, and other relevant communities living inside the Middle East or in lands of immigration. The Unit promotes scholarship on themes from the early Christian period to the present, encompassing various approaches and subjects. Its aim is to establish an interdisciplinary platform for fostering scholarly approaches to Middle Eastern Christianity, and to provide opportunities for scholars to discuss their work in relation to the overall field of the study of religion.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

E-mail with Attachment (proposal is in attachment, not in body of e-mail)

Leadership:

Chair - Andraos, Michel, Catholic Theological Union, mandraos@ctu.edu

Chair - Zaborowski, Jason R., Bradley University, jzaborowski@bradley.edu

Moral Injury and Recovery in Religion, Society, and Culture Unit

Call:

We invite proposals for papers or complete panels on:

- **Racial Justice and Moral Injury**
Honoring the work of the late Dr. Dale Andrews on the moral injury of anti-racism and the politics of white resentment; interiorized racial oppression and moral injury; silencing of Latinx and/or multiple racial identities and moral injury
- **Addressing Collective Historical Moral Injuries as a Public Intellectual**
How do we intersectionally address the collective legacies of religious violence and of crimes against humanity such as genocide, systemic racism, economic injustice, patriarchal oppression, hetero-normativity, and ableism?
- **Moral Injury, Policy Making and Activism**
How is the concept of moral injury helpful when addressing issues such as climate change, migration, systemic racism, and transphobia?
- **Moral Injury and Theology**
How are contemporary discussion of moral injury affecting theological constructs such as the *imago Dei*, sin, and salvation? How can the addressing moral injury help us with the production of theologies that protect life in all its forms?
- ***Exploring Moral Injury in Sacred Texts***
We plan to convene a pre-arranged roundtable, co-sponsored with the Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Unit and the Moral Injury and Recovery in Religion, Society, and Culture Unit, on Joseph McDonald ed., *Exploring Moral Injury in Sacred Texts* (Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2017).

Mission Statement:

The Moral Injury and Recovery in Religion, Society, and Culture Unit engages interdisciplinary study on moral injury, an emerging concept which attempts to engage the impact of making difficult moral choices under extreme conditions, experiencing morally anguishing events or duties, witnessing immoral acts, or behaving in ways that profoundly challenge moral conscience and identity and the values that support them.

In examining how understandings of recovery from moral injury might illuminate post-conflict situations in many areas of the world, this unit will interrogate how educating a wider public about moral injury might challenge the role of religion in supporting war and the militarization of international and intra-national conflicts, the effects of war on combatants in post-conflict societies, and more effective means for social support in recovery from moral injury.

Contributions are welcome engaging:

- Diverse religious, cultural, and social systems and their sacred texts
- Neuroscientific approaches to ritual, moral formation, and the moral emotions
- Proposed methods for recovery, such as ritual, pastoral counseling, spiritual direction, arts, community life, narrative, and interreligious cooperation
- The roles of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, class, race, and other forms of oppression in relation to personal agency and theories of ethics.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Lettini, Gabriella, Starr King School for the Ministry-GTU, glettini@sksm.edu

Chair - Moon, Zachary, Chicago Theological Seminary, zacharymoon@gmail.com

Mormon Studies Unit

Call:

The Mormon Studies unit seeks proposals for full sessions or individual papers that consider any aspect of Mormon experience using the methods of critical theory, philosophy, theology, history, sociology, or psychology. This includes the use of Mormonism as a case study for informing larger questions in any of these disciplines and, thus, only indirectly related to the Mormon experience.

- The Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities (BREIC) Unit and the Afro-American Religious History Unit will co-sponsor one session with the Mormon Studies Unit. The units are collectively interested in papers that connect to the fortieth anniversary of the 1978 “Official Declaration 2,” when Spencer W. Kimball extended the priesthood and temple blessings to all worthy male members of the LDS Church. Topics might include African American religious history, post-colonialism and globalization, Black or womanist theology, scriptural interpretation of race, or responses to the Declaration by non-LDS communities. We also especially seek papers that address the role and history of Latter-day Saint movements in Native communities; the LDS theology of Native peoples and responses within Native communities to the same; and historical opposition to the Indian Child Welfare Act.
- Topics in Religion and Race in North American and Transnational Perspectives
Religion, racialization/racism, religion and anti-racist organizing in historical and contemporary perspectives. Co-sponsorship with the Mormon Studies Unit and the North American Religions Unit.
- Topics in religion and queer studies/theory that address the study of Mormonism. For a potential co-sponsorship with the Mormon Studies Unit and the Queer Studies in Religion Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit will examine the range of topics, disciplines, and methodologies that can be brought into dialogue with Mormonism as studied in an academic environment. It is interested in exploring strategies for teaching about Mormonism, both as the main focus of a class or as a unit within a survey course. It seeks to identify the best resources available for teaching and understanding the tradition and provide encouragement for scholars to fill gaps in what is currently available. The Unit encourages significant comparative studies and interdisciplinary cross-fertilization and hopes to explore intersections between Mormonism and ethics, theology, philosophy, ecclesiology, missiology, spirituality, arts and literature, sociology, scripture, and liberation studies.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - McDannell, Colleen, University of Utah, colleen.mcd@utah.edu

Chair - Fluhman, Spencer, Brigham Young University, fluhman@byu.edu

Music and Religion Unit

Call:

The discipline of religious studies is expanding beyond linguistic rationality to include the importance of musical phenomena in the development of healthy religious communities and religious consciousness. Meanwhile, theological aesthetics is moving beyond the textual to include music as a resource in its own right for constructive and transformative meaning-making. Music, religiously speaking, is no mere adjunct to the study of sacred space, ritual, visual art, liturgy, or philosophical aesthetics; rather, it is a distinct field in its own right — with its own particular content, methods, and norms. By placing the relationship between music and religion at the center of our endeavor, this Unit seeks to serve scholars who operate out of this ubiquitous, but ironically unrepresented, realm of academic pursuit within the guild.

The Music and Religion Unit invites papers or panels on the relationship between music and religion in the context of contemporary or historical cultures. We would be delighted to partner with musicians and scholars affiliated with local institutions, e.g. University of Colorado, University of Denver, and associated music archives. Papers or panels which incorporate/demonstrate live performance as part of the session (or at other venues in the AAR program) are particularly welcome. We encourage proposals that relate to Denver or the Mountain West, and that connect to important anniversaries: 1968, 1918, etc. In particular we welcome submissions on the following topics:

- We are seeking individual or session proposals for a co-sponsored session with the Music and Religion Unit and the Religion in the American West Unit around the theme of "Music and Religiosity in the Mountain West". Potential topics include but are not limited to Native American musico-religious and sonic traditions, Latter-day Saints musical traditions, the music of evangelical megachurches and institutions (e.g., New Life, Focus on the Family), uses and critiques of music, Latino/a religious music in the West, musical hagiography of the West in the American imagination (e.g., religious themes in cowboy songs), sonic environments erased from the American imagination, music and the Rocky Mountains, and local music institutions (e.g., University of Colorado, University of Denver, local music archives, Gospel Music initiative).
- Latter-day Saints' musical traditions
- Evangelical megachurches and institutions (e.g., New Life, Focus on the Family), uses and critiques of music
- Intersections between Latino churches and white churches in the region
- Hagiography of the West in the American imagination, e.g. religious themes in Cowboy traditions, and sonic environments erased from the American imagination
- Music and the Mountains, the Sublime (e.g., Messiaen's *Des canyons aux étoiles...*)
- Local music institutions, e.g. University of Colorado, University of Denver, local music archives, Gospel Music initiative
- Music in the Apocalyptic Mode

Anniversary category:

- 1968: Music and Social Protest over the Last 50 Years, 1968 to Present
- Edward Hawkins, "O Happy Day"
- Stravinsky's "Soldier's Tale" 1918 (live music performance?)
- Tyagaraja (b. ca. 1767-68) South India Karnatic composer (live music performance?)

Topics of perennial interest

- How do we define "sacred" music?
- Music, sound and silence under religious interdict, prohibition of music and/or musical instruments under some forms of Protestantism, some forms of Islam, some moments in Judaism, some currents of thought in Buddhism
- Thinking about music: sound, time, and rhythm

Mission Statement:

The discipline of religious studies is expanding beyond linguistic rationality to include the importance of musical phenomena in the development of healthy religious communities and religious consciousness. Meanwhile, theological aesthetics is moving beyond the textual to include music as a resource in its own right for constructive and transformative meaning-making. Music, religiously speaking, is no mere adjunct to the study of sacred space, ritual, visual art, liturgy, or philosophical aesthetics; rather, it is a distinct field in its own right — with its own particular content, methods, and norms. By placing the relationship between music and religion at the center of our endeavor, this Unit seeks to serve scholars who operate out of this ubiquitous, but ironically unrepresented, realm of academic pursuit within the guild.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Stowe, David, Michigan State University, stowed@msu.edu

Chair - Rycenga, Jennifer, San Jose State University, jrycenga@earthlink.net

Mysticism Unit

Call:

The Mysticism Unit invites proposals on the following topics:

- **Intersections of Mysticism, Politics, and Violence**
In what ways have mystic traditions been associated with violence and politics, or in what ways has political violence appropriated mystic practices, ideologies, or vocabularies?
- **Crazy Wisdom**
Papers that address connections between mysticism and crazy wisdom/divine madness, or those that discuss Chögyam Trungpa specifically or Tibetan Buddhism more broadly are welcome.
- **Mysticism, Lineage, and Ritual Transmission**
We are interested in projects that explore the transmission and configuration of mystical power or religious energies. This includes both traditional means and contemporary methods that might use new technologies and social media (for example, initiation rituals performed over Skype). For co-sponsorship with the Mysticism Unit, the Ritual Studies Unit, and the Religion, Media, and Culture Unit.
- **Teaching Mysticism**
How do we professors go about teaching courses on mysticism? What particular challenges or opportunities present themselves with regard to mysticism as a pedagogical topic? Co-sponsorship with the Mysticism Unit and the Teaching Religion Unit.
- **Mysticism in Religions of the African Diaspora**
How well does the term mysticism apply to the religions of the African diaspora? How has mysticism functioned in these traditions? Co-sponsorship with the African Diaspora Religions Unit and the Mysticism Unit.
- **Mystic Biographies and Autobiographies**
To what degree have mystics' experiences and the narratives of their lives been intertwined, and how have those influences operated?

Mission Statement:

This Unit began as a Consultation within the AAR in 1987 and achieved formal Unit status in 1989. While its early focus was primarily Christianity and Western religions — and the study of experience and textual interpretation within those areas — the Unit has grown and changed over time, paralleling the change and growth in the AAR itself. Today, our conversations cut across boundaries that characterize many of the Program Units within the AAR — boundaries of

discipline, tradition, temporality, and region. Members of our Unit use different methodologies and work across a variety of disciplines, among which are the psychology of religion, sociology of religion, history of religions, hermeneutics and textual analysis, biographical analysis, feminist studies, film studies, philosophy of religion, mysticism and science, art criticism, postmodern theory, cultural studies, and anthropology of consciousness, among others. This interdisciplinarity has importance not only to our work as scholars, but also to our work as teachers and public educators. We post our current call, past sessions, a selection of past papers, as well as links in the field of mysticism to our Website at www.aarmysticism.org. We have also started a listserv, and those interested may write to aarmysticism-owner@yahoogroups.com or sign up through the Website.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

We do NOT accept proposals by email.

Chair - Gleig, Ann, University of Central Florida, ann.gleig@ucf.edu

Chair - Blum, Jason N., Davidson College, jnblum09@gmail.com

Native Traditions in the Americas Unit

Call:

We invite individual paper and group proposals on any aspect of Native Traditions in the Americas (North, Central and South). In particular, in light of AAR's theme of interrogating the civic responsibilities, opportunities and risks facing others affected by our research as well as ourselves as scholars of religion, we are seeking papers on the following topics:

- Indigenous community-centered research. Papers should consider methodological, ethical and theoretical issues involved with community-based participatory or applied fieldwork, including issues of reciprocity, authority-sharing, and solidarity.
- Indigenous religious traditions and politics within the greater Denver area. Papers may consider the impact of the events themselves, or of our research on the events or other publics (e.g. media, corporate sector, government agencies, general public, etc.) as well as indigenous peoples. Topics may include but are not limited to events such as the Indigenous People's Day movement, memorialization of the Sand Creek Massacre and the Sand Creek Run, issues pertaining to Native American veterans or elders. Topics may also include the intersection of indigenous religious traditions and national organizations in the Denver region such as the Native American Rights Fund.

In addition, we are also seeking papers on:

- The work of George Tinker, as theologian, philosopher, historian and activist.
- Decolonization as Healing
With a wide range of other units, we plan to co-sponsor a session on the theme of decolonization as healing, recognizing that colonization in Africa and in other parts of our world has resulted in both historical and ongoing threats to health and wellbeing. We are looking for papers that address facets of this theme, including but not limited to: "Place, Land, and Environmental Degradation," "Decolonization/Restoration of Identities," "Vocabularies and Pragmatic Applications of Rituals and Ceremonies," "Reclaiming the Past, Imagining the Future," and "Tradition as Healer". Co-sponsored with the Religions, Medicines and Healing; African Diaspora Religions, African Religions; Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society; Body and Religion; Indigenous Religious Traditions; Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society; Native Traditions in the Americas; Religions in the Latina/o Americas; Religion in South Asia, Religion in Southeast Asia; and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism; and World Christianity Units. Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the Call for Papers, and will speak to its broader implications for African American religious history. This session is a panel. Please submit a proposal for a paper or presentation. If your proposal is chosen, your paper will be circulated ahead of the conference and you'll be asked to give a brief (5-7 minute) summary of the paper during the conference session.
- Papers or panel proposals on the impact of current North American administrations' environmental and economic policies on indigenous religious freedom, protection of

sacred places, plants and animals. For a joint session with the Native Traditions in the Americas Unit and the Religion and Ecology Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit sees its mission as the promotion of the study of Native American religious traditions and thereby the enrichment of the academic study of religion generally, by engaging in discourse about culturally-centered theories and encouraging multiple dialogues at the margins of Western and non-Western cultures and scholarship. The Unit is committed to fostering dialogue involving Native and non-Native voices in the study of North, Central, and South American Native religious traditions and to engaging religious studies scholarship in robust conversation with scholarship on other facets of Native cultures and societies.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Crawford O'Brien, Suzanne J., Pacific Lutheran University, crawfosj@plu.edu

Chair - Pesantubbee, Michelene, University of Iowa, michelene-pesantubbe@uiowa.edu

Navarātri Seminar

Call:

The Navarātri Seminar is currently seeking submissions for the 2018 AAR meeting. As part of our mission we seek to study the festival of Navarātri from multiple geographical regions and historical periods and from a variety of methodological and theoretical perspectives. We, therefore, encourage papers that cover a range of traditions, regions, and languages in which Navarātri is celebrated.

The Navarātri Seminar only accepts single paper submissions.

Some themes identified as potential papers session topics at our last meeting were:

- Economies of Navarātri
- Spaces of Navarātri
- Different Religious Traditions' Responses to Sacrifice in Navarātri
- Ornamentation and Navarātri
- Navarātri and Democracy

Mission Statement:

This Seminar seeks to study the festival of Navarātri from multiple geographical regions and historical periods and from a variety of methodological and theoretical perspectives. Our seminar seeks to take seriously how enactment and performance during Navarātri meaningfully shapes social worlds for its participants and gives us insights into the dynamicity of religious traditions. Over the course of the five-year seminar, Navarātri will be our extended case study through which questions of religious change, performance, ritual timing, transnational migration, affect, etc. can be investigated.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Huesken, Ute, Heidelberg University, huesken@uni-heidelberg.de

Chair - Simmons, Caleb, University of Arizona, cbs852s@gmail.com

New Materialism, Religion, and Planetary Thinking Seminar

Call:

Over the past 50 years or so there has been a resurgence in new and old forms of immanent ways of thinking about metaphysics and reality. To some extent, these methods for thinking about the link between mind/body, culture/nature, and spirit/matter have coincided with the emergence of an ecological crisis and awareness of our own embeddedness within the rest of the natural world. These immanent frames for understanding how our ideas materialize in the world and how our entanglement with other bodies in an evolving planetary community shapes our ideas, have great potential for re-thinking human-technology-animal-earth relationships and for addressing problems of global climate weirding and other forms of ecological degradation. Older forms of thought from animisms, shamanisms, and other religious traditions are joined by these more recent forms of thinking with immanence such as the universe story, process thought, emergence theory, the new materialisms (NM's), object-oriented ontologies (OOO's), and even queer theory; yet, these older forms of thinking and the new philosophies of immanence rarely meet in conversations surrounding religion and ecology/nature.

This, the third of a four-year seminar, will focus on ethical implications of immanent philosophies and theories that have been reflected on over the past couple of years. As each year builds on the other in this seminar, we are not accepting outside papers, but papers by seminar participants will be written prior to the seminar and available online prior to the AAR meeting in 2018. Anyone is welcome to attend our session at the AAR, which will be mainly devoted to Q&A of the pre-circulated papers.

Mission Statement:

Recently, a number of methods and ideas for re-thinking ideas as part of the rest of the natural world (including religious ideas and values) have appeared on the religious studies landscape. The ideas of emergence theory, new materialisms, and object-oriented ontologies are all geared toward thinking about religion and science, ideas and nature, values and matter from within what Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari call a "single plane" of existence. Others within the field of "religion and ecology/nature" are skeptical of these "postmodern" methods and theories and claim rightly that ideas from various religious traditions such as pantheism, panentheism, animism, and even co-dependent arising already do the intellectual work of rethinking "religion and nature" together onto an immanent plane of existence. This closed seminar will begin to explore some of the links and differences between these older religious traditions of thinking immanence with more recent post-modern theoretical moves toward spatially-oriented ways of thinking.

Rather than being a final reflection on these connections and differences, this seminar calls for a more sustained comparative study of these different spatial approaches. Recently, a number of methods and ideas for re-thinking ideas as part of the rest of the natural world (including religious ideas and values) have appeared on the religious studies landscape. The ideas of emergence theory, new materialisms, and object-oriented ontologies are all geared toward

thinking about religion and science, ideas and nature, values and matter from within what Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari call a “single plane” of existence.

Method of submission:

We are not accepting submissions from outside of the seminar participants this year.

Chair - Tucker, Mary Evelyn, Yale University, maryevelyn.tucker@yale.edu

Chair - Bauman, Whitney, Florida International University, whitneyabauman@mac.com

New Perspectives on Religion in the Philippines Seminar

Call:

For this fourth year of a five-year seminar series we are encouraging the submission of proposals for full research papers that address any aspect of religion in the Philippines from a global perspective while suggesting promising new avenues of research within the field. We welcome submissions from all scholars, but scheduling priority may be given to previously-confirmed participants.

For next year's session(s) we are particularly looking for papers addressing the following issues:

- New and entangled perspectives on 17th/18th century Filipino religion
- Minority religions and new religious movements in the Philippines

We are also considering making use of the new AAR program structure and offering a second session on an important recent book published by a Filipino/a scholar; we welcome suggestions and proposals for such an author-meets-critics panel via email or via the PAPERS system.

Scholars interested in being part of this conversation are encouraged to contact the chairs for more information and/or details about submitting a proposal. In order to facilitate substantive conversation during the panel, this seminar will participate in the AAR Full Paper Submission system. Full drafts of all accepted papers will be posted online several weeks prior to the Annual Meeting, being accessible to AAR members only.

Mission Statement:

This seminar serves as a space at AAR for presenting and discussing innovative research on religion in the Philippines and strives to develop new perspectives in the study of its religious history. The Philippines has always been a crossroads of diverse religious encounters: between indigenous religions, Islam, Iberian and American Catholicism, Protestantism, indigenous Christian and non-Christian traditions, as well as various Charismatic movements. At the same time, it has been a marginal space, at the geographical margin of Asia and the intellectual margins of scholarship on religion in Southeast Asia and the study of Christianity and Islam. In response to these concerns, this five-year seminar on "New Perspectives on Religion in the Philippines" will contribute to understanding the Philippines as an important node in a global history of transregional and transcontinental religious interactions. It pursues two goals: publishing an extensive edited volume outlining a broad and comparative perspective on religion in the Philippines, as well as establishing a public forum at AAR for discussing the study of religion in the Philippines. As a group, we are always open to new voices and topics, please get into contact with the chairs if you want to become involved.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Hermann, Adrian, University of Bonn, adrian.hermann@gmail.com

Chair - de la Cruz, Deirdre, University of Michigan, ddelac@umich.edu

New Religious Movements Unit

Call:

The New Religious Movements Unit welcomes all papers that address research pertinent to the study of marginal, emergent, “alternative,” or minority religions. In particular, we encourage submissions on the topics of:

- Media and Public-Facing Scholarship
- Space, Place, and Geography (particularly, though not exclusively, with regard to our host state of Colorado)
- Technologies of Religious Innovation
- Drug Culture(s) and Religious Innovation
- The *Welcome to Nightvale* podcast, for a possible collaboration with SBL's Sacred Texts, Theory, and Theological Construction Program Unit
- Reflections on Peoples Temple, in memoriam of the 40th anniversary of the Jonestown massacre

We are especially interested in papers that forefront concerns of race, gender, sexuality, class, and ability within these topics.

Note: New Religious Movements is particularly interested in proposals for full panels, but strongly encourages scholars to familiarize themselves with existent NRM scholarship while preparing their proposals. We also expect that the composition of proposed panels will reflect the lived diversity of the Academy. When preparing your proposal, please include the demographic data you provide to the AAR and explain how your panel's participants instantiate academic diversity.

Mission Statement:

This Unit supports and encourages research on all aspects of the study of New Religious Movements. Presenters in our sessions study marginal, minority, new, and alternative religions, past and present, from a variety of methodological and disciplinary perspectives. Our sessions and additional meetings are intended to create opportunities for dialogue among academics who share a passion for understanding NRMs, and to make known to a broader audience the importance of such movements for understanding issues of religious difference, community building and maintenance, ritual and doctrinal innovation, and other aspects of religious life.

We, the Steering Committee of the New Religious Movements Program Unit, affirm our solidarity with the Muslim scholars of the American Academy of Religion and the Society for Biblical Literature, with Muslim Americans, and with those seeking refuge and asylum in the United States.

As scholars of minority, alternative, and new religions, we are deeply aware of the challenges facing those on America's religious margins. We know the immense human toll such

intolerance causes. Our scholarship also demonstrates the violence and tragedy than can result when federal and state agencies fail to recognize the humanity of marginalized religious groups.

We condemn in the strongest terms Mr. Trump's executive order purporting to “protect the American People from terrorist attacks by foreign nationals”.

www.nytimes.com/2017/01/27/us/politics/refugee-muslim-executive-... We reject the premise that punitive exclusions of any religious group based on the actions of extremist members make any American safer or freer. We affirm the commitments of our country’s first president, who saw in our nation the promise of a government “which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance.”

Cognizant of increased travel and personal safety concerns, we are further committed to offering scholars video conferencing options as an alternative means of participation on all New Religious Movements panels at the American Academy of Religion’s 2017 national meeting and in the future, should similar needs arise.

We are resolved to make space for difference both within the academy and beyond.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Goodwin, Megan, Syracuse University, meganpgoodwin@gmail.com

Chair - Rapport, Jeremy, College of Wooster, jrapport@wooster.edu

Nineteenth Century Theology Unit

Call:

Our unit plans to sponsor or co-sponsor three sessions at the annual meeting in 2018. The first of these, to be co-sponsored by La Société Internationale d'Etudes sur Alfred Loisy, is a book panel consisting of invited responses to Thomas Albert Howard's *The Pope and the Professor: Pius IX, Ignaz von Döllinger, and the Quandary of the Modern Age* (Oxford University Press, 2017).

2018 is the centennial of the end of the First World War, and thus of the so-called "long nineteenth century." For a session on The Future of the Nineteenth Century, we seek proposals for papers that:

- Look at points of continuity and discontinuity with later twentieth-century theology
- Examine how later scholarship constructed nineteenth-century theology
- Discuss new approaches to the study of the "long nineteenth century"

For a third session on Theological Responses to the Rise of Historical Consciousness, we seek papers that examine diagnoses of, and constructive responses to, the challenges of "historicization" resulting from the application of historical-critical methods to the foundational texts and ideas of Christianity and other religious traditions. Papers that engage with the ideas of Ferdinand Christian Baur and related figures are especially welcome, though proposals that consider the impact of the rise of historical consciousness on modern theology more broadly will be given equal consideration.

Mission Statement:

Our Unit focuses on major themes, thinkers, and movements in nineteenth century religious thought and theology — from the French Revolution to World War I — and on the relation of religious thought to its historical, political, and cultural contexts. Each year the Unit selects two or three focused topics and predistributes papers before the AAR sessions.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Gooch, Todd, Eastern Kentucky University, todd.gooch@eku.edu

North American Hinduism Unit

Call:

This Program Unit seeks to advance the study of Hindus and Hindu traditions in North America, and to nurture thoughtful debate on the methodologies and theories unique to and appropriate for this subject. We welcome any paper or panel submissions that might fulfill these goals.

Specifically, for the 2018 AAR meeting, we invite individual papers, paper sessions, and roundtable proposals on the following topics. Please contact the chairs if you are interested in connecting with other potential panelists or for more information:

- Definitions, public perceptions, and the perils of pluralism with regards to N. American Hinduism and the category of "religion"
- Everyday ethics and practices in N. American Hinduism
- Caribbean Hinduism

The NAH Unit especially solicits roundtables and other panel formats that resist the formal reading of papers and invite discussion, collaboration, and creativity.

Mission Statement:

This Unit was established in 2006 for the purpose of drawing greater scholarly attention to Hinduisms outside of South Asia. Though it will focus on North America, the Unit also welcomes relevant research on Hinduisms in other non-Indian contexts. The Unit has three main goals:

To study and describe Hinduisms in North America and related diaspora contexts

To develop a more sophisticated understanding of what distinguishes these Hinduisms from those in South Asia

To nurture thoughtful debate on the methodologies unique to and appropriate for their study

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Pokazanyeva Foxen, Anya, California Polytechnic State University,
apokazan@calpoly.edu

Chair - Altman, Michael, University of Alabama, michael.altman@ua.edu

North American Religions Unit

Call:

This Unit advances the study of religions in North America, broadly conceived (Mexico, the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, etc.), as well as the study of historical, social, and structural links between North American religions and those beyond North American boundaries. We are especially interested in sponsoring sessions that explore the fundamental questions that have shaped the field in the past or should shape it in the future.

The Unit sponsors roundtables, debates, workshops, performances, pre-circulated papers, and other creative formats. As always, this program unit also welcomes proposals for keyword panels based on important concepts in the field. We encourage the submission of both individual contributions and complete panels, though we may reconfigure proposed panels in order to place them on the conference program. For panel proposals, diversity of rank/seniority (including graduate student, post-doctorate, junior and senior participants) and gender, race and ethnicity is strongly encouraged. Presenters in any format should expect to give short presentations that maximize time for audience questions and comments. All presenters should explicitly relate research to ongoing discussions in the field and the wider academy.

In addition to the above, we also encourage proposals on the following topics for our 2018 meeting in Denver, Colorado:

- Sovereignties, Religion, and the Invention of American “Wests”
- Religion, Land, and Water
Activism and histories of resource extraction
- Religion and Law
E.g. recent high court legal decisions concerning religion across North American jurisdictions as well as legal pluralism and indigenous nations
- Sessions themed around “Religion and 1968” in North America
- Religion and the Regulation of Drugs
- Secrecy and Transparency
- Religion and Taxation
- Topics in Religion and Race in North American and Transnational Perspectives

Religion, racialization/racism, religion and anti-racist organizing in historical and contemporary perspectives. Co-sponsorship with the Mormon Studies Unit and the North American Religions Unit.

- Religion and the Materiality of AI
- North American Religions and the Bible.

Mission Statement:

Purpose, Practices & Procedures:

Purpose of an AAR Program unit:

The purpose of program units is twofold: to provide a forum for dialogue and exchange among differing approaches and projects in the field and to provide opportunities for the discussion of work that does not fall within the agendas that find other expressions in the Annual Meeting program. Program units should provide significant time for presenting research in the major subfields of religion.

Purpose of the North American Religions Program unit:

The North American Religions Program unit exists to sponsor conversations about the field at thematic, theoretical, definitional, experimental or historiographical levels, in order to ask where the study of North American religions is going or should be going. Such conversations embrace the diversity of scholars, disciplines, methods and traditions that make up the field.

Routine functions:

The Steering Committee composes the Call for Papers for NAR sessions for the AAR Annual Meeting; reviews, shapes and accepts proposals for those sessions; reviews and reports on sessions; and communicates with the NAR constituency.

Composition: The Steering Committee is made up of ten members, two of whom are elected by the members to serve as co-chairs. A Steering Committee term is three years, renewable for a second three years if everyone is amenable. The terms are staggered, so that there are continuity and change on the committee. During a total of six possible years, a member might serve a co-chair term, which is three years. A member elected to serve as co-chair has at least one full year's experience on the Steering Committee. The co-chair elections are staggered as well, so that each new co-chair serves with an experienced co-chair.

Responsibilities:

The co-chairs take care of the business of NAR and moderate communication of the Steering Committee. All members of the Steering Committee make decisions on substantive matters. All attend the Annual Meeting and reserve Friday dinner for Steering Committee socializing, envisioning and business. All attend the NAR Business Meeting.

Succession:

Members of the Steering Committee are replaced by the following procedure: when there is a vacancy, after the Annual Meeting the co-chairs ask the NAR constituency (via email) for nominations. From among the nominees, the Steering Committee votes to elect a new member.

The co-chairs maintain this “NAR Purpose, Practices & Procedures” document, make it available to the Steering Committee and the NAR constituency, and revise it as needed by vote of the Steering Committee.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Holscher, Kathleen, University of New Mexico, kholscher@unm.edu

Chair - Klassen, Pamela, University of Toronto, p.klassen@utoronto.ca

Open and Relational Theologies Unit

Call:

The Open and Relational Theologies Unit explores theological ideas and their implications as related to the traditions of Open Theism, Process Theology, and other Relational Theologies. These explorations tend to be constructive in nature, and involve theological and philosophical speculation about the nature of God, freedom, power, relationality, love, and more.

For 2018, we invite paper proposals for the following sessions:

- **A Social Trinity? Open-Relational Considerations of Keith Ward's *Christ and the Cosmos***
For this author-meets-critiques session, we invite papers that provide critical and creative responses to Keith Ward's recent book, *Christ and the Cosmos: A Reformulation of Trinitarian Doctrine* (Cambridge University Press, 2015); in which Ward explores the concept of the 'social Trinity'. Papers that consider Ward's position in conversation with Open and Relational theologies are especially encouraged.
- **God as Poet of the World: Art, Beauty, and Creativity**
This session invites papers that explore the notion of God as poet of the world as related to the intersection of art, beauty, and creativity. Papers that deal with theopoetics and post-structuralism are particularly encouraged.

Mission Statement:

This unit explores theological ideas generally related to the following:

- Theology involves speculation about who God truly is and what God really does
- God's primary characteristic is love
- Creatures — at least humans — are genuinely free to make choices
- God experiences others in some way analogous to how creatures experience others
- Both creatures and God are relational beings, which means that both God and creatures are affected by others in give-and-take relationships
- God experience changes, yet God's nature or essence remains the same
- Creatures are called to act in ways that please God and make the world a better place
- The future is open — it is not predetermined by God
- God's expectations about the future are often partly dependent upon creaturely actions

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Schwartz, Wm. Andrew, Center for Process Studies, andrew@ctr4process.org

Origen and the Roots of "Human Freedom" and "Human Dignity" in the West Seminar

Call:

The Origen and the Roots of Human Dignity and Human Freedom in the West Seminar is seeking papers that explore Origen of Alexandria's understanding of human freedom as this understanding is expressed in the wide variety of texts written by Origen. Papers comparing and contrasting the thoughts of Origen with the thoughts of other theologians and philosophers from Plato to Augustine are also welcome. Papers, which contribute to a comprehensive and complex understanding of Origen's understanding of human freedom in its historical, philosophical and theological context, will be preferred.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Origen and the Roots of Human Freedom and Human Dignity in the West seminar is to foster focused discussion about the philosophical and theological roots behind the modern Western conception of humans as free, valuable, and dignified beings. This seminar is particularly interested in the reception of the works of Origen of Alexandria in various times and places in relation to notions of 'human freedom' and 'human dignity' in those contexts. This seminar was started by members of the EU-funded "History of Human Freedom and Human Dignity in Western Civilization" project.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Jacobsen, Anders-Christian, Aarhus University, alj@cas.au.dk

Pentecostal–Charismatic Movements Unit

Call:

The Pentecostal-Charismatic Unit invites individual paper proposals--or complete sessions of related papers, or proposed panel discussion or book-discussion sessions with particular emphasis on:

- Papers that include research at the intersection of Pentecostalism, power & politics in Latin America. We invite papers/panels that focus on Pentecostal theology & practice in countries affected by narcos & gangs (including but not limited to Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador).
- Papers/panels that explore Indigenous Pentecostals throughout the Americas.
- Papers that examine Pentecostals & Social Action (e.g. Civil Rights, protest) as 2018 marks the 50th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at Mason Temple Church of God in Christ.
- Papers that discuss the definition(s) of Pentecostalism within Pentecostal communities and within the study of religion.
- Papers that examine Pentecostal responses (theological and practical) to violence.
- We invite papers or a panel on the upcoming film on Carlton Pearson's conversion to the "Gospel of Inclusion," Come Sunday.

- Pentecostal Responses to Mass Incarceration
We seek proposals that address mass incarceration, its intersection with Pentecostal and charismatic religions and its larger impact/implications for Pentecostals outside of the USA, particularly the Latin American countries of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

- Pentecostalism and Political Action
As 2018 is an election year, we invite papers that discuss how Pentecostals create theologies of politics and how Pentecostal practitioners envision themselves as political actors.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a forum for scholarly consideration of global phenomena associated with Pentecostalism and Charismatic movements. This Unit provides an arena for a wide array of scholars, disciplinary orientations, and methodological approaches bringing together those working constructively from within these traditions with scholars considering the phenomena from historical, sociological, ethnographic, theological, and other perspectives. The Unit intentionally seeks to encourage a global and pluralist perspective.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Payne, Leah, George Fox University, lpayne@georgefox.edu

Chair - Sanchez-Walsh, Arlene, Azusa Pacific University, Asanchez-walsh@apu.edu

Philosophy of Religion Unit

Call:

The steering committee invites proposals on the following topics:

- Philosophy of religion and religious studies with particular interest in papers that address the fate of the field and/or the academic job market
- Religious naturalism
- Anger, outrage
- Afro-pessimism and Afro-futurism (with particular interest in papers that engage the work of Christina Sharpe and/or Claudia Rankine)
- Cosmology
- Glossolalia and religious language
- Philosophy of religion at crossroads (e.g., in the context of Hindu and Muslim encounters)
- W. E. B. Du Bois
- Noreen Khawaja's *The Religion of Existence: Asceticism in Philosophy from Kierkegaard to Sartre*

Although proposals for individual papers will be given due consideration, we encourage proposals for prearranged "papers sessions" (i.e., an entire session with a designated group of presenters) on these or other topics that will be of interest to philosophers of religion. Proposals have a much greater chance of acceptance if they are written so as to be accessible to philosophers with no expertise on the particular topics or figures dealt with in the proposed paper, and they make very clear the central thesis and main line(s) of argument of the proposed paper.

Mission Statement:

This Unit analyzes the interface between philosophy and religion, including both philosophical positions and arguments within various specific religious traditions and more generalized philosophical theories about religion. We include in our purview not only traditional topics of Western philosophy of religion but also those arising from non-Western traditions and from the study of religion in a comparative context.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Rubenstein, Mary-Jane, Wesleyan University, mrubenstein@wesleyan.edu

Chair - Lewis, Thomas A., Brown University, tlewis@brown.edu

Platonism and Neoplatonism Unit

Call:

We invite papers on any topic on the broad theme of Eros and Ascent in the Ancient and Medieval World. In this our fourth year, we especially welcome papers in Judaism, Islam and Late Antique or Medieval Christianity.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is committed to the ongoing study of Platonic traditions in connection with the history and philosophy of religions, from antiquity to the present. We are supported in this effort by the International Society for Neoplatonic Studies. Several of our panelists have published their papers in the Society's *Journal of Neoplatonic Studies* as well as in other refereed journals in classics, religious studies, theology, and philosophy.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Corrigan, Kevin, Emory University, kcorrigan@emory.edu

Political Theology Seminar

Call:

- **Political Theology and Justice**
For 2018, the Political Theology Seminar is issuing an open call for presentations that explore the relation between political theology and justice. How do different conceptions of justice shape think about political theology? In relation to justice, we are interested in both (1) theoretical and legal accounts (the relationship of justice and democracy, for example) and (2) engagement with specific topics such as reproductive justice, racial justice, gender justice, global justice, climate justice, etc. As for political theology, we interpret the category broadly to include both descriptive and normative work that attends to the mutual influence of political and religious concepts (in any religious tradition).

The seminar seeks constructive projects that offer new directions for the field of political theology. We are particularly interested in presentations that reflect upon the broad theoretical significance of particular texts, traditions, and practices.

Mission Statement:

The Political Theology Seminar examines the interaction between religious and political thought: how do they influence one another, and how should we respond? Political theology emerged as an area of study through the work of scholars such as Carl Schmitt, who examined the origin of political concepts in Christian theology. The area has also drawn upon theological traditions (Christian, Jewish, and otherwise) in order to reflect constructively upon the way in which politics ought to operate. In recent years, political theology has been taken up by scholars in various disciplines, including philosophy of religion, Biblical studies, Islamic studies, African American religion, sexuality and religion, and elsewhere. The seminar will draw upon these diverse approaches in order to explore the contribution of political theology to the study of religion.

Over the course of five sessions (2017-2021), the seminar will expand the conversation about political theology to highlight minority, feminist, and queer voices and foreground scholars from Jewish, Muslim, and other religious traditions. The goal of the seminar is to provide a forum for a diverse group of scholars to explore what political theology means in their own work, how they see the conversation about political theology developing, and how political theology can enrich the study of religion.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Newheiser, David, Australian Catholic University, David.Newheiser@acu.edu.au

Chair - Radzins, Inese, Pacific School of Religion, iradzins@psr.edu

Practical Theology Unit

Call:

Community Organizing: Theologies, Practices, Liberations

- **Community Organizing: Theologies, Practices, Liberation**
The Practical Theology Unit and the Liberation Theologies Unit welcome papers and panel proposals for a co-sponsored session critically exploring the theologies embedded in practices of and calls for liberation in community organizing worldwide. We welcome critical engagements not only from scholars, but also from community activists and social organizers in both faith-rooted and not faith-rooted organizations. Topics may include studies of organizations fighting climate change, racisms, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, restrictive immigration policies, sexism, labor injustices, voter suppression, land ownership, the re-emergence of white supremacist power, gentrification, religious conflict, and more. We particularly welcome proposals seeking to explicitly engage these struggles building power networks across identity lines (interfaith, interracial, transnational, etc). The Liberation Theologies Unit encourages crossover dialogue — between contexts, between disciplines, and between religions — and reflection on the implications of liberationist discourse for the transformation of theology, both its methods and substance. We welcome proposals arising out of or engaging all religious or ritual traditions including, but certainly not limited to: indigenous religions, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Christianity, traditional African religions, and Buddhism. We encourage broad interpretation of the terms of the call and creative, constructive proposals for liberation theologies in the 21st century.

Mission Statement:

This Unit engages practical theology and religious practice, reflects critically on religious traditions and practices, and explores issues in particular subdisciplines of practical theology and ministry. The Unit engages this mission in five interrelated public spheres with the following goals:

For practical theology — to provide a national and international forum for discussion, communication, publication, and development of the field and its related subdisciplines

For theological and religious studies — to foster interdisciplinary critical discourse about religious practice, contextual research and teaching for ministry, and practical theological method and pedagogy

For a variety of religious traditions — to enhance inquiry in religious practice and practical theology

For academic pedagogy — to advance excellence in teaching and vocational development for faculty in divinity and seminary education generally and for graduate students preparing to teach in such settings specifically

For the general public — to promote constructive reflection on social and cultural dynamics and explore the implications of religious confession and practice.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Scharen, Christian A. B., Auburn Theological Seminary, cscharen@auburnseminary.org

Chair - Kaufman, Tone Stangeland, MF Norwegian School of Theology, tkaufman@mf.no

Pragmatism and Empiricism in American Religious Thought Unit

Call:

- **Islam and Pragmatism**
Muhammad Iqbal has stated that “spiritual democracy...is the ultimate aim of Islam.” He also spoke of applying a “pragmatic test” to revelation. This session will explore the intersection of Islam with pragmatism and democracy. Papers might examine topics such as: ways pragmatist thinkers have directly engaged Muslim cultures and Islamic thought; ways Islamic thinkers have directly engaged pragmatist thought; and how democracy is expressed through Islam. Other potential topics could include: Muhammad Iqbal’s interpretation of the pragmatic tradition in *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought* (1930*); an analysis of John Dewey’s visit to Turkey in 1924; William James use of Islamic source material in the *Varieties of Religious Experience*; and links between knowledge and behavior in Islamic theology and *adab* including the concept of beneficial knowledge (*al-ilm al-nafi*).
- **W.E.B. DuBois and Pragmatism**
On the 150th anniversary of W.E.B DuBois's birthday, we invite papers that examine the relationship between W.E.B DuBois and pragmatism. Papers might revisit and/or challenge Cornel West and Paul Taylor's incorporation of DuBois into the tradition of American pragmatism; explore how DuBois is relevant for thinking about contemporary concerns and problems; engage the recent studies on DuBois and religion (Edward Blum, Jonathon Kahn, Terrence Johnson).
- **Pragmatism and the Progressive Movement**
We invite papers that engage and think critically about the relationship between pragmatism and the early twentieth century progressive movement. We welcome reflections on Jane Addams and Hull House; papers that examine the implications of the progressive movement for contemporary crises and possibilities within democratic life; reflections on the limitations, dangers, and promise associated with the category “progress”.

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to foster the advancement and understanding of the pragmatic and empiricist traditions in American religious thought, as well as the intersections of those traditions with other methodologies, intellectual figures, artistic movements, communities, and issues. This Unit is concerned with critically interrogating, evaluating, and developing the insights and relevance of the pragmatic and empiricist traditions of American thought, broadly construed, for the study of religion and theology, with attention both to the historical interpretation of ideas and contemporary developments within this critical sphere of philosophical and theological reflection. Recent areas of interest include pragmatism and democracy, the continued relevance of empiricism to the revival of pragmatism, multidisciplinary aspects of the

tradition (intersections with other fields of inquiry), overlaps with cultural criticism and analyses of gender and race, and the application of pragmatic and empiricist analyses to contemporary problems.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Winters, Joseph, Duke University, jrw@duke.edu

Psychology, Culture, and Religion Unit

Call:

- **Recent Neuroscientific Approaches to Psychology and Religion(s): Gains and Losses?**
In the broad field of psychology, neuroscience has increasingly influenced the understanding of religious development, spiritual experience, meaning-making, vocation, healing, etc. What has been gained by the recent focus on brain science in the study of psychology and religion? What has been lost? We especially seek proposals that 1) focus on a concrete area of research or practice and 2) take into account the cultural and historical context in which twenty-first century neuroscience has arisen.
- **#MeToo: Sexual Trauma and Sexual Shaming in the Era of #45**
Though Tarana Burke, creator of #metoo, designed the campaign in 2007 to promote solidarity between women of color survivors, the popularization of #metoo a decade later eclipses Burke's early efforts making the face of the movement against sexual trauma: white women. When Time magazine raised #metoo as the 2017 theme and named "The Silence Breakers" person of the year, the omission of Tarana Burke from the cover exposes how media often re-traumatizes and renders particular survivors invisible. The well-publicized sexual misconduct assaults pervasive in church institutions and faith communities where authorities move pastoral pedophiles from congregation to congregation, and the #metoo campaign has exposed men in the worlds of film and TV, sports, food, news media and publishing, academia, technology, and politics, including the current sitting U.S. President. This session invites papers that address sexual trauma and sexual shaming, including the way society weights trauma and race, and the need for therapy and pastoral care: the culture of violence disproportionately targets girls and women of color. Questions of identity, methodology, and ethics using psychological, theological, and religious perspectives animate these discussions in both activist and academic circles. For co-sponsorship with the Psychology, Culture, and Religion Unit and the Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit.
- **Hooked: Contemporary Study, Treatment and Religious Responses to Addiction**
PCR invites proposals that engage psychology and religion in relation to the current drug crisis in North America, including such topics as; the political/cultural shift from criminalization to medicalization of addiction; the connections among drug policy, racism, gender, and mass incarceration; changes in religious, theological, and psychological discourse about addiction and substance abuse; new psychospiritual treatments.
- ***On Death and Dying*: Kübler-Ross 50th Anniversary**
For 2018, we invite submissions for the 50th anniversary of the publication of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross' seminal study, *On Death and Dying*, for a co-sponsored session with the Death, Dying, and Beyond Unit and the Psychology, Culture and Religion Unit.

Submissions are welcome that engage the memory, theory, and legacy of her work on assisted dying, and hospice/palliative care.

- What is Innateness? Evolution and Development in the Cognitive Science and Psychology of Religion

What does it mean for a cognitive process or capability to be innate? Does this category only refer to fully realized functions at birth? in the first week? in the first month? How should theories about innateness address connections between innate and acquired capacities, and what are the implications for our understanding of the psychology and cognitive science of religion? Recent evidence from developmental cognitive psychology has upended our thinking about innateness. For example, the first longitudinal study of neonatal imitation, published in 2016, showed no evidence to support previous claims by Meltzoff and others. Yet human infants learn to imitate and both nonhuman primates and humans learn to acquire certain, socially relevant capabilities early in life. Are there ways to conceptualize innateness that help us make sense of what may be an innate readiness to acquire such capabilities? For example, does the innateness theory of Gary Marcus sufficiently address both the evolutionary and developmental aspects of acquiring language, morality, religious behaviors and affiliations, etc.? We are especially interested in integrative theoretical or empirical papers that address Marcus' theory and/or new approaches that draw on the evolutionary and developmental interaction literature in psychology and cognitive science (i.e., EvoDevo theories), with a clear connection to how these approaches help or hinder understanding of the origin, transmission, and practice of religion. This is a co-sponsored session with the Cognitive Science of Religion Unit and the Psychology, Culture, and Religion Unit. Contact: Michael Spezio, Scripps College, mspezio@scrippscollege.edu.

Mission Statement:

The PCR unit is comprised of scholars and practitioners in the fields of psychology, religious studies, and cultural analysis. The interests of our members range from Freudian and Jungian psychoanalysis to the practice of pastoral counseling, from object relations theory to cultural studies of trauma and healing. Our primary purposes are to foster creative research, encourage the exchange of ideas among the membership, and provide a forum within the AAR for people with shared backgrounds in the interdisciplinary study of psychology, religion, and culture. Please visit our Website at <http://pcr-aar.org/> and join the PCR listserv at <http://aarlists.org/listinfo/psychculturereligion>

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Campbell-Reed, Eileen, Central Baptist Theological Seminary,
eileen.campbellreed@gmail.com

Chair - Bulkeley, Kelly, Graduate Theological Union, bulkeleyk@gmail.com

Quaker Studies Unit

Call:

For the 2018 AAR sessions in Denver, the Quaker Studies Program Unit invites papers for:

- **Power Dynamics, Authority, and Leadership in Quaker Institutions, Meetings, and Churches**
We welcome research that aims to explore the nature of power and leadership (both internal and external power) in the Quaker tradition. How are these structures of power abused or utilized in negative ways? How does power and its abuse interact within and outside the community? Are there other traditions that may be able to illuminate the structure of Quaker institutions? How do Quaker communities relate to power and what may be illuminated through this relation both internally and externally? Is there an evolution in the way these powers have interacted both internally and externally? What may scholars be able to analyze and understand about the nature of power/authority, in general, if the structures of Quaker power are placed in conversation with other political and religious structures. We welcome all submissions that look to explore Quaker power structures through a broad range of methodologies and practices.

- **Open Call**
We solicit paper proposals that address Quakers and Quaker-related topics. All methodologies are welcome. Special interest would include, but is not limited to, papers that discuss:
 - Quaker understandings of the causes and contexts of violence
 - Race in Quaker history and contemporary Quakerism
 - Quaker political theories
 - Religious identity

Mission Statement:

The Quaker Studies Unit seeks to advance critical scholarship of Quakerism and sub-fields that interact with Quaker history, practice and thought. This Unit is particularly focused on interdisciplinary analyses of Quakerism in its global contexts and the breadth of its theological diversity. Quaker Studies includes the variety of religious traditions that derive from the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), as well as the spiritual and social movements and practices that claim Quaker influence.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Kershner, Jon, University of Lancaster, jon.kershner@gmail.com

Chair - Spencer, Carole Dale, George Fox Seminary, spencca@earlham.edu

Queer Studies in Religion Unit

Call:

This Unit welcomes proposals for individual papers, papers sessions, and roundtables on all topics related to queer theory and LGBT studies in religion, especially those focused on bisexual and/or transgender studies, those that foreground race as an analytical framework, and those that consider contexts beyond the United States and that engage religions other than Christianity.

For the 2018 annual meeting, we are particularly interested in:

- Topics in religion and queer studies/theory that address the study of Mormonism. For a potential co-sponsorship with the Mormon Studies Unit and the Queer Studies in Religion Unit.
- Queer of Color critique and engagement in the study of religion. (possible themes might include: Afropessimism; queer bodies of color; queer of color reflections on foundational scholarship and intellectual genealogies; queer engagement with intersectional feminist, womanist, and *mujerista* standpoints and critiques; etc.)
- Religion and queer studies/theory in conversation with themes of geography and spatialization. This might include questions of gentrification, displacement, indigeneity, settler colonialism, "safe space,"; analyses of rural/urban/suburban, etc. We particularly welcome papers and proposals that address Denver, the state of Colorado, and US borderlands (in recognition of the location for the 2018 annual meeting)
- We also welcome all topics related to the program unit goals

Mission Statement:

The core goals of this Unit are as follows:

- Foster the application of queer theory and gender theory to the study of religion
- Encourage comparative study of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues in religion
- Support the growth of bisexual studies and transgender studies in the field

We actively seek to explore the connections between queer theory in religion and complementary or overlapping fields of inquiry, such as postcolonial theory, critical race theory, disability theory, feminist theory, and cultural studies, among others.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - White, Heather, University of Puget Sound, hwhite@pugetsound.edu

Chair - Young, Thelathia, Bucknell University, nikki.young@bucknell.edu

Qur'an Unit

Call:

The Qur'an Unit welcomes papers and organized panels on all aspects of the Qur'an, its role in the lives of Muslims, its tradition of commentary, liturgical use, aesthetics and material forms, and its influence in the world generally.

Topics that were mentioned at the last annual meeting are: The Qur'an and the Late Antique, the Qur'an and philosophy, Conceptions of time and history in the Qur'an, Liturgical uses of the Qur'an, Material culture and the Qur'an, Mystical letters and symbols in the Qur'an, Popular culture and the Qur'an, Reception history of the Qur'an, Regional issues and the Qur'an (e.g., the Qur'an in Turkey, Malaysia, Indonesia, etc.), Ulum al-Qur'an, The Qur'an in the context of teaching the study of religion. This list of topics is meant as inspirational rather than limiting. If you have a proposal not on this list, please be sure to submit it. The Steering Committee actively solicits proposals that can be linked to other units in the AAR, since linking with other units allows an additional session for each unit.

- Parody, Polemics, and Wordplay through Scriptural Interpretation
Together we propose an invited panel that focuses on Parody, Polemics and Wordplay through Scriptural Interpretation across religious communities in the (very) Late Ancient East and into Early Islam. Co-sponsored with the Quran Unit and the Traditions of Eastern Late Antiquity Unit.

Evaluation of paper and panel proposals to the Qur'an Unit are done by the Steering Committee through anonymous evaluation based on the quality and clarity of the proposal without regard to issues of the presenter's age, status in the profession, gender, religious or ideological affiliation or other factors beyond the quality of the proposal. We hope that this will encourage all members to send us their best proposals. For any questions and help in crafting your proposal, please feel free to contact the co-chairs.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to provide a forum for comprehensive scholarly discussion of the Qur'an, its commentaries, and its role in Muslim and world societies through a variety of disciplinary and methodological perspectives. We particularly welcome student-scholars and scholars from all areas of the academy to help us achieve our goals of promoting an understanding of the Qur'an.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Newby, Gordon D., Emory University, gnewby@emory.edu

Chair - Saleh, Walid, University of Toronto, wahid.saleh@utoronto.ca

Reformed Theology and History Unit

Call:

The Reformed Theology and History Unit welcomes historical and theological proposals on the themes of (1) Eschatology and (2) Racism. We also invite paper proposals for a joint session with the Christian Systematic Theology Unit on the theme of "freedom":

- **Eschatology**
We invite papers that address how the Reformed tradition has depicted and debated issues in eschatology, in both its personal and its cosmic dimensions. What are the contributions of the Reformed tradition to perennial debates concerning the restoration of all things, continuity or discontinuity with creation, theologies of hope, personal identity after death, and divine judgment? How does eschatology intersect with other theological debates in the Reformed tradition around Christology, theological anthropology, the sacraments, election, and salvation? Papers that bring the Reformed tradition into constructive conversation with biblical, philosophical, and/or scientific scholarship are most welcome.
- **Racism**
We also invite papers that explore the ways in which racism has been manifest and/or challenged in the history and the present of the Reformed tradition. What features of the Reformed tradition have been particularly prone to be used for racist ends? What resources have been found within the Reformed tradition to work against racism? Papers that explore the multi-faceted history and complex present of racism, and the specific limitations and possibilities of the Reformed tradition as it relates to responding to the sin of racism, are most welcome.
- The Reformed Theology and History Unit and the Christian Systematic Theology Unit invite paper proposals for a co-sponsored session on the theological legacies of Karl Barth and Jonathan Edwards. We welcome proposals for analytical or constructive (but not purely historical) papers that treat these theologians' accounts of issues surrounding freedom, liberty, and liberation. We especially welcome proposals that explore what these accounts could contribute to contemporary conversations in theology. We welcome proposals for analytical or constructive papers that treat these theologian's accounts of freedom. We also especially welcome proposals that explore what these accounts could contribute to contemporary conversations in theology.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to open up Reformed traditions for critical review and study, focusing on its characteristic themes in theology and historical patterns of polity and practice. Our aim is to present panels and paper sessions that balance historical with theological methods, single figures within larger cultural movements, and core themes with emerging or forgotten

elements of Reformed thought and practice. In all of these topics, we hope to demonstrate the vitality, originality, and diversity of Reformed Christianity in its worldwide expression.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Nimmo, Paul, University of Aberdeen, paul.nimmo@abdn.ac.uk

Chair - Rigby, Cynthia, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, crigby@austinseminary.edu

Religion and Cities Unit

Call:

The Religion and Cities group seeks papers that address the way religious communities address, confront, and respond to changing urban demographics due to gentrification, generational shifts, and other economic and social trends. As demographics shift in many urban environments, religious communities in changing neighborhoods are faced with decisions about who to serve and how to use their facilities. Some religious institutions with declining memberships must determine what to do with aging or historic buildings with considerable maintenance costs beyond their means to support. Others find ways to share building space with other religious groups and community groups that would not have been likely partners before. Still others adopt innovative strategies to develop affordable housing or provide safe spaces for marginalized groups and immigrant community networks.

Papers should focus on current trends or the recent past and may be considered from various disciplinary approaches: historical, ethical, sociological, ethnographic, etc. Individual paper proposals will be given priority, but we will consider panel proposals that present a multi-faceted approach to a unified topic.

- To mark the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination in Memphis, the Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr. Unit, the Afro-American Religious History Unit, and the Religion and Cities Unit plan to co-sponsor a session at the 2018 meeting. We are seeking papers that focus on surveillance of religious communities including socio-religious movements in cities, making connections to FBI surveillance of King in his last year. Papers that address the ways Black and Brown activists continue to be surveilled today (including the 2017 revelation of the FBI's construction of "Black Identity Extremists") and a critical analysis of historic and contemporary religious-theological responses to surveillance are welcomed.
- Urban Migration and Religious Ethics
For a co-sponsored panel with the Comparative Religious Ethics Unit and the Religion and Cities Unit, we are looking for papers that focus on urban migration and religious ethics. We would like to consider how diverse religious traditions have viewed cities and urban migration. How does the wave of recent global urban migration enhance or challenge religious ethics? We invite papers that address how religious ethics be utilized to respond to crises associated with mass urbanization.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is focused on scholarship that explores the dynamics of religion in urban contexts. We draw largely, though not exclusively, from social research in looking at the ways in which the cultures, economies, space, and politics both shape and are shaped by the presence of an increasing diversity of faith traditions in cities.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Edwards, Elise, Baylor University, elise_edwards@baylor.edu

Chair - Day, Katie, United Lutheran Seminary, Philadelphia, kday@uls.edu

Religion and Disability Studies Unit

Call:

The Religion and Disability Studies Group welcomes paper submissions on any aspect of the intersections between religion, theology, and disability studies. We have particular interests in the following topics:

Since the AAR is meeting in Denver, the home town of ADAPT (Americans Disabled Attendant Programs Today, an organization known for its successful social political activism), we encourage papers that address Disability Justice and Disability Activism (see the July 5, 2017 Danika Worthington, Denver Post article on 40 years of ADAPT actions: www.denverpost.com/2017/07/05/adapt-disabled-activists-denver/), and papers that address building coalitions of collaboration between scholars in Religion and Disability Studies and secular and religious communities at local, state, national, and international levels.

We invite as well:

- Papers that may develop as a panel of interlocutors that would engage in (confirmed) conversations between Monica A. Coleman on *Bipolar Faith: A Black Woman's Journey with Depression and Faith* (Fortress Press, 2016) and Michelle Mary Lelwica on *Shameful Bodies: Religion and the Culture of Physical Improvement* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2017).
- Papers that address all too common disabling experiences: trauma and its aftereffects (witnessing or suffering: a. war violence on combatants and non-combatants, b. domestic/internecine acts of violence, and/or c. cyber/digital, emotional, physical, psychological, or sexual violence).
- Papers that expose barriers for people with disabilities to accessibility in liturgical, community, and educational spaces and/or that consider the theological and ethical implications for both continued exclusion and genuine change. For a co-sponsorship with the Religion and Disability Studies Unit and Teaching Religion Unit.
- Papers that address the impact of current US political/legislative environment on people with disabilities in light of studies in religion and regarding those who are most vulnerable (e.g., children, elderly, imprisoned, immigrants, migrants, LGBTIQ, homeless). For a co-sponsorship with the Class, Religion, and Theology Unit, the Religion and Disability Studies Unit, and the Religion, Memory, History Unit.

Mission Statement:

The Religion and Disability Studies Unit is committed to maintaining the visibility, viability, and value of the experience and politics of disability as they relate to the study and practice of religion. We promote engagement between disability studies theory and the study of religion, examine the role of disability in lived religious experience and theology, and consider the historical and contemporary role of disability in diverse religious traditions, texts, and cultures.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Iozzio, Mary Jo, Boston College, mary.io.iozzio@bc.edu

Chair - Peckruhn, Heike, Daemen College, hpeckruhn@iliff.edu

Religion and Ecology Unit

Call:

The Religion and Ecology Unit seeks individual paper and complete panel proposals relating to a wide range of themes in religion and ecology including proposals that resonate with the 2018 thematic emphasis on civic discourse, or that take up the impact of religion and ecology scholarship beyond the academy, through activism, public education or other means. Following our last business meeting we are also interested in a number of topical themes including proposals that concentrate on Colorado and the Intermountain West; methodological pluralism in religion and ecology; ecological deities; re-wilding and neo-primitivism; an authors-meet-critics panel that features several noteworthy new books in religion and ecology; and religious experiences of climate change impacts. Other topics and proposals will also be given full consideration.

The Religion and Ecology Unit is also pursuing a possible co-sponsored session with related units as follows:

- Papers or panel proposals on the impact of current North American administrations' environmental and economic policies on indigenous religious freedom, protection of sacred places, plants and animals. For a joint session with the Native Traditions in the Americas Unit and the Religion and Ecology Unit.
- Religion, Ecology, and Place
Papers or panel proposals on the role of religious traditions in place-based ecological actions or campaigns, especially regarding extractive industries. For a joint session with the Space, Place, and Religion Unit and the Religion and Ecology Unit.
- Law, Religion, and Public Lands/Spaces/Water
We call on papers or panel proposals on law, religion, and public lands, spaces, and waters. Co-sponsored session with the Law, Religion, and Culture Unit and the Religion and Ecology Unit.

Please note that, following our emphasis in 2017 on individual paper proposals, high priority will be given this year to complete panel proposals that offer creative alternatives to the usual format of reading out 4-5 papers.

We aim to offer a Friday afternoon workshop on pedagogy in religion and ecology. Those interested in participating should contact co-chair James Miller.

We are also interested in organizing a tour of local ecologically significant sites. If you are able to organize and lead such a tour, please contact co-chair Christopher Carter.

Mission Statement:

This Unit critically and constructively explores how human–Earth relations are shaped by religions, cultures, and understandings of nature and the environment. We are self-consciously inter- and multi-disciplinary and include methods such as those found in the work of theologians, philosophers, religionists, ethicists, scientists, and anthropologists, among others.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Carter, Christopher, University of San Diego, christophercarter@sandiego.edu

Chair - Miller, James, Queen's University, Kingston, james.miller@queensu.ca

Religion and Economy Unit

Call:

The Religion and Economy unit provides a multidisciplinary forum for exploring intersections between religious and economic modes of social life. For the 2018 Annual Meeting, the Religion and Economy unit welcomes any paper or panel proposals related to the group's mission, including but not limited to the following themes:

- **Collapse and Crisis**
This year marks the 10-year anniversary of the global financial crisis and subprime collapse. The Religion and Economy unit endeavors to use this moment as a convenient prompt for reflection on topics including: (a) specific changes wrought (or not) throughout the world relative to intersections of religious and economic modes of social life in the wake of the 2008 “Great Recession”, and (b) related interrogations of how analyses of concepts such as excess and scarcity, failure and flourishing, slumps and surplus, cycles, sequences, and impasses, can further studies of religion and economy as shared pursuits, practices, and entangled ideational enterprises.
- **Canons and Canonization**
To generate a conversation about the relationship between Religion and Economy and the state of the study of religion, we invite papers that ask: does the field of Religious Studies have a common “canon”? What does it feature, and how might economic concepts complement, alter, or reorient that canon or ongoing processes of canonization? Papers might consider such concepts as supply and demand, capital, equilibrium, distribution, choice, incentive, disruption, elasticity, profit, gift, contracts, division of labor, property, tax, trade, consumption, pricing, deficit, currency, interest, and risk, among others.
- **Capital and Colonial Formations of Race and Religion**
We invite proposals that examine relations and formations of race, religion, and the economic. Papers may, for example, explore arguments surrounding the religious and economic dynamics of colonial conquest, slavery, migration, transnational flows of money and religiosity, nativism, reparations, the coloniality of being and legacies of colonial economic social formations.
- **Care, Caretaking, and Healthcare**
We welcome submissions that consider economies of care, caretaking, and healthcare within broader religious settings and contexts. We are especially interested in papers that address modes and forms of care across chronologies and geographies, from ancient to contemporary, and around the globe (e.g., the effects of healthcare reform on individual and community wellbeing). Co-sponsored with the Religion and Economy Unit and the Religions, Medicines, and Healing Unit.

- **Book Panels**
Proposals that organize a set of formal responses to a recently published book or publication series that contributes to the broader mission of this unit will also be considered, possibly in co-sponsorship with other AAR program units or groups.

Mission Statement:

This Unit sponsors multidisciplinary conversations that explore intersections between religious and economic modes of social life. Building upon and extending scholarship that considers how economic terms and constraints orient religious activity, this Unit cultivates scholarship that asks how economic systems and orientations have developed through fields of thought, practice, and resistance that come into view through attention to the "religious." Encouraging conversations that traverse religious traditions, geographic locations, methodologies, and historical time periods, this Unit's collaborative explorations not only address and explore capitalist and non-capitalist economic systems but also consider how broader systems of "exchange" produce social relations among varied actors--from humans to spirits to material objects. By interrogating religion and economy, this Unit also encourages scholars to consider the stakes of other concepts with ongoing currency in the study of religion, including secularism, postsecularism, spirituality, affect, networks, ritual, agency, and subject formation.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Vaca, Daniel, Brown University, daniel_vaca@brown.edu

Chair - Oliphant, Elayne, New York University, elayne.oliphant@nyu.edu

Religion and Families in North America Seminar

Call:

This Group provides an opportunity for scholars of North American Religions to think critically about how the concepts of religion and family are co-constituting terms, asking how religious rhetoric shapes understandings of the family and how families provide a primary context for religious experiences, identities, and rituals. We are seeking papers examining these topics across broad range of family configurations, religious traditions, and historical eras. We are particularly interested in ensuring that we include papers from all of North America: Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and the United States.

We are committed to addressing familial relationships other than motherhood and religious traditions apart from white Christianity (Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, and Mormonism). We are particularly interested in papers investigating African American experiences, extended kinship networks, siblings, elder care, singleness in a religious world designed for families, divorce, queer families, and men in familial contexts. We are open to all historical periods.

Mission Statement:

The seminar insists on broad definitions of religion and pulls from as diverse a range of families as possible, in order to create generative conversations. To that end, we will think critically about how the concepts of religion and family are co-constituting terms, asking how religious rhetoric shapes understandings of the family and how families provide a primary context for religious experiences, identities, and rituals.

Family, as naturalized term that is anything but natural, is a very generative theme for scholars across the range of theoretical and methodological approaches in the AAR. Geographically, the Seminar is regionally focused on North America to provide a limited scope but intentionally includes Canada, the U.S., Mexico, and the Caribbean, which is to say that we do not see North America as simple a stand in for the United States and intend a transnational and comparative conversation. Methodologically, the Seminar focuses on historical, ethnographic, and cultural studies explorations of family. Theoretically, the Seminar brings together scholars of religion working on questions of kinship, reproduction, gender, race, class, colonialism, ritual and practice, the nation-state, and sexuality in a richly comparative, yet helpfully bounded, conversation. The seminar allows for plenty of opportunity for scholars with very different theoretical orientations toward both the terms “religion” and “family” to find fruitful avenues for dialog between them.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Mehta, Samira, Albright College, smehta@albright.edu

Chair - Ridgely, Susan, University of Wisconsin, susan.ridgely@wisc.edu

Religion and Food Unit

Call:

This Unit provides an opportunity for scholars to engage in the intersection of religion and food, foodways, and food ethics. We are interested in examining these topics across broad geographical areas, religious traditions, and historical eras. We seek papers investigating practices and beliefs related to food, drink, fasting, the production of food, the ethics of production and consumption, or on any aspect of religiously influenced foodways.

Topics might include, but are not limited to:

- Submissions that engage themes of power, particularly:
 - Meat and masculinity
 - Food as an agent of power (biologically speaking)
 - Food as an agent of imperialism
 - Food as agent of tolerance (or intolerance)
- Submissions that engage themes of materiality, or the sensory nature of foods.
- Inspired by our Colorado location, we also welcome submissions that treat questions of religion and intoxicants, particularly cannabis.

Co-sponsored sessions:

- Food, Allurement, Proselytization, and Conversion (Nora Rubel, nora.rubel@rochester.edu). Co-sponsorship with the Religion and Food Unit and the Religious Conversions Unit.
- Nora Rubel's (forthcoming) book, *Recipes for the Melting Pot: The Lives of the Settlement Cook Book* offers a cultural biography of *The Way to a Man's Heart: The Settlement Cook Book*, the most successful fundraising cookbook in American history, having seen forty printings and sold over two million copies. Non-kosher from the start, the book that emerged from a turn-of-the-century Jewish Settlement House featured traditional Jewish recipes alongside a multi-ethnic fusion that reflected not only its Midwestern, acculturated Jewish origins, but also projected cosmopolitan aspirations. Accordingly, the Study of Judaism Unit and the Religion and Food Unit are interested in submissions that will engage this book. Topics include, but are not limited to:
 - The impact of The Settlement Cook Book on the construction of a Jewish American religio-culinary culture
 - The challenges of cultural memory in maintaining religio-culinary tradition
 - The cultural impact of carrying on food traditions in a new land (or we could say in diasporic contexts?)
 - Food and religion's impact on serving sub-cultural communities
 - Connections between domestic reform and religious reform movements

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides an opportunity for scholars to engage in the intersection of religion and food, foodways, and food ethics. We are interested in examining these topics across broad geographical areas, religious traditions, and historical eras. We encourage critical reflection regarding:

- The relationships of religious commitments to food (consumption, production, and invention)
- Diet and sustainability
- Issues of food (in)justice, which may include food availability or insecurity, commitment to wellness, access to healthy foods, etc.
- Theological, spiritual, and religious interrelationships as expressed in food commitments or confluence
- The cross-cultural applicability of the categories of “religion” and “food” themselves

We seek to develop ongoing investigations into practices and beliefs related to food, drink, fasting, the production of food, the ethics of production and consumption, or on any aspect of religiously influenced foodways.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Rubel, Nora L., University of Rochester, nora.rubel@rochester.edu

Chair - Hicks, Derek, Wake Forest University, hicksds@wfu.edu

Religion and Humanism Unit

Call:

The Religion and Humanism unit will be hosting a panel discussion of Rice University's Agnes Cullen Arnold Professor of Humanities Anthony Pinn's most recent publication *When Colorblindness Isn't the Answer: Humanism and the Challenge of Race*. The panel will consist of four invited guests who will each present a 15 minute written response to Pinn's work. Anthony Pinn will then engage their responses and the remainder of the session will consist of a conversation about humanism and the challenge of race.

Mission Statement:

The Religion and Humanism Unit is a forum for constructive work incorporating humanist themes in theology, religion and the arts, and philosophy. The unit also aims to bring scholarly and critical methodologies to bear on the history of humanism and the question of the human. We engage religious historians in the task of tracing the history of humanism across its many manifestations. Understanding that humanism is a highly contested phenomenon, we also seek to bring humanism and its critics into constructive conversation. Finally, in advancing our critical and constructive goals we seek to be rigorously interdisciplinary in approach.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)

Leadership:

Chair - Jakelic, Slavica, Valparaiso University, slavica.jakelic@valpo.edu

Chair - Elwell, J. Sage, Texas Christian University, sage.elwell@tcu.edu

Religion and Migration Unit

Call:

The Religion and Migration Unit seeks proposals for the 2018 Annual Meeting to be held in Denver, Colorado related to the following themes:

- First, second, and third generation migrant differences in religious identity (construction, maintenance or conversion in the diaspora)
- Forced migration, religion, and refugees
- Religion, migration, and Paganism
- Religion, migration, and transcending difference through performance
- Religion, migration, and film
- Religion, migration, and the politics of a good death

We also invite submissions for a possible co-sponsored session with the Religion in Europe Unit on the following topic:

- The role of religion in migration both to and within Europe, either historical or contemporary. This includes the religious ramifications of forced migration to Europe and the rise of the alt-right in Europe in relation to non-majority religious groups and migration. Co-sponsored with the Religion and Migration Unit and the Religion in Europe Unit.

Finally, we offer an open call for any other topics dealing with religion and migration, especially proposals that address theoretical and methodical issues in the field of migration in relation to religious studies.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is a forum in which scholars working on religion and migration from multiple perspectives can interact across methodologies, religious traditions, and regions. We solicit papers addressing the religious practices, experiences, needs, and beliefs of migrating peoples who adapt to new environments and impact their societies of origin and destination. We understand religion and migration broadly, from the religious communities of rural migrants in regional cities to the new understandings of religion that second-generation children construct in order to make sense of their ethnic identities or ethical responses of receiving communities. If you are interested in subscribing to our listserv, please contact Alison R. Marshall, Brandon University, marshalla@brandonu.ca.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Ramji, Rubina, Cape Breton University, rubina@eastlink.ca

Chair - Marshall, Alison, Brandon University, marshalla@brandonu.ca

Religion and Politics Unit

Call:

In addition to receiving paper or panel proposals on topics generally in the purview of the Unit (which encompasses both domestic and global interconnections of religion and politics, in practice and theory), we especially welcome proposals that address the following (and we are open to additional co-sponsorships beyond those listed here):

We are interested in paper proposals addressing issues of religion and politics in the Mountain West region, including “bodies and borders.” This includes religious responses to ecology, sex, guns, and immigration. Denver is home to sacred land, the 2017 Supreme Court same-sex marriage case, the 1999 Columbine massacre, and the 2012 Dark Knight massacre. 2018 is the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We envision a panel of paper presentations on the role of religion in the 2018 midterm elections. Is there any evidence of a third way beyond liberal-conservative or left-right binaries? Is there any evidence that taxation is a moral issue?

Please submit a detailed abstract and more in-depth description to the AAR PAPERS online system so that our steering committee members can review your proposals anonymously.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a forum for scholars and professionals interested in the relationships between religion, the state, and political life, both in the United States and around the world. Our members focus on the interaction between religious and political values, movements, and commitments, and the role of religious individuals and communities in bodies politic. This focus includes attention to the ways in which religion and religious actors participate in public discourse, contribute to debates over public values and social policy, and affect — and are affected by — activity in the political sphere. We welcome members doing both normative and descriptive work from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds, including religious studies, political science, philosophy, social ethics, law (including church–state studies), history (as it relates to contemporary understandings), and theology. We seek to advance scholarly inquiry on religion and politics and we seek also to speak to broad and diverse publics about areas falling under the Unit’s purview.

We also maintain a lively, year-round Religion and Politics Google group, which is open to all AAR members here: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/aar-religionandpolitics>

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Jones, Robert P., Public Religion Research Institute, rjones@prri.org

Chair - Biondo, Vincent, Humboldt State University, vfb2@humboldt.edu

Religion and Popular Culture Unit

Call:

This Unit invites both organized sessions and individual paper proposals that explore the intersections of religion and popular culture. We strongly encourage presentation formats that foster interactive environments and provide creative alternatives to the conventional reading of papers. This year, we encourage presentations that address the following topics:

- Religion in Scripted Comedy Shows
(*The Good Place*, *Blackish*, *Master of None*, etc)
- Religious Aspects of Fan Fiction
- Teaching Religion and Popular Culture
- Differences between Theological and Religious Studies Approaches to Popular Culture
- Fictional Religions in Film, Literature, and Other Media
(Such as Bokomonism, Movementarianism, etc.)
- New spiritual material cultures, communities, and objects originating in the legalization of marijuana
- “Truth”, Conspiracies, and Fake News
The use of religious imagery in memes, religious communities within internet subcultures, nationalist and populist movements, and in particular, rising anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in contemporary popular culture.
- “Peak” Experiences and Rocky Mountain Highs
What are the cultural productions and religious and spiritual results of hiking, mountaineering, and other outdoor activities?
- Religion and Popular Culture during and after the Great War
What did Religion and Popular Culture look like during World War I? How did the War change religion and popular culture? What is the legacy of the 11/11/1918 Armistice for the study of Religion and Popular Culture?

We also invite submissions for two possible co-sponsored sessions:

- Cinema in Southeast Asia

The Religion in Southeast Asia Unit is working with the Religion and Popular Culture Unit to organize a jointly sponsored session on cinema in Southeast Asia. The session will explore film as a site for debating issues — such as, e.g., historical memory and violence, LGBTQ rights, the place of religion in public life, changing ideals of romantic intimacy and personal accomplishment — that have proven difficult to discuss in other public arenas.

- The AAR's Religion and Popular Culture Unit and the SBL's Bible and Popular Culture Unit invite proposals for a joint session exploring interactions between the Bible, Religion, and Popular Culture that involve material or people in or from the Global South.

Finally, we offer an open call for any other topics dealing with religion and popular culture, especially proposals that address the relevance of popular culture studies for larger theoretical and methodical issues in the field of religious studies.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is dedicated to the scholarly exploration of religious expression in a variety of cultural settings. We encourage a multidisciplinary display of scholarship in our sessions and are committed to taking popular culture seriously as an arena of religious and theological reflection and practice.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Sieglar, Elijah, College of Charleston, sieglere@cofc.edu

Chair - Gregory, Rabia, University of Missouri, rabiagregory@gmail.com

Religion and Public Schools: International Perspectives Unit

Call:

This group will promote the comparative study of religion education in public schools around the world. By encouraging interdisciplinary research on the ethical, legal, political, pedagogical, and religious issues that arise with the study of religion in elementary and secondary schools, we seek to deepen our understanding of alternative approaches to religion as an academic subject. We also hope to find new ways of responding to the increasing religious diversity in schools and societies and to study the relationship between religion education and citizenship education in pluralistic democratic societies.

- **Non-Religious/Secular Worldviews in Public Schools**
Teaching about religion in public school is often associated with the teaching about the “religions of the world”. This can be done within for example history or a social science subject or, as in some countries, within a special religion education school subject. Apart from “world religions” there are of course many other “world-views” that are taught in public school. Several supra national documents, such as Council of Europe’s Signposts, the Toledo Guiding Principles, AAR’s Guidelines for Teaching about Religion, and the Religious Studies Companion Document to the National Council for the Social Studies Framework for Social Studies State Standards mention or prescribe the teaching of non-religious or secular world views. In this session, we would like to discuss the teaching of these world-views. What non-religious and secular world views are presented, in what school subject and why and how? What is not presented?
- **Pedagogies for Teaching about Religion in Public Schools**
We also call for studies on pedagogies of teaching religion used in compulsory schools? What pedagogies have proved successful in compulsory public education? In what ways have they been successful? What pedagogies have seemed to fail and why? What works and why, and in what settings? How do teachers treat religious diversity?

In an open call, we also invite papers that advance the mission of this program group.

Mission Statement:

This Unit will promote the comparative study of religion education in public schools around the world. By encouraging interdisciplinary research on the ethical, legal, political, pedagogical, and religious issues that arise with the study of religion in elementary and secondary schools, we seek to deepen our understanding of alternative approaches to religion as an academic subject. We also hope to find new ways of responding to the increasing religious diversity in schools and societies and to study the relationship between religion education and citizenship education in pluralistic democratic societies.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

E-mail with Attachment (proposal is in attachment, not in body of e-mail)

Chair - Berglund, Jenny, Södertörn University, jenny.berglund@sh.se

Chair - Waggoner, Michael, University of Northern Iowa, Mike.Waggoner@uni.edu

Religion and Science Fiction Unit

Call:

Religion and Science Fiction invites proposals exploring the intersections of religion and speculative fictions in ways that illuminate theoretical, methodological, and substantive issues in the study of religion. We are especially interested in proposals that invite audience conversation, make use of new media, and consider alternative "sciences" and worlds. We seek proposals on the following topics:

- 2018 marks the 200th anniversary of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. We invite papers on this classic foremother of science fiction and iterations of her story from the originating novel to *Rocky Horror Picture Show* and beyond.
- Cyborgs, Monsters, and Transformation
- Contact Fiction and Colonialism
- Transposition of Religious and Theological Concepts through Worldbuilding
- Religion in Games and Gaming
(*Halo*, *Mass Effect*, *Fallout*, *Deus Ex*, *Bioshock* and etc.)
- *Blade Runner*, Then and Now
- *Westworld*, Then and Now
- Resurgence of Science Fiction Television
(*Black Mirror*, *Star Trek: Discovery*, *Orville*, *Expansive*, *Westworld*, *Gifted*, *Sense8*, Marvel/DC titles, *Future Man*, *Handmaid's Tale*, *The OA*, *Electric Dreams*, *Mr. Robot*, *12 Monkeys*, etc.)
- Proposals that provoke science fictional imaginings and transgressions on the AAR's 2018 theme "Religious Studies in Public: The Civic Responsibilities, Opportunities, and Risks Facing Scholars of Religion"
- We invite proposals from a range of disciplinary and methodological approaches.

Mission Statement:

This Unit connects the study of religion to the limitless possibilities for world-making, soul-saving, god-imagining, community-forming, and human-being posed by science fiction (and broadly, "speculative" fictions). Science Fiction (SF) is a literary and visual medium addressing the most basic existential and teleological questions human beings can pose. As the genre of infinite possible worlds and human and superhuman becoming, SF has a unique ability to ask,

examine, and suggest answers to the most profound questions and to envision transcendence beyond traditional realist literature or religious interpretations of the world.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Ammon, Laura, Appalachian State University, ammonl@appstate.edu

Religion and Sexuality Unit

Call:

This Unit examines religion and sexuality, broadly conceptualized, and focuses on questions of why and how sex matters for particular religious persons, communities, or traditions. We welcome collaboration with other Program Units doing work in some area of sexuality. Distinguishing this Unit from other Program Units are (1) an emphasis on empirical research and analysis, (2) an intentionally multidisciplinary and comparative religious focus, and (3) an interest in comparative international perspectives. We especially encourage interdisciplinary approaches, interest in gender, and strong attention to methodological issues. While we welcome papers that address theory we are especially interested in praxis-based theoretical analysis. Accordingly, this Unit welcomes papers on religion and sexuality, broadly conceptualized. We are particularly interested in papers addressing and analyzing the following themes:

- #MeToo
We welcome papers that engage and problematize the #metoo campaign through the critical lenses of bodies, sexualities, power, pleasure, abuse, ethics, etc. In particular, we welcome papers that problematize religious sexual abuse and spiritual bypassing. Papers should employ empirical, literary, or poetic approaches.
- Sacred Texts in Sexuality Education
We welcome papers that engage the current and/or potential use of sacred texts (across traditions) in comprehensive sexuality education. For potential co-sponsorship with the LGBTI/Queer Interpretation section (SBL).
- Queer Gathering
We welcome papers that address queer theology and queer religious activism. We are particularly interested in a) an empirical focus on lived experiences across religious traditions and b) interreligious dialogue/cross-faith conversations pertaining to queer theology and activism.

Other proposals for papers, session, panels, and/or book sessions in keeping with the general mission of the Unit are always welcome.

Mission Statement:

This Unit examines religion and sexuality, broadly conceptualized, and focuses on questions of why and how sex matters for particular religious persons, communities, or traditions. We welcome collaboration with other Program Units doing work in some area of sexuality. Distinguishing this Unit from other Program Units are an emphasis on empirical research and analysis and an intentionally multidisciplinary and comparative religious focus. We especially encourage interdisciplinary approaches, interest in gender (broadly defined), and strong attention to methodological issues.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Hoel, Nina, University of Oslo, ninahoel@gmail.com

Chair - Leath, Jennifer S., Iliff School of Theology, jennifer.s.leath@gmail.com

Religion and the Social Sciences Unit

Call:

In light of the 2018 conference theme “Religious Studies and Publics,” the Religion and Social Science Unit (RSS) invites submissions of papers that address the following themes and topics:

- Social scientific-based methodologies that focus on community-based research
- The vulnerabilities associated with conducting field research and those that ethnographers of religion experience in the field as a public and as public figures
- Regional focus on religion in the Middle Western states
- Religion and the environment, including the aftereffects of natural disasters
- Searching for the elusive “interdisciplinarity” in Religious Studies and other social scientific fields

Mission Statement:

This Unit supports scholarship at the intersection of the social sciences — including psychology, ethnography, sociology, political sciences, economics, and cultural studies — and religious or theological studies. Topic areas include the study of religious and theological questions through specific social scientific methodologies, the contribution of religious and theological approaches to the work of social scientific disciplines, and comparative assessments of current issues by humanities-based and social scientific methods.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Anonymity of Review Process: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection. Please do not include any identifying information in the body of your proposal.

Chair - Phillips, Nichole, Emory University, nichole.r.phillips@emory.edu

Chair - Nabhan-Warren, Kristy, University of Iowa, kristy-nabhan-warren@uiowa.edu

Religion and US Empire Seminar

Call:

The AAR Seminar on Religion and U.S. Empire invites panel or individual paper proposals for a session on one of three themes:

- **Religion and the Financing of U.S. Empire**
Proposals may interpret and organize this theme in a variety of ways. Possibilities include: How have religious groups helped to fund American expansion? What resources have they brought to bear at different times and places in the history of American imperialism? This theme aims to bring together the study of U.S. Empire with histories of religion and capitalism, the exploitation of natural resources (land, water, fossil fuels) within and beyond the United States, and the “business turn” in American religion.
- **Religion and U.S. Empire in Comparative Perspective**
Proposals may interpret and organize this theme in a variety of ways. Possibilities include considering how and why apologists for U.S. Empire have insisted that American expansionism is or has been fundamentally different from European imperialism. What is at stake in asserting American distinctiveness? This theme aims to critically engage with narratives of American exceptionalism through comparative analysis focusing on the role of religion in the production, extension, defense and/or critique of U.S. and other empires.
- **Religion and the Collapse of Empire**
Proposals may interpret and organize this theme in a variety of ways. Possibilities include: Is U.S. empire in a state of decline? How do narratives of declension operate within the realm of American religion? What political, cultural, and/or spiritual work do such accounts accomplish? How can scholars of religion engage with contemporary jeremiads about the end of American empire?

Mission Statement:

The seminar, which will be in its fifth year, supports a critical examination of the complex relationship between religion and US empire from the formal inception of the US as a nation-state to the present. The seminar encourages attention to fundamental theoretical issues relating to religion and US expansionism, including but not limited to the following: the co-constitution of race, religion, and nation; the political and institutional mechanics of empire; the role of civic, ethnic, and religious nationalisms in supporting and critiquing empire; the value of transnational and national approaches to understanding US religious history; and the implications of reconceiving the standard periodization of US history to depart from standard state-building categories. The specific research projects of the collaborators attend to such issues as militarism and the materiality of religion and empire; the influence of empire on rituals, practices, and beliefs of US public religion; and the linkages between colonial administrators, missionaries, and the scientific study of religion.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Leavelle, Tracy, Creighton University, tracy.leavelle@creighton.edu

Chair - Curtis, Heather D., Tufts University, heather.curtis@tufts.edu

Religion in Europe Unit

Call:

This unit analyzes religion in both Eastern and Western Europe or related to Europe in any historical period. We encourage interdisciplinary, interreligious, and comparative approaches to the topic. For the 2018 meeting we especially seek proposals related to one or more of the following themes:

- **The Relationship between Right-Wing Politics, Religion, and European Identity**
This topic can be either historical or contemporary and could include discussions of negotiating boundaries of/within Europe (e.g., regional or separatist movements), the relationship between religion and foundational laws/constitutions, and the exploitation of religious terms (internally or externally) in relation to the far-right. Co-sponsored session with the Law, Religion, and Culture Unit and the Religion in Europe Unit.
- **The use of feminist and gender theory in analyzing the challenges and responses of religious communities in Europe:** In addition to concerns over religious or legal regulation of women's attire, this can include religious debates over wider gender issues of equal rights and meaningful participation in decision-making, safety, the recovery of hidden/forgotten/suppressed female historical narratives, and the work of interreligious women's coalitions, for a co-sponsored session with the Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Unit and the Religion in Europe Unit.
- **Religious Conversion and European Identity, Both Historical and Contemporary** (Elissa Cutter, elissa.cutter@lmu.edu). Co-sponsorship with the Religion in Europe Unit and the Religious Conversions Unit.
- **The role of religion in migration both to and within Europe, either historical or contemporary.** This includes the religious ramifications of forced migration to Europe and the rise of the alt-right in Europe in relation to non-majority religious groups and migration. Co-sponsored with the Religion and Migration Unit and the Religion in Europe Unit.
- **Recognizing the Armenian Genocide**
At a 2017 United Nations General Assembly meeting, President of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan, invited "all member States to support a new initiative toward the international recognition of the Armenian genocide" (www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=57581#.WirgkbaZPOQ). In light of President Sargsyan's invitation and the Annual Meeting theme of "The Civic Responsibilities, Opportunities, and Risks Facing Scholars of Religion," we invite proposals that address the role of religion in the politics of recognition and denial with regard to the Armenian genocide. We are particularly interested in the following themes: (1) the politics of denial and recognition of the Armenian genocide in Turkish and European contexts with

attention to religious language involved, and/or (2) the role of religious and or secular rhetoric, as well as the implications and political influence of international recognition of the Armenian genocide by various religious groups (such as Pope Francis in 2015 and the Central Council of Jews in Germany), (3) and/or the risks facing scholars of the Armenian genocide, especially Turkish scholars or scholars based in Turkey. Co-sponsorship with the Religion in Europe Unit and the Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Unit.

We also welcome proposals that do not correspond to these themes, as well as proposals for complete sessions related to Europe in some fashion. Successful proposals will be considered for publication in the peer-reviewed Journal of Religion in Europe.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is designed to serve as a forum for the examination of religious issues related to the social, cultural, and political development of both Eastern and Western Europe. Its guiding principles include a commitment to scholarly dialogue across disciplines, a comparative spirit sensitive to Europe's religious diversity, and a transhistorical appreciation of the full trajectory of the European experience.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Dressler, Markus, Leipzig University, markus.dressler@uni-leipzig.de

Chair - Cutter, Elissa, Loyola Marymount University, Elissa.Cutter@lmu.edu

Religion in Premodern Europe and the Mediterranean Unit

Call:

We welcome proposals on all topics related to the Unit's subject matter, broadly conceived. Proposals that are themselves comparative in nature or that present novel approaches to the study of premodern religion are particularly welcome. We encourage the submission of preformed panel proposals; each 90-minute panel should include two or three papers and a respondent. The steering committee will also consider panel proposals without a designated respondent; if accepted, the steering committee will appoint an appropriate respondent.

This year, we specifically encourage proposals on the following three topics:

- **Prophetic and Divinatory Dreaming**
Ordinary people found evidence in the Bible and Qur'an as well as in hagiography that God communicates to humans through dreams. Practical texts even offered special prayers for access to divine knowledge through dreams. Even as believers sought true divine dreams, however, they had to distinguish these experiences from dreams brought on by humoral imbalance or demonic temptation. This session aims to explore dream narratives and oneiric techniques in premodern texts with the goal of understanding how, where, and when dreams could be understood as a mode of access (legitimate or not) to revelatory knowledge.
- **Jerusalems: Heavenly, Earthly, Imaginary**
This session aims to explore premodern Jewish, Christian, and Islamic ideas of Jerusalem as expressed in a variety of media, such as visions, art, exegesis, and chronicles. Of particular interest are papers that examine the relationship between conceptions of Jerusalem and ideas about the very nature of Judaism, Christianity, or Islam.
- **Premodern Masculinities**
This session aims to explore the performance of masculinities or the construction/representation of normative and subaltern masculinities in premodern Europe and the Mediterranean. Participants will examine the diversity of masculinities within Jewish, Christian, and Islamic communities and the varied ways that gender and masculinity intersect with religious, ethnic, and cultural identities. We seek scholars of premodern gender and masculinity to propose papers on the performance of masculinities or the construction/representation of normative and subaltern masculinities in premodern Europe and the Mediterranean. We welcome individual or preformed panel proposals that explore the diversity of masculinities within Jewish, Christian, and Islamic communities and the varied ways that gender and masculinity intersect with religious, ethnic, and cultural identities. For a co-sponsored panel with the Men, Masculinities, and Religions Unit and the Religion in Premodern Europe and the Mediterranean Unit. (Preformed panels should include 2-3 papers and a respondent

for a 90-minute session; we welcome panel proposals without a designated respondent and will assign a respondent if the proposal is accepted.)

Mission Statement:

This Unit aims to bring together scholars working on premodern Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in order to create a venue in which religious phenomena can be considered comparatively. Our panels are 90 minutes in length and feature 2-3 papers as well as a respondent. Individual papers may be embedded in a single tradition, but presenters should be interested in engaging this material comparatively during the discussion period.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Freidenreich, David, Colby College, dfreiden@colby.edu

Religion in South Asia Unit

Call:

RISA's mission is to provide a venue for new research on the many religious cultures, texts, and histories of South Asia. We have a strong preference for sessions in which the papers cover a range of traditions, regions, and languages of South Asia. The theme for the 2018 AAR is "The Civic Responsibilities, Opportunities, and Risks Facing Scholars of Religion", so panels related to this theme are also encouraged. The steering committee of the Religion in South Asia (RISA) unit invites colleagues to submit proposals for the 2018 AAR meeting in Denver, according to the following guidelines:

- 2018 Individual Paper Proposals
 - "New Directions" Panel

The RISA Steering Committee dedicates one standard-length paper session (150 minutes) to showcasing new scholarship in our field. Applicants for this panel must: (1) be doctoral students or recent grads from a Ph.D. programme in South Asian religions and (2) never have presented at the national AAR meeting. Accepted panelists will be mentored by a senior colleague with appropriately specialized expertise. To apply, upload your individual paper proposal in the AAR's PAPERS system, explicitly labelled as a "New Directions" submission, and also email your proposal (and any other queries) to Elaine Fisher, convener of the panel for 2018 (emf@stanford.edu).

- Decolonization as Healing

With a wide range of other units, we plan to co-sponsor a session on the theme of decolonization as healing, recognizing that colonization in Africa and in other parts of our world has resulted in both historical and ongoing threats to health and wellbeing. We are looking for papers that address facets of this theme, including but not limited to: "Place, Land, and Environmental Degradation," "Decolonization/Restoration of Identities," "Vocabularies and Pragmatic Applications of Rituals and Ceremonies," "Reclaiming the Past, Imagining the Future," and "Tradition as Healer". Co-sponsored with the Religions, Medicines and Healing; African Diaspora Religions, African Religions; Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society; Body and Religion; Indigenous Religious Traditions; Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society; Native Traditions in the Americas; Religions in the Latina/o Americas; Religion in South Asia, Religion in Southeast Asia; and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism; and World Christianity Units. Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the Call for Papers, and will speak to its broader implications for African American religious history. This session is a panel. Please submit a proposal for a paper or presentation. If your proposal is chosen, your paper will be circulated ahead of the conference and you'll be asked to give a brief (5-7 minute) summary of the paper during the conference session.

- 2018 Paper Session Proposals

Starting this year RISA is allotted either one 150-minute session, one 120-minute session, and five 90-minute sessions, OR two 150-minute sessions, one 120-minute session, and three 90-minute sessions.

- 150-minute panels consist of 6 participants: 4 paper presenters, a respondent, and a presider.
- 120-minute panels consist of 5 participants: 4 paper presenters and a presider.
- 90-minute panels consist of 5 participants: 3 paper presenters, a respondent, and a presider.

Please specify your preferred format (150, 120, or 90 minutes).

If relevant, list any potential co-sponsoring unit with your proposal.

All participants must be current AAR members to complete your submission.

If you are looking for collaborators towards proposing a papers session, please feel free to reach out to colleagues on the RISA listserv, or to contact the RISA co-chairs for assistance, Andrea Pinkney (andrea.pinkney@mcgill.ca), Hamsa Stainton (hamsa.stainton@mcgill.ca). Some themes already identified as potential papers sessions are listed below. To express interest in collaboration, below, please contact the associated colleagues for details directly.

- Hindu Appropriations of Buddhism
Joel Bordeaux and Brad Clough (bordeauxjoel@gmail.com; bradley.clough@mso.umt.edu)
- Hindus and Hindu Traditions in Pakistan
Jürgen Schaflechner (juergen.schaflechner@uni-heidelberg.de)
- Memory and Materiality
Prea K. Persaud (ppersaud@ufl.edu)
- Migration and Sacred Matters
Priyanka Ramlakhan (priyankaram@ufl.edu)
- Premodern Buddhist-Hindu Interaction
Bradley Clough (bradley.clough@mso.umt.edu)
- Relevance of Theory in Fieldwork: Case Studies
Mani Rao (emailmanirao@gmail.com)
- Religion and the Performing Arts in Northeast India
Rodney Sebastian (rodney.sebastian@gmail.com)
- Religion and the Politics of Cow Protection
SherAli Tareen (sherali.tareen@fandm.edu)

- Religious Encounters in the Early Modern
Anne Murphy (anne.murphy@ubc.ca)
- Religious Minorities in South Asia
Borayin Larios (b.larios@uni-heidelberg.de)
- Roundtable: Theorizing Secularism in Taneja's *Jinnealogy*
Richard McGregor (richard.j.mcgregor@vanderbilt.edu)
- Session Honoring H. Daniel Smith
Purushottama Bilimoria and Sudhakshina Rangaswami
(pbilimoria@gtu.edu; rsudhakshina@gmail.com)
- South Asian Religions in Kerala
Helena Reddington (helena.reddington@mail.mcgill.ca)
- *Stotra* as Genre
Lynna Dhanani (lynna.dhanani@yale.edu)

Mission Statement:

This Unit's mission is to provide a venue for new and important research in the many religious cultures, texts, and histories of South Asia. Within the area of South Asia, all world religions exist in unique forms, from religions that originated in India — such as Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Tantra, and tribal religions — to religions that have taken on longstanding and distinctive forms in South Asia — such as Islam, Judaism, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism. The focus of our work is thus on a geographical area, the religious, cultural, and intellectual traditions of that area, and changes that have occurred in those traditions over several millennia. Scholars of South Asia explore the distinctive manifestations of religious traditions in the subcontinent, their interactions, and their movements to and expressions in other parts of the world. This Unit encourages contextualizing religion within debates on a broad array of parallel and intersecting issues, such as (but not limited to) politics, secularism, literature, philology, globalization, modernity, colonialism and postcolonialism, history, society, media, popular culture, material and visual culture, and economics. Our scholarship often emphasizes sessions and papers that look at more than one tradition and thus frequently entail some degree of comparative approach. Our Website is www.montclair.edu/RISA. We also have a listserv, which is essential to the work of our Unit. Information on joining the listserv can be found on our Website.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Stainton, Hamsa, University of Kansas, Hamsa.stainton@gmail.com

Chair - Pinkney, Andrea Marion, McGill University, andrea.pinkney@mcgill.ca

Religion in Southeast Asia Unit

Call:

The Religion in Southeast Asia Program Unit at the American Academy of Religion invites proposals for individual papers, paper sessions, and roundtables. For those interested in proposing organized paper sessions, we would encourage you to consider a 90-minute session with pre-circulated papers. (This can be indicated in your panel proposal.) Continuing our effort to cultivate a greater inclusiveness in the range of topics and participants involved in the Unit's activities, we will favor submissions from both underrepresented groups and those who have never before presented in this Program Unit. Topics of special interest for 2018 include:

- Religion, borders, and violence
- Religion as a critical category
- Southeast Asian scholarship on religion in Southeast Asia
- Contemporary ethnographies of religion

- Cinema in Southeast Asia
The Religion in Southeast Asia Unit is working with the Religion and Popular Culture Unit to organize a jointly sponsored session on cinema in Southeast Asia. The session will explore film as a site for debating issues — such as, e.g., historical memory and violence, LGBTQ rights, the place of religion in public life, changing ideals of romantic intimacy and personal accomplishment — that have proven difficult to discuss in other public arenas.

- Decolonization as Healing
With a wide range of other units, we plan to co-sponsor a session on the theme of decolonization as healing, recognizing that colonization in Africa and in other parts of our world has resulted in both historical and ongoing threats to health and wellbeing. We are looking for papers that address facets of this theme, including but not limited to: "Place, Land, and Environmental Degradation," "Decolonization/Restoration of Identities," "Vocabularies and Pragmatic Applications of Rituals and Ceremonies," "Reclaiming the Past, Imagining the Future," and "Tradition as Healer". Co-sponsored with the Religions, Medicines and Healing; African Diaspora Religions, African Religions; Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society; Body and Religion; Indigenous Religious Traditions; Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society; Native Traditions in the Americas; Religions in the Latina/o Americas; Religion in South Asia, Religion in Southeast Asia; and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism; and World Christianity Units. Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the Call for Papers, and will speak to its broader implications for African American religious history. This session is a panel. Please submit a proposal for a paper or presentation. If your proposal is chosen, your paper will be circulated ahead of the conference and you'll be asked to give a brief (5-7 minute) summary of the paper during the conference session.

Proposals may also be submitted on any other subject relating to religion in Southeast Asia.

Mission Statement:

Situated at the nexus of several civilizational influences — including Indian, Chinese, and Middle Eastern — Southeast Asia, as a region, remains understudied in terms of its relevance to the theoretical and methodological study of religion. This neglect is in part due to the tendency to reduce Southeast Asian religious systems to the named “world religions” often identified with other regions. As a result, indigenous practices are not viewed in terms of their conceptual and other linkages — and in some cases the dynamic interactions between those practices and the religious practices brought over by different classes of immigrants are frequently overlooked. However, and especially in the last fifteen years, exciting materials addressing different religious cultures in Southeast Asia have emerged. Hitherto, there has been little scholarly conversation at the AAR on Southeast Asia. And, perhaps even less commonly, are Southeast Asian religious cultures (e.g., Buddhist, Islamic, Christian, Hindu, “animist”, Chinese, and Pacific) put into conversation with one another. In light of this need in the field, we strive to provide a context for this conversation as well as to foster critical thinking about Southeast Asia as a region.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Fox, Richard, Heidelberg University, rfox@eth.uni-heidelberg.de

Chair - Kaloyanides, Alexandra, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, akaloyan@uncc.edu

Religion in the American West Unit

Call:

The theme for the 2018 annual meeting is “The Civic Responsibilities, Opportunities, and Risks Facing Scholars of Religion.” As a response to that theme, we invite paper proposals that in some way address public memory or memorialization in relation to religion in the American West. We use the terms “public memory” and “memorialization” broadly, to encompass various means by which invested communities represent, reassess, or reclaim the past, including monuments, festivals, pageants, re-enactments, anniversaries, apologies, literature and art, television and film, music, history education in schools, museums, archives, cemeteries, historic preservation, repatriation of artifacts, or revivals of historic styles.

Recent confrontations, sometimes violent, around Confederate memorials offer vivid reminders that works of public memory deploy specific politics in the present and embody rival visions of the future. Viewing religion in the American West through the lens of that concern raises questions such as these:

- How is religion present in—or absent from—the memorializing of the American West?
- How significant are religious institutions or practices today in shaping public memory?
- What lessons might case studies of contested memorialization offer to other invested parties who seek to reshape communal memory?
- How do stories about religion in the American West complicate or challenge widely reproduced narratives about the nation?
- What would a public history of religion in the American West look like—or what does it look like at present?
- How might religious studies scholars collaborate with other professionals, in venues such as museums, to shape public understandings of the history of the American West?
- How do we as scholars navigate a religious group’s “politics of memory” when we research or write about their past?

We are especially—but by no means exclusively—interested in papers that examine religion and public memory or memorialization in the annual meeting’s host city, Denver, or elsewhere in the state of Colorado. We will consider proposals that do not address public memory or memorialization; however, our preference is to select a slate of papers on that theme.

- We are seeking individual or session proposals for a co-sponsored session with the Music and Religion Unit and the Religion in the American West Unit around the theme of “Music and Religiosity in the Mountain West”. Potential topics include but are not limited to Native American musico-religious and sonic traditions, Latter-day Saints musical traditions, the music of evangelical megachurches and institutions (e.g., New Life, Focus on the Family), uses and critiques of music, Latino/a religious music in the West, musical hagiography of the West in the American imagination (e.g., religious themes in cowboy songs), sonic environments erased from the American imagination,

music and the Rocky Mountains, and local music institutions (e.g., University of Colorado, University of Denver, local music archives, Gospel Music initiative).

Deadline for completed papers: As is the long custom of this unit, our session will be formatted as a group discussion of pre-circulated papers. Each presenter will deliver a 5-minute oral précis of their work at the beginning of the session but will not read their entire paper aloud. This format allows presenters to circulate article-length or chapter-length manuscripts to the group (rather than condensed, 20-minute versions) and greatly increases the amount of time available during the session for offering feedback to presenters. However, the pre-circulated format also requires presenters to submit their completed papers for circulation to the seminar by October 15, 2018.

Mission Statement:

The Religion in the American West Unit is a forum for graduate students, independent scholars, and faculty who situate their work regionally in the North American West, broadly conceived. The study of religion in this region allows scholars to use a broad array of methodologies (historical, anthropological, literary, sociological, and others) to explore the most pressing questions in the field of American religion and in Religious Studies more generally. These include, but are not limited to: the history of empire and colonialism; the connections between religion and violence; the construction and deployment of racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual identities; transnational movement of people and ideas; religion and the natural and built environments; myth-making and its role in the construction and critique of nationalist ideologies; and the development of the category of religion. The purpose of this subfield is not to remain in the American West, to define the West, or to argue that religion in the West is unique. Instead, by situating scholarship regionally, scholars of the American West are able to develop theories and methods that can be useful interpretive lenses for other regions defined by land, transnationalism, migrations, diversity, and colonialism. Moreover, the Unit supports the development of a rigorous intellectual community by pre-circulating papers in advance of the national meeting and maintaining a blog.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Denison, Brandi, University of North Florida, b.denison@unf.edu

Chair - Hendrickson, Brett, Lafayette College, hendribr@lafayette.edu

Religion, Affect, and Emotion Unit

Call:

RAE accepts individual proposals and panel submissions on research that examines the impact for religion scholarship of theorizing particular affects or emotions, assessing specific theorists or strains of affect theory or emotion studies, or re-examining the history of emotion and feeling. For the 2018 conference we especially solicit papers or panels on the following topics:

- For the 2018 presidential theme on public scholarship:
Affective dimensions of public scholarship, including free speech, assessment of public scholarship, allegations of being "too political" or "too emotional", receiving hate mail and threats, etc.
- 5-minute talks for a lightning session on emotion, affect, and pedagogy:
How do we use, transform, dismiss, or neutralize feelings in the religious studies classroom? (Please indicate that your proposal is for this session by starting your title with "5-min Teaching Presentation.").
- Affective politics online, with particular attention to social media (liking, following, friending, going viral, trolling, favoriting, brigading, meme-making, bullying, doxing).
- The politics and poetics of boredom in religion.
- Obligatory affects. The emotions you're supposed to have (respectability, a stiff upper lip), to give (emotional labor), and to avoid ("just being emotional").
- Proposals on current controversies in brain-mind science and emotion, such as the debates surrounding domain-specific vs. domain-general theories of emotion, and the implications of these controversies for religion. For a co-sponsored session with Religion, Affect and Emotion Unit and the Science, Technology, and Religion Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides space for theoretically-informed discussion of the relationship between religion, affect, and emotion. The Unit serves as a meeting point for conversations on the affective, noncognitive, and passional dimensions of religion coming from diverse fields, including anthropology, comparative religion, psychology, decolonial theory, gender and sexuality studies, cultural studies, philosophy, and theology. Proposals drawing on these theoretical resources to examine specific religious traditions, shifting historical understandings of religion and affect/emotion, comparative work that looks at affective forms across traditions, and broader theoretical reflections are all welcome.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Hamner, M. Gail, Syracuse University, mghamner@syr.edu

Chair - Schaefer, Donovan, University of Pennsylvania, doschaef@upenn.edu

Religion, Attire, and Adornment in North America Seminar

Call:

For 2018, our unit is especially interested in proposals for individual papers that relate to any of the following topics:

- Religious Adornment of Heads
(Including but not limited to hair, head coverings, piercings, etc.)
- Ritualized Garments
- Religious Dress as Material Culture
(The production, wearing, presentation, etc.)
 - Critical Response to the Met Fifth Avenue exhibition, "Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination"

The steering committee also welcomes all other proposals related to the broad subject of religion and dress.

Presenters are encouraged to use visuals in their presentation.

Mission Statement:

Focusing on the North American context, this seminar explores specific instances of religion, attire, and adornment, as well as theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of religion and dress. Religion and dress includes a wide range of expressions, including not only clothing but all forms of bodily adornment: hairstyle, jewelry, cosmetics, scents, bathing, tattooing, and more. Many religions prescribe and proscribe various forms of dress in both sacred and secular settings, but beyond basic questions of who, what, and why that are prompted by such religious rules, this seminar is especially interested in exploring connections between religious dress and meaning-making. We also seek to move beyond dress as merely a sign or communicator of meaning to attend to the materiality of dress itself, and the ways it shapes bodies and selves. All scholars are invited to contact the chair to express interest in participating in the seminar.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Dallam, Marie W., University of Oklahoma, mwdallam@ou.edu

Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Unit

Call:

- **Migration and Visuality**
We invite papers that explore visuality and the margins of Empire, including considerations of migrants and migrations from zones that are traditionally neglected in academic and public conversations, such as the Caribbean, Africa and East Asia. We encourage papers that deal with the ways in which migrants and colonized religious "others" are depicted in film and other forms of visual culture (television, photography, graphic art, graffiti, clothing, etc.). How do visual media affect the ways in which we understand these people and events? Any papers related to these themes as well as broader issues of colonialism and postcolonialism in relation to visual culture are invited. Co-sponsored with the Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Unit and the Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Unit.

We are also interested in papers for the following co-sponsored sessions:

- **Hindu-German Conspiracy Trial**
2018 marks the centenary anniversary of the conclusion of the Hindu–German Conspiracy Trial. The trial was, at the time, the most expensive in American legal history in which eight members of the Ghadar Party were indicted on charges of conspiring to violate US neutrality with England (before US entry into WWI) by conspiring with Germany to initiate revolt against the British in India. We invite papers that speak to both directly to the Hindu-German Conspiracy Trial and its aftermath, as well as papers that address the many matters that the trial touches upon, including but not limited to: the Ghadar Party and other anti-colonial movements in the early-twentieth century, state surveillance, and religious sites and universities as places of anti-colonial resistance and organization. Co-sponsored with the Sikh Studies Unit and the Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Unit.
- **Decolonization as Healing**
With a wide range of other units, we plan to co-sponsor a session on the theme of decolonization as healing, recognizing that colonization in Africa and in other parts of our world has resulted in both historical and ongoing threats to health and wellbeing. We are looking for papers that address facets of this theme, including but not limited to: "Place, Land, and Environmental Degradation," "Decolonization/Restoration of Identities," "Vocabularies and Pragmatic Applications of Rituals and Ceremonies," "Reclaiming the Past, Imagining the Future," and "Tradition as Healer". Co-sponsored with the Religions, Medicines and Healing; African Diaspora Religions, African Religions; Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society; Body and Religion; Indigenous Religious

Traditions; Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society; Native Traditions in the Americas; Religions in the Latina/o Americas; Religion in South Asia, Religion in Southeast Asia; and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism; and World Christianity Units. Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the Call for Papers, and will speak to its broader implications for African American religious history. This session is a panel. Please submit a proposal for a paper or presentation. If your proposal is chosen, your paper will be circulated ahead of the conference and you'll be asked to give a brief (5-7 minute) summary of the paper during the conference session.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you in Colorado.

Please note that the Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism Unit is deeply committed to inclusion and diversity. Please ensure that any full panel proposals are sensitive in their consideration of a plurality of gendered and racialized voices.

Mission Statement:

This Unit presents an opportunity for scholars in various subfields of religious studies to explore a topic whose relevance cuts across specializations. We bring together scholars treating different time periods, geographical regions, and traditions in working to strengthen our field's role in the study of empire, colonialism, and postcolonialism.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Hermann, Adrian, University of Bonn, adrian.hermann@gmail.com

Chair - Hussain, Syed Adnan, Saint Mary's University, Halifax, syedadnan.hussain@smu.ca

Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Unit

Call:

This Unit offers a forum for those interested in the interdisciplinary study of religion, film, and visual culture. There is no single way to study religion and the visual, and we encourage scholars to provide new perspectives on the theories and methodologies we use to understand visual culture and religion.

The Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Unit invites proposals on the following topics. Please note that we strongly encourage the use of visual media in presentations and ask that all proposals indicate whether (and how) visuals will be used. We also ask that proposals be clear about their theoretical and methodological approaches, and particularly welcome submissions from perspectives other than Christian and/or Eurocentric ones:

- **Migration and Visuality**
We invite papers that explore visibility and the margins of Empire, including considerations of migrants and migrations from zones that are traditionally neglected in academic and public conversations, such as the Caribbean, Africa and East Asia. We encourage papers that deal with the ways in which migrants and colonized religious "others" are depicted in film and other forms of visual culture (television, photography, graphic art, graffiti, clothing, etc.). How do visual media affect the ways in which we understand these people and events? Any papers related to these themes as well as broader issues of colonialism and postcolonialism in relation to visual culture are invited. Co-sponsored with the Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Unit and the Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Unit.
- *A Wrinkle in Time*
We invite proposals on Ava DuVernay's upcoming film adaptation *A Wrinkle in Time*, and other visual adaptations of young adult fiction. Papers may examine religion in these works in relation to various topics/issues, including (for example) race, gender, vulnerability, humor, pedagogy, agency, and ideology. Co-sponsored with the Childhood Studies and Religion Unit and the Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Unit.
- **Subversive Filmmaking and Race**
How are filmmakers using their medium to ignite discussions about – and critiques of – race and racism? We invite proposals that investigate subversive treatments of race and religion in the films of artists such as Jeff Barnaby, Ryan Coogler, Guillermo del Toro, Ava Duvernay, Chris Eyre, Spike Lee, Pablo Larraín, Lucrecia Martel, Alanis Obomsawin, Jordan Peele, Ivan Sen, Justin Simien, Tala Hadid, Faouzi Bensaidi, Haifaa al-Mansour, Nadine Labaki, and Taika Waititi.
- **Religion, Comedy, and Marginality in Television**
Several television comedies over the past few years have involved varied and explicit

treatments of religion, particularly in relation to questions of marginalization and inclusion (as these questions involve, for example, race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.). Such works include *Blackish*, *Fresh Off the Boat*, *The Good Place*, *Kim's Convenience*, *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, *Master of None*, *Rev.*, and *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*. We invite proposals that consider the ways in which such shows may be reflecting and/or shaping current discourses about religion and marginality.

- **2018 AAR Theme: Religion and Film Scholars: New Audiences, and Industry Interlocutors**
The AAR Annual Meeting in 2018 seeks to examine the civic responsibilities and opportunities religious studies scholars face. This session will be a practical dialogue to encourage more fruitful, critical, and creative interaction with film and television industry professionals around the world and other publics. Topics may include: film criticism, blogs, serving as a religion consultant on film or television, screenwriting, production, serving on international film festival juries, etc. We invite papers that focus on interaction and collaboration with the industry based on your experience. You may want to respond to the following queries: What skills are required in these new roles? How do you seek these relationships and create an opportunity to share your expertise with new audiences and industry professionals? What obstacles tend to arise? How do you broach religious illiteracy effectively? How does an international context change the dynamic?

Mission Statement:

This Unit offers a forum for theory and methodology of the visual for those interested in the interdisciplinary study of religion, film, and visual culture. There is no single way to study religion and the visual, and we expect scholars to provide new perspectives on the way we understand visual culture and to provide this understanding through traditional and emerging methodologies.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Derry, Ken, University of Toronto, ken.derry@utoronto.ca

Chair - Reedy Solano, Jeanette, California State University, Fullerton, jsolano@fullerton.edu

Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Unit

Call:

In light of the 70th Anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the 2018 Annual Meeting theme, "The Civic Responsibilities, Opportunities, and Risks Facing Scholars of Religion", the Religion, Genocide, and Holocaust

Unit invites proposals that address the various relationships between religion and genocide. Of particular interest are proposals that treat the influences and ramifications of the Convention on Genocide, the perils of genocide recognition and scholarship, and the inter-generational effects of genocidal violence. We are particularly interested in proposals that are comparative and that treat understudied religious communities and conflicts.

- Gender, Religion, and Violence

We seek papers that address topics such as genocidal violence and the construction of masculinities, rape, and sexual violence as tools in conflicts and genocide, religiously inflicted and symbolic sexual violence, and the targeting and persecution of gender and sexual minorities. Co-sponsorship with the Comparative Approaches to Religion Unit, the Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Unit, the Women and Religion Unit, and the Men, Masculinities and Religion Unit.

- Recognizing the Armenian Genocide

At a 2017 United Nations General Assembly meeting, President of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan, invited "all member States to support a new initiative toward the international recognition of the Armenian genocide" (www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=57581#.WirgkbaZPOQ). In light of President Sargsyan's invitation and the Annual Meeting theme of "The Civic Responsibilities, Opportunities, and Risks Facing Scholars of Religion," we invite proposals that address the role of religion in the politics of recognition and denial with regard to the Armenian genocide. We are particularly interested in the following themes: (1) the politics of denial and recognition of the Armenian genocide in Turkish and European contexts with attention to religious language involved, and/or (2) the role of religious and or secular rhetoric, as well as the implications and political influence of international recognition of the Armenian genocide by various religious groups (such as Pope Francis in 2015 and the Central Council of Jews in Germany), (3) and/or the risks facing scholars of the Armenian genocide, especially Turkish scholars or scholars based in Turkey. Co-sponsorship with the Religion in Europe Unit and the Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Unit.

- Religion and the Convention on Genocide

As we commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, we welcome papers that critically reflect on the legacy of the Convention and its relationship to religion as well as future directions for study. Topics may include, but are not limited to, the political uses of the Convention by religious groups, debates about the efficacy of the Convention to protect religious groups, the current status of religion as a "stable identity" amid other Convention protected groups, the contributions of religious studies to the reconceptualization of "genocide," and comparative approaches to the involvement and reaction of religious actors who have been indicted or convicted under the Convention. Co-sponsorship with

the Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Unit and the Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Unit.

- **Intergenerational Memory and Legacies of Genocide**
We invite proposals that consider theories and narratives of post-memory and other multi-generational effects of genocide, such as (1) child survivors, (2) children born of rape, (3) testimony and inherited trauma, and (4) the return of refugees. We are particularly interested in proposals that attend to the effects of genocide on ethno-religious communities beyond the Holocaust.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides an academic forum to integrate the analysis of the Holocaust with past and ongoing problems of genocide around the globe. It asks critical questions about the implications of these histories and their legacies for the study of religion, building on Jewish and Christian theological, literary, ethical, ritual, and philosophical responses to the Holocaust, and opening conversations with responses to genocide from other communities, such as Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, and Indigenous peoples.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Temoney, Kate, Montclair State University, temoneyk@montclair.edu

Chair - Vincent, Alana, University of Chester, alana.vincent@gmail.com

Religion, Media, and Culture Unit

Call:

The Religion, Media, and Culture unit invites individual presentations, paper/multimedia research presentation sessions, and roundtable proposals on the following themes:

- Theory and Methods in the Study of Religion, Media, and Culture
- Ethnographic Approaches to Religion in Digital Media
- Religious Studies in New Media: Public Intellectuals, Activist Scholarship, and/or the Politics of Recognition
- American Islam Online
Exploring how Muslim community building and Islamic practices are uniquely shaped via social media platforms and online resources. Co-sponsorship with the Contemporary Islam Unit and the Religion, Media, and Culture Unit.
- Mysticism, Lineage, and Ritual Transmission
We are interested in projects that explore the transmission and configuration of mystical power or religious energies. This includes both traditional means and contemporary methods that might use new technologies and social media (for example, initiation rituals performed over Skype). For co-sponsorship with the Mysticism Unit, the Ritual Studies Unit, and the Religion, Media, and Culture Unit.
- For an Authors Meet Critics panel, responses to Martin Shuster's 2017 book, *New Television: The Aesthetics and Politics of a Genre*.

Note: We strongly prefer papers that include audio/visual media and ask that proposals make use of media clear. We are also particularly interested in session proposals and presentations that break from traditional paper-reading formats. We encourage panels that propose innovative ways to develop collaborative conversation, especially those that allow for timely analysis of current events.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a multidisciplinary forum for exploring the intersections between media and religion. Areas of interest include the participation of religion in digital culture, mediation of religion, the interplay between religious and media communities and between religious and media practices, and the significance of both media and religion in the transformation of religious structures and practices.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Aghapour, Andrew, University of North Carolina, andrewaghapour@gmail.com

Religion, Memory, History Unit

Call:

- We are especially interested this year in memories of catastrophes and disaster. We employ the concept of catastrophe/disaster widely so that it includes memories of social trauma, cultural trauma, genocide, natural disasters, and economic crises.
- Our second theme this year focuses on material religion, monuments, and museums. How does the present shape the production and perception of material religion, monuments, and museums? How are they received and perceived in the public sphere?
- Our third theme this year deals with memories of indigenous landscapes. How are indigenous sites memorialized in landscapes, monuments, or national parks? How do they respond to competing colonial histories and economic development?
- Papers that address the impact of current US political/legislative environment on people with disabilities in light of studies in religion and regarding those who are most vulnerable (e.g., children, elderly, imprisoned, immigrants, migrants, LGBTIQ, homeless). For a co-sponsorship with the Class, Religion, and Theology Unit, the Religion and Disability Studies Unit, and the Religion, Memory, History Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit explores the construction of narratives of the past as memory and history in relation to religious practices, ideologies, and subjectivities. The role of memory and history in the formation of religious subjectivities calls for examination within a comparative context, to allow for an intercultural and interdisciplinary exploration of its forms and contexts, and to provide engagement with theoretical and methodological concerns across traditions.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)

Chair - Hassan, Mona, Duke University, mona.hassan@duke.edu

Chair - Langille, Tim, Arizona State University, timothy.langille@asu.edu

Religion, Sport, and Play Unit

Call:

- The Religion, Sport, and Play Unit invites proposals for original papers on the intersection of religion, sport and/or play. Proposals attending to "body" construed broadly, are particularly encouraged. In other words, proposals that address sport and/or play: within the context of the body politic (e.g. as representation or enactment of a people or nation); in relation to the human body (e.g. in terms of performance, enhancement, physicality, able-ness, disability studies); as employed in religious, scriptural, theological constructs (e.g. as metaphor, in evangelization, as spiritual, as distraction, as abomination). Attention to the local context of the AAR 2018 meeting is also encouraged.
- The Religion, Sport, and Play Unit and the Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Unit will co-sponsor a session on sport and play as sites of resistance, liberation, assimilation, and complicated spiritualities from explicitly Latinx and Latin@ perspectives. Successful proposals will address historical or contemporary cases and contribute to a range of disciplinary perspectives, diverse religious traditions, methodological approaches, and critiques. Proposals should clearly state the main argument of the paper and summarize evidence used to support the argument.

Successful proposals for both sessions will address historical or contemporary cases and contribute to a range of disciplinary perspectives, diverse religious traditions, methodological approaches and critiques. Proposals should clearly state the main argument of the paper and summarize evidence used to support the argument.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides an opportunity for scholars to engage in emerging research at the intersection of religion and sport, games, and play. We are interested in examining these topics across broad geographical areas, religious traditions, and historical eras. We encourage critical reflection regarding relationships of religious institutions to sport, play, and games; theological and spiritual experiences of participants and spectators invested in these activities; and the cross-cultural applicability of the received categories.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Remillard, Arthur, Saint Francis University, aremillard@francis.edu

Chair - Nanko-Fernandez, Carmen Marie, Catholic Theological Union, cnanko@ctu.edu

Religions in the Latina/o Americas Unit

Call:

The Religions in the Latina/o Americas Unit seeks to foster interdisciplinary and theoretically innovative analyses of Latina/o and Latin American religiosities and spiritualities in the Americas. We explore the richness and diversity of religious traditions in Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States, highlighting the complex and often explosive relations between religion and politics in the region, the centrality of religion in the Americas since pre-Conquest times, and the global significance of religious events and lived religion in the region. Our goal is to advance knowledge and ways of knowing that expand traditional areas of religious studies throughout the Americas, mindful of transnational and global realities. Thus, we encourage studies that explore non-Western beliefs and practices, including indigenous, African diasporic, Buddhist, and Islamic, as well as those that advance more complex understanding of culturally hybrid Christianities. We encourage feminist- and queer-centered perspectives as well as thought rooted in community experience. Diverse disciplinary and methodological perspectives are highlighted in presentation of this scholarship.

As always, we are interested in papers that advance interdisciplinary and theoretically innovative analyses of Latina/o and Latin American religiosities and spiritualities in the Americas.

This year, we are also especially interested in papers that address topics such as the following:

- Religion, Trauma, and History in the Americas
- The Politics of Memory and/or Memorialization
- Altered States and the State: Hallucinogens, Spiritual Practices, and Power
- Indigenous Religion and Spirituality before the Arrival of Europeans
- The Survival of Indigenous Practices in the Present
- Shamanic and/or Spiritual Tourism in the Americas
- Ghosts, Ancestors, Spirits, and/or Necropolitics in the Latina/o Americas
- The Spirituality of Latin American, Latina, Eco-, and/or Third World Feminisms
- Philosophy and Critical Theory of Religion from the Latina/o Americas

- What's in a Name? Latinx, Latino/a, Latin@, Latine...: Insights from and/or Implications for Religious Studies
- Decolonization as Healing
 With a wide range of other units, we plan to co-sponsor a session on the theme of decolonization as healing, recognizing that colonization in Africa and in other parts of our world has resulted in both historical and ongoing threats to health and wellbeing. We are looking for papers that address facets of this theme, including but not limited to: "Place, Land, and Environmental Degradation," "Decolonization/Restoration of Identities," "Vocabularies and Pragmatic Applications of Rituals and Ceremonies," "Reclaiming the Past, Imagining the Future," and "Tradition as Healer". Co-sponsored with the Religions, Medicines and Healing; African Diaspora Religions, African Religions; Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society; Body and Religion; Indigenous Religious Traditions; Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society; Native Traditions in the Americas; Religions in the Latina/o Americas; Religion in South Asia, Religion in Southeast Asia; and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism; and World Christianity Units. Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the Call for Papers, and will speak to its broader implications for African American religious history. This session is a panel. Please submit a proposal for a paper or presentation. If your proposal is chosen, your paper will be circulated ahead of the conference and you'll be asked to give a brief (5-7 minute) summary of the paper during the conference session.

Prearranged Roundtable Sessions:

In addition to accepting INDIVIDUAL paper proposals, our unit will also consider ROUNDTABLE proposals, which usually consist of 3-4 presenters, along with a moderator and a respondent. When submitting your proposal, please identify the proposal as either an INDIVIDUAL or ROUNDTABLE proposal.

Book Panel Sessions:

These sessions work best when 2-3 authors work together to propose a panel with a single, overarching theme. Each panelist should submit an individual proposal that refers to the larger theme, and the panel as a whole should determine ahead of time who the respondent(s) will be. These "New Book" sessions are meant not merely to highlight the merits of each book, but, more substantially, to serve as springboards for a larger group discussion (i.e., What broader issues are raised by placing the books in conversation with one another?).

Emerging Scholarship Session:

We encourage 1) doctoral students and recent Ph.D. graduates working in the area of the Latina/o Americas who 2) have never presented at the national AAR meeting to submit papers. To apply, upload your individual paper proposal in the AAR's PAPERS system, explicitly labeling it as an "Emerging Scholarship" submission.

Mission Statement:

This Unit fosters interdisciplinary and theoretically innovative analyses of Latina/o and Latin American religiosities and spiritualities in the Americas. We explore the richness and diversity of religious traditions in Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States, highlighting the complex and often explosive relations between religion and politics in the region, the centrality of religion in the Americas since pre-Conquest times, and the global significance of religious events and lived religion in the region. Our goal is to advance knowledge and ways of knowing that expand traditional areas of religious studies throughout the Americas, mindful of transnational and global realities. Thus, we encourage studies that explore non-Western beliefs and practices, including the indigenous, the African diasporic, Buddhist, and Islamic, as well as those that advance more complex understanding of culturally hybrid Christianities. We encourage feminist- and queer-centered perspectives as well as thought rooted in community experience. Diverse disciplinary and methodological perspectives are highlighted in presentation of this scholarship.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Tirres, Chris, DePaul University, ctirres@gmail.com

Chair - Delgado, Jessica, Princeton University, jessicad@princeton.edu

Religions, Medicines, and Healing Unit

Call:

The Religions, Medicines, and Healing Unit welcomes papers and/or panel proposals that explore specific intersections of religious and healing traditions and practices. Proposals should address the socio-political context of the topic, as well as theoretical and analytical framework(s), such as how this analysis helps us to understand religions and “healing” in new ways. For 2018, we are particularly interested in the following themes:

- **Decolonization as Healing**
With a wide range of other units, we plan to co-sponsor a session on the theme of decolonization as healing, recognizing that colonization in Africa and in other parts of our world has resulted in both historical and ongoing threats to health and wellbeing. We are looking for papers that address facets of this theme, including but not limited to: “Place, Land, and Environmental Degradation,” “Decolonization/Restoration of Identities,” “Vocabularies and Pragmatic Applications of Rituals and Ceremonies,” “Reclaiming the Past, Imagining the Future,” and “Tradition as Healer”. Co-sponsored with the Religions, Medicines and Healing; African Diaspora Religions, African Religions; Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society; Body and Religion; Indigenous Religious Traditions; Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society; Native Traditions in the Americas; Religions in the Latina/o Americas; Religion in South Asia, Religion in Southeast Asia; and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism; and World Christianity Units. Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the Call for Papers, and will speak to its broader implications for African American religious history. This session is a panel. Please submit a proposal for a paper or presentation. If your proposal is chosen, your paper will be circulated ahead of the conference and you’ll be asked to give a brief (5-7 minute) summary of the paper during the conference session.
- **Pedagogy in Teaching Religions, Medicines, and Healing**
We invite presentations that draw on pedagogical, programmatic, curricular, and administrative experiences, to address such topics as: Teaching RMH as a gateway for religious literacy in settings like Health Sciences, Medical Humanities, STEM, etc.; carving out space in existing curricula to teach about RMH; advocating for RMH in the hiring process for teaching positions; providing RMH knowledge or training to address student and parent concerns about the job market after professional education (e.g., med/pre-med, and other undergraduate majors); and promoting public understanding of RMH. We are particularly interested in papers that foster a discussion about effective strategies at different kinds of institutions, rather than papers that focus on individual syllabi or case studies.
- **Care, Caretaking, and Healthcare**
We welcome submissions that consider economies of care, caretaking, and healthcare within broader religious settings and contexts. We are especially interested in papers

that address modes and forms of care across chronologies and geographies, from ancient to contemporary, and around the globe (e.g., the effects of healthcare reform on individual and community wellbeing). Co-sponsored with the Religion and Economy Unit and the Religions, Medicines, and Healing Unit.

- Friday Workshop to develop detailed organizational plan for RMH Resource Website: Members of the RMH group and other units of the AAR are welcome to attend and contribute to the conversation.

Mission Statement:

The study of religions, medicines, and healing is a growing field within religious studies that draws on the disciplines and scholarship of history, anthropology (particularly medical anthropology), phenomenology, psychology, sociology, ethnic studies, ritual studies, gender studies, theology, political and economic theory, public health, bioscientific epidemiology, history of science, comparative religion, and other interdisciplinary approaches to interpret meanings assigned to illness, affliction, and suffering; healing, health, and well-being; healing systems and traditions, their interactions, and the factors that influence them; and related topics and issues. As a broad area of inquiry, this field incorporates diverse theoretical orientations and methodological strategies in order to develop theories and methods specific to the study of illness, health, healing, and associated social relations from religious studies perspectives. Although religious texts serve as important resources in this endeavor, so do the many approaches to the study of lived religion, religious embodiment and material culture, and popular expressions of religiosity. Finally, like its sister field of medical anthropology, the field of religions, medicines, and healing encourages examination of how affliction and healing affect social bodies through fractured identities, political divides, structural violence, and colonialism. We support the work of graduate students, religion scholars, scholar-activists, and scholars in allied fields. We promote collaboration with other interdisciplinary Program Units and those focused on particular traditions and/or regions.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Barnes, Linda L., Boston University School of Medicine, lbarnes@bu.edu

Chair - Wu, Emily, Dominican University, California, emily.wu@dominican.edu

Religions, Social Conflict, and Peace Unit

Call:

This group welcomes individual papers and paper session proposals (presider, 3-4 papers, and respondent) on intersections of religion with violence, social conflict, and peace. For the 2017 Annual Meeting, we are particularly interested in proposals that address the following topics:

- Intersectionality and religious peacebuilding
- Boycott, divestment and sanctions as prophetic practice and response to calls of solidarity
- Memory, race, and the legacy of the American Civil War in contemporary contentions and violence in the U.S.
- Religious dimensions of responses to the resurgent threat of nuclear warfare; Korea crisis; International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (winners of 2017 Nobel Peace Prize)
- Religious peacebuilding and movement for environmental justice
- Pedagogical approaches to the intersection of Religion and Peace and Conflict Studies

Mission Statement:

Relationships between religions and the causes and resolution of social conflict are complex. On the one hand, religion is a major source of discord in our world, but on the other, religious agents have often played a central role in developing and encouraging nonviolent means of conflict resolution and sustainable peace. While religion as a factor in conflicts is often misunderstood by military and political leaders, it is also the case that the popular call for an end to injustice is quite often a religious voice. We seek to add a critical dimension to the understanding of how religion influences and resolves social conflict. We want to develop and expand the traditional categories of moral reflection and response to war and also to investigate kindred conflicts — terrorism, humanitarian armed intervention, cultural and governmental repression, ecological degradation, and all of the factors that inhibit human flourishing. We also hope to encourage theoretical and practical reflection on religious peacebuilding by examining the discourses, practices, and community and institutional structures that promote just peace. Through our work, we hope to promote understanding of the relationships between social conflict and religions in ways that are theoretically sophisticated and practically applicable in diverse cultural contexts.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Omer, Atalia, University of Notre Dame, aomer1@nd.edu

Chair - Marshall, Ellen Ott, Emory University, ellen.marshall@emory.edu

Religious Conversions Unit

Call:

Individual paper or full paper/panel session proposals (with a preference for the latter) are welcome on any topic related to religious conversion, including, but not limited to the panel topics proposed at the 2017 business meeting (the person whose name is listed in parentheses has expressed an interest in organizing the panel). They are:

- Religious Conversion and European Identity, Both Historical and Contemporary (Elissa Cutter, elissa.cutter@lmu.edu). Co-sponsorship with the Religion in Europe Unit and the Religious Conversions Unit.
- Conversion and Deconversion in the Context of Genocide (Katharina Peetz; katharinapeetz@gmx.de)
- Literature and Conversion/Literary Conversions (Eliza Kent, ekent@skidmore.edu)
- Multiple Religious Belonging (Linda Mercadante, LMercadante@mtso.edu)
- Book Panel on Ines Jindra's New Model of Religious Conversion: Beyond Network Theory and Social Constructivism (Athanasios Despotis, despotis@uni-bonn.de)
- Conversion in/as Response to Extreme Circumstances (Veronique Lecaros, vgauthier@pucp.pe)
- Food, Allurement, Proselytization, and Conversion (Nora Rubel, nora.rubel@rochester.edu). Co-sponsorship with the Religion and Food Unit and the Religious Conversions Unit.
- Feminist Conversions and Deconversions/Feminist Theorizing of Conversions/Deconversions (Chad Bauman, cbauman@butler.edu)
- Negotiating Identities Jewish/Christian: Ancient and Modern (Athanasios Despotis, despotis@uni-bonn.de or Kelley N. Coblenz Bautch, kellyb@stedwards.edu). Possible co-sponsorship with the Pseudepigrapha Unit of the Society of Biblical Literature.

Mission Statement:

This Unit studies the full spectrum of issues related to religious conversions, in any historical or geographic context, encompassing different forms of religious belief and practice. The scope of

the issues we cover is broad and wide-ranging. We consider investigations into the reasons for various types of religious conversions including, but not limited to intellectual, theological, philosophical, historical, experiential, psychological, social, cultural, political, and economic causes. We also study the consequences of religious conversions, both individually and socially, and their implications. We encourage the methodologies of multiple disciplines, as well as interdisciplinary approaches. More narrowly focused areas of inquiry suggested by interested scholars include, but are not limited to the following:

- Multiple conversions
- Group and individual conversions
- Forced conversions
- The narrative and/or literary aspects of conversions
- Hybridity
- Ecclesiological consequences of conversion
- The place and role of conversion in a specific religious tradition
- Theories of conversions
- Formulas of religious conversion (as step-by-step processes)

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Pugliese, Marc, Saint Leo University, marcpug@gmail.com

Chair - Bauman, Chad, Butler University, cbauman@butler.edu

Religious Literacy College-Wide Project

Call:

There is no call, since the document for discussion is produced by the steering group for the grant project.

Mission Statement:

Relatively few college students major or minor in religion. Many students do not take even an introductory course in religion, and their exposure to religion elsewhere in curricula may be haphazard. To position colleges to be better at graduating religiously literate students, this seminar will develop guidelines for colleges to draw upon in identifying the religion-related knowledge and skills that all associate's and bachelor's degree students ought to gain prior to graduation.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Moore, Diane L., Harvard University, diane_moore@harvard.edu

Chair - Gallagher, Eugene V., Connecticut College, evgal@conncoll.edu

Ricoeur Unit

Call:

- Ricoeur and Traditions of Critique

We seek proposals for papers that take a critical approach to Ricoeur. We are not looking for papers about him or his work, per se, but rather looking for interdisciplinary attempts to apply Ricoeur's ideas to the varied areas of specialized study across the breadth of the academies of religion (AAR and SBL). In what ways has it proven difficult to appropriate and apply his work? Are there limits to thinking with Ricoeur? We are especially interested in papers representing one or more of the many critical traditions, such as critical theory, feminist theory and theologies, liberation theologies, queer studies, womanist approaches, postcolonial thought, Black theologies, comparative religions, and other perspectives crossing cultural, contextual, economic, or religious boundaries.

Mission Statement:

The purpose of this Unit is to promote the work of Paul Ricoeur within the broad fields of theology and religious studies. We believe that Paul Ricoeur, as a dialogue partner, has continued relevance to the manifold disciplines that constitute the AAR. Yet more than a Unit dedicated to the study of a particular scholar's work — as a form of academic fandom — this Unit seeks to build up and creatively utilize Ricoeur's work in a way that enriches a wide range of theological and religious subdisciplines.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Reynhout, Kenneth A., United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities,
kenneth.reynhout@gmail.com

Ritual Studies Unit

Call:

The Ritual Studies Unit encourages submissions from scholars who propose innovative approaches to the study of ritual and foster theoretical sophistication in the interdisciplinary study of ritual. Although we are open to reviewing any proposals that enhance the academic study of ritual, this year we are particularly looking for papers and panels that engage with the following topics:

- **Cognitive Studies of Ritual and the Senses**
In continuity with last year's focus on the aesthetics of ritual, we invite paper proposals from the full array of the cognitive science of ritual, from sound recognition and sensual perception to the study of ritual simulation, representation, and misrecognition. Co-sponsored with the Cognitive Science of Religion Unit and the Ritual Studies Unit.
- **Mysticism, Lineage, and Ritual Transmission**
We are interested in projects that explore the transmission and configuration of mystical power or religious energies. This includes both traditional means and contemporary methods that might use new technologies and social media (for example, initiation rituals performed over Skype). For co-sponsorship with the Mysticism Unit, the Ritual Studies Unit, and the Religion, Media, and Culture Unit.
- **Ritual and Vulnerability**
We are interested in proposals which examine rituals of the socially and politically marginalized, including rituals in transgender communities, ritual and disability, and rituals of the homeless.
- **Embodied Pedagogy Teaching Tactics in Large Introductory Courses**
We are interested in papers discussing teaching tactics that focus on ritual and embodied pedagogy in undergraduate courses (e.g. World Religions, Introduction to Religion, etc.). Co-sponsored with the Body and Religion Unit, the Ritual Studies Unit, and the Teaching Religion Unit. Proposals should:
 - State succinctly the context within which you used the strategy including: characteristics of your students, the institution and the course, when in the semester you use this tactic, and how long it takes;
 - State the pedagogical purpose of the strategy;
 - Describe the strategy itself in brief, clear language -- demonstrating a quick version of the tactic is encouraged;
 - State why and how the strategy was effective (or not effective) – i.e., how it supported (or failed to support in some way) student learning; and

- Address potential challenges or obstacles -- i.e., avoiding cultural appropriation, avoiding the appearance of 'practicing' religion in public institutions, and potential ethical issues.

We are interested in sessions that experiment with new formats, such as forming sessions with 2-3 pre-circulated shorter papers and 2-3 respondents. We welcome individual paper proposals as well as proposals for full panels.

Proposals should be situated in the context of scholarship on ritual. They should indicate their body of evidence and method of investigation and analysis. All proposals will be reviewed anonymously and judged based on the clarity and structure of the argument.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a unique venue for the interdisciplinary exploration of ritual — broadly understood to include rites, ceremonies, religious and secular performances, and other ritual processes — in their many and varied contexts, and from a range of theoretical and methodological perspectives.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Pike, Sarah M., California State University, Chico, spike@csuchico.edu

Chair - Kreinath, Jens, Wichita State University, jens.kreinath@gmail.com

Roman Catholic Studies Unit

Call:

The Roman Catholic Studies Unit invites submissions on diverse subjects in Catholic Studies, but especially the following topics:

- **Interrogating American Catholicism**
In August 1996, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin wrote a statement entitled “Called to be Catholic: Church in a Time of Peril” listing key challenges to the Church that require honesty and imagination. In this new millennium, we invite papers that critically reflect on the challenges listed by Cardinal Bernardin in ways that can deepen and broaden our understanding and study of American Catholicism. This includes questions on the capacity of the Church to embrace African-American, Latino/a, and Asian/Asian-American populations, the changing roles of women and a space for LGBTIA persons. To what degree have these populations changed not only the demographic and dynamic of American Catholicism but also the very study of its history and practices, challenging who counts as Catholic and part of American Catholicism. We invite papers that consider the historical, theological, and ethical dimensions of race, ethnicity, sexuality and identity politics in the Catholic Church, with particular attention to the ways in which the theologies and studies of these groups, and the other issues Cardinal Bernardin listed, might enrich or disrupt other disciplinary modes of interrogating American Catholicism in the 21st Century.
- **U.S. Immigration and Global Migration**
During Pope Francis’s speech to the U.S. Congress in 2015, he invoked the spirit of Martin Luther King, Jr. to discuss not only the issue of U.S. immigration, but also that of global migration, with his reference to how “our world is facing a refugee crisis of a magnitude not seen since the Second World War.” We invite papers that consider the involvement of Catholics in this global crisis as immigrants, migrants, or refugees, and as those who reject or accept them into their communities. What are some theological positions on the treatment of immigrations and refugees? How does the issue of immigration and migration challenge us to think of new ways of being church, including new reflections on Christology, ecclesiology, sacramental theology, Catholic social teaching, moral theology, etc.? What historical precedents might shed light on current circumstances? Are there specific examples of Catholic responses to the migrant/refugee crises in the Middle East, Africa, and Europe, as well as debates about the status of immigrants and refugees in the United States and other parts of the world?
- **Catholicism, Colonialism, and Indigenous Religions**
The colonial roots of Catholicism in French, Spanish, British, American, and Canadian territories places the interaction of European and Native American peoples at the center of the Catholic Church in the Americas. The Catholic Church’s legacy of colonialism remains salient in the twenty-first century, as was made manifest when Pope Benedict

XVI canonized Kateri Tekakwitha in 2012 and Pope Francis canonized Junipero Serra in 2015. Now, in 2017, the bishop of the Diocese of Rapid City, South Dakota, has forwarded the sainthood cause of Nicholas Black Elk, a Lakota chief and Catholic catechist who was made known to wider audiences in John Neihardt's book *Black Elk Speaks*. We invite proposals that explore the intersection of Catholicism and colonialism through the perspectives of indigenous peoples in the Americas. We also encourage papers that reflect upon ways in which the Catholic Church, in both official and unofficial capacities, has addressed its colonial past and present.

- **Teaching Roman Catholic History and Culture: National and Global Frameworks**
Those who teach courses on the history and culture of Roman Catholicism often confine their coverage to national boundaries. There are excellent reasons to organize courses along national lines, but there are also built-in limitations to what or who merits attention. We invite proposals from teachers who structure such courses according to national frameworks (i.e., American Catholicism, French Catholicism, Korean Catholicism, Mexican Catholicism, Nigerian Catholicism) and are willing to pre-circulate their syllabi to panel participants and audience members. The goal of the panel is to think critically and comparatively about how we teach Roman Catholic history and culture, with particular attention to transnational and global pathways within and between national churches.

We are especially interested in proposals that are attentive to the ways in which history and theory relate to one another within the field of Roman Catholic studies. Co-chairs are happy to consult with those who are developing individual papers, paper sessions, or roundtable proposals to answer questions, discuss ideas, and help shape final submissions.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a scholarly forum to study the global Roman Catholic community. Consequently, we welcome critical studies, cultural, ethical, historical, and theological perspectives. We seek to mirror the subject community's diversity in pursuing equally diverse methods to study that community.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Enriquez, Karen, Loyola Marymount University, karen.enriquez@lmu.edu

Chair - Pasquier, Michael, Louisiana State University, mpasquier@lsu.edu

Sacred Texts and Ethics Unit

Call:

The Sacred Texts and Ethics Unit invites proposals from scholars and/or activists that closely analyze the use of sacred and foundational religious texts, including commentaries, in ethical or political discourse (either contemporary or historical). We welcome individual papers and panel proposals from all religious traditions and methodologies, including constructive ethical reflection with a textual basis. Proposals on all topics are welcome. We are particularly interested in the following topics:

- Sacred texts and material culture, particular the ethical and political uses of sacred texts as material objects
- Uses of sacred texts in interreligious contexts, or considerations of sacred texts shared or contested by two or more traditions
- Uses and abuses of sacred texts in contemporary political discourse
- Hagiographical writings as sacred texts
- Sacred texts between Religious Studies and Theology, particularly as sources for ethical or political reflection
- The relationship between different textual genres (narrative, legal, poetry, letters, etc.) and religious ethics

Mission Statement:

The Sacred Texts and Ethics Unit invites scholars and activists across the disciplines to consider (or re-consider) the complex and enduring role of scriptural and foundational religious texts in the contemporary world as well as historically, and to theorize the roles these texts play in ethical reflection, lived religious practice, and political debate.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Filler, Emily, Earlham College, filleem@earlham.edu

Chair - Atkinson, Tyler, Bethany College, atkinsonts@bethanylb.edu

Sacred Texts, Theory, and Theological Construction Unit

Call:

This Unit firstly welcome paper and panel proposals in an open call by theologians and biblical scholars and other scholars of sacred texts. We welcome proposals from scholars working on a range of themes from postcolonial, critical race, queer, and ecocritical perspectives on theory, theological construction, and sacred texts. Contemporary or emerging themes in constructive theology are especially sought after. For 2018 in Denver, we also seek proposals on the following themes:

- **Refugees and Political Displacements**
We invite paper and panel proposals that theologically engage the intersection of sacred texts and forced migration, displacement or refugee-ism. Debates about the status of refugees in the United States, the emergence of "climate refugees," human and nonhuman, and emerging scholarship on forced migration and diaspora in biblical studies, constitute a growing scholarly and political edge. We invite proposals that work on these themes as they relate to theology and sacred texts. How does scholarship reflect on forced migration in sacred texts, the ethics of hospitality, national borderlands, diaspora, identity, theology and religious experience?
- **What is Multidisciplinarity?**
In contemporary discussions on the role and fate of the humanities, what exactly is interdisciplinarity or multidisciplinarity work? Given the nature of this Unit's work, how can scholars of sacred texts and theologians engage in more fruitful conversation with one another. What contribution might scholars of sacred texts and theologians offer the humanities more broadly? How does one do multidisciplinary work with integrity? Is there a place for that work in the academy? How do changing perspectives on interdisciplinary themes change our understanding of what it means to be a scholar of sacred texts or theologians? What are the limits of thinking of certain forms of scholarship as "interdisciplinary" or "multidisciplinarity" as opposed to a kind "pure" position relative to a field of inquiry. How do institutions enable and constrain certain forms of "interdisciplinarity," or what the limits are of thinking in terms of disciplines at all? What are the intellectual rubrics for "rigor" in those circumstances, and how might those be defined?
- **Pedagogy and Public Theology**
We invite paper and panel proposals that take on the 2018 presidential theme on "Civic Responsibilities, Opportunities and Risks Facing Scholars of Religion", particularly as those proposals engage the intersection of teaching theology and sacred texts to varying publics in a changing planetary plural religious, philosophical, and humanist landscape? What new perspectives on teaching does public theology or theology rooted in activism provide? Are there sacred texts when it comes to public theology? How are those texts deployed in political movements and to what effect? How do texts like the recent *Awake to the Moment: An Introduction to Theology* (Westminster John Knox Press,

2017) by the Workgroup in Constructive Theology help us understand the role of theologians and scholars of sacred texts in our current landscape? Proposals may engage new pedagogical theory, teaching in nonacademic contexts, sacred texts therein, multidisciplinary teaching, collaborative theology, etc.

- Podcasts as/and Sacred Texts: *Welcome to Night Vale*
The podcast *Welcome to Night Vale* describes itself as "a twice-monthly podcast in the style of community updates for the small desert town of Night Vale, featuring local weather, news, announcements from the Sheriff's Secret Police, mysterious lights in the night sky, dark hooded figures with unknowable powers, and cultural events." (<http://www.welcometonightvale.com/>) Since its debut in 2012, the podcast has stimulated its audience with imaginative storytelling, magical realism, theological and religious complexity and mystery, paranormal activity, conspiracy theory, monstrosity, Gods, Glow Clouds, sexuality, angelology and a deeply human narrative of relationship and meaning. The podcast's creators--Joseph Fink, who was a religious studies major, and Jeffrey Cranor--interweave theological reflection with sacred texts, themes of religion and science, belief and doubt. We seek proposals that attend to *Welcome to Night Vale's* odd mix of texts and theology, constructive reflections and critiques on the themes of the podcast, the audience of the podcast itself, its characters and quirks. And, more generally, can podcasts be sources of theological reflection, can podcasts be sacred texts for those who listen? Co-sponsorship with the New Religious Movements Unit and the Sacred Texts, Theory, and Theological Construction Unit.
- Prisons, Incarceration, and Prison Literature
The Comparative Theology Unit and the Sacred Texts, Theory, and Theological Construction Unit invite paper and panel proposals for a co-sponsored session on the theme of "Prisons, Incarceration, and Prison Literature". From imprisonments of religious figures like the Apostle Paul or Mahatma Ghandi to texts like Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* or Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Letters and Papers from Prison* or Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow* or Langdon Gilkey's *Shantung Compound*, theological and critical reflection on imprisonment, internment, and mass incarceration is a growing and pressing field of importance. This session seeks proposals that think about the interdisciplinary intersections of prison literature, sacred text, and comparative theory and theology. Proposals might consider: comparative work on sacred texts engaged by prison literature; mass incarceration and intersectional considerations of race, gender, and empire; emergent themes in comparing religiously-inflected prison literature; comparative theological reflections on genre; comparative theological reflections on imprisonment, internment and mass incarceration; engagement with contemporary critical theory on imprisonment and/or mass incarceration; engagement with critical theorists like Michel Foucault, Michelle Alexander, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, etc.; and other major related themes. We especially welcome proposals from scholars of sacred texts working in a wide range of religious traditions.

- **Pre-Arranged Panel: *Un/Familiar Theology***

We have pre-arranged a book review panel on Susannah Cornwall's new book *Un/Familiar Theology: Reconceiving Sex, Reproduction, and Generativity* (T&T Clark, 2017). Through engagement with theologies of adoption, pro-natalism, marriage, and queer theology, Susannah Cornwall figures developments in models of marriage and family not as distortions of or divergences from the divinely-ordained blueprint, but as developments already of a piece with these institution's being. Much Christian theological discussion of family, sex and marriage seems to claim that they are (or should be) unchanging and immaculate; that to celebrate their shifting and developing natures is to reject them as good gifts of God. However, models of marriage, family, parenting and reproduction have changed and are still, in some cases radically, changing. These changes are not all a raging tide to be turned back, but in continuity with goods deeply embedded in the tradition. Alternative forms of marriage and family stand as signs of the hope of the possibility of change. Changed institutions, such as same-sex marriage, are new beginnings with the potential to be fruitful and generative in their own right. In them, humans create new imaginaries which more fully acknowledge the interactive nature of our relationships with the world and the divine. We are looking forward to this pre-arranged panel, and while we are not considering proposals for this panel, we do invite a range of proposals on queer theory, texts, and theological construction. Co-sponsored by the Gay Men and Religion Unit and the Sacred Texts, Theory, and Theological Construction Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit works with the unique intersection of sacred texts, contemporary theory, and theological construction. We call for papers engaged in contemporary constructive theology that think in innovative ways with sacred texts and contemporary biblical studies. We encourage dialogue between constructive theologians and biblical scholars from AAR and SBL, dealing with themes of interest to both academic disciplines in the wake of postmodernity. Topics range from theological hermeneutics to the value of theology, interrogations of our new theoretical contexts to constructive theological proposals, and from the use of sacred texts by contemporary theorists to the use of those contemporary theorists in constructive theology. This unit encourages and is receptive to creative proposals that work at the intersection of biblical studies, contemporary philosophy, theory, and theology.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Grau, Marion S., MF Norwegian School of Theology, marion.grau@gmail.com

Chair - Erickson, Jacob, Trinity College, Dublin, jacobjrickson@gmail.com

Schleiermacher Unit

Call:

The Schleiermacher Unit issues an open call for proposals that engage Schleiermacher's thought historically, analytically, comparatively, or constructively. Any topic is welcome. We intend to showcase two exceptional papers that [1] represent cutting edge scholarship on Schleiermacher's work, and [2] support substantive, critical dialogue between attendees.

The Schleiermacher Unit invites proposals for papers that explore the value of Schleiermacher's thinking for discussions about "lived religion" or "lived theology". We encourage papers that draw from Schleiermacher's Dialectic, Aesthetics, Christian Ethics, sermons, or On Religion, but we will equally consider proposals that engage other texts in his oeuvre that are significant for exploring lived religious practices, community formation, intersubjectivity, and ritual. We especially welcome proposals that consider the role of affect, sub-culture, social organization, or a particular form of religious expression, within lived religion.

The Liberal Theologies Unit and the Schleiermacher Unit invite paper proposals that attend to the interplay between trust, power, and/or dialogue, and that invites new reflection, both historical and constructive, in post-truth times. Possible topics can include: communal dialogical practices promoting trusting truthful relations; cultivation of the affective and virtues promoting community; analyses of power and dialogical theories; pedagogies cultivating communal practice; gender and race; and theories of truth. We especially welcome papers that engage the thought of Friedrich Schleiermacher and the theologians situated broadly in relation to liberal theologies while making an argument that attends to the current political, cultural, and/or religious situations we face. Schleiermacher's Letters, Sermons, Hermeneutics, and/or Staatslehre may prove especially productive for this constellation of topics, though we welcome engagement with any part of his work and/or theologians building on his legacy.

Mission Statement:

This unit promotes scholarship--from specialists and non-specialists alike--that critically engages the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834). We encourage historical, textual, and constructive analyses that open new lines of inquiry into Schleiermacher's oeuvre and contribute to contemporary discussions in theology, religious studies, philosophy, ethics, and hermeneutics.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Poe, Shelli, Millsaps College, poesm@millsaps.edu

Chair - Waggoner, Ed, Brite Divinity School, ed.waggoner@tcu.edu

Science, Technology, and Religion Unit

Call:

The Religion, Science, and Technology Group seeks paper and panel proposals on the following themes:

- Religion and the Public
What is the role of religion scholars in the culture wars over science? How should one best understand the controversies over science in the American public? How does one connect the issues of science and religion to the world beyond the academy?
- Biomedicine
Does the study of religion provide any unique insights for the study of biomedicine? Does biomedicine only address questions of 'how' while leaving 'why' questions to the domain of religion, or is this dichotomy oversimplified? What new methodological tools can be brought to the study of biomedicine and religion? We are particularly interested in papers that explore non-Christian and non-western Christian contexts from historical and ethnographic perspectives.
- Reflections on the Work and Legacy of Christopher Southgate
- Astrobiology
What implications would the discovery of another form of life have on how we see ourselves and our world. In particular, what would be the implications for different religious traditions? Papers are invited that relate to Lisa Sideris's book *Consecrating Science: Wonder, Knowledge and the Natural World* (University of California Press, 2017) as an opportunity to reflect upon ways we might relate religious discourse and scientific knowledge in morally motivating ways. Do we need science to feed a sense of "wonder" and ecological responsibility, or could this arise in a personal encounter with nature? And can and should we aim for a grand cosmic story or rather value a plurality of particular stories, as religious legacies are as diverse as human cultures and languages?
- Proposals on current controversies in brain-mind science and emotion, such as the debates surrounding domain-specific vs. domain-general theories of emotion, and the implications of these controversies for religion. For a co-sponsored session with Religion, Affect, and Emotion Unit and the Science, Technology, and Religion Unit.

Finally, STR is always open to paper proposals that do not fit any of these particular parameters.

Mission Statement:

This Unit supports scholarship that explores the relationship of religion, theology, technology, and the natural sciences. We support research that attempts to bridge the gap between

religious and scientific approaches to reality and encourage the development of constructive proposals that encourage engagement and dialogue with the sciences, along with a critical assessment of the meaning and impact of technologies for the human condition and the natural world.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Cootsona, Greg, California State University, Chico, greg@cootsona.net

Chair - Reeves, Josh, Samford University, jareeves@samford.edu

Scriptural Reasoning Unit

Call:

We invite paper or panel submissions related to the following themes:

- **Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Theology**
Since the 1990's two creative and innovative interreligious practices have emerged: Scriptural Reasoning and comparative theology, both of which place the reading of texts at the center of interreligious learning, though they do so in a different vein. Comparative theology is a solitary studious enterprise, while Scriptural Reasoning is a communal conversational practice. Scriptural Reasoning places sacred scriptures at the heart of its practice, while comparative theology focuses on theological and philosophical treatises. We welcome papers or panel proposals that examine the relation between comparative theology and Scriptural Reasoning. What are their different methods, hermeneutics, or theological approaches? What sort of knowledge does each produce? How do they challenge or complement one another? And how do they relate to other disciplines like the theologies of religions or the academic study of religion? Co-sponsored with the Comparative Theology Unit and the Scriptural Reasoning Unit.
- **Wisdom**
The ideal interpreter of scripture is often assumed to embody 'wisdom', but this category is notoriously vague. What is wisdom, how is it gained, and how does it shape the interpretation of scripture? We invite papers that address conceptions of wisdom in religious traditions, the role of scriptural study in the formation of wisdom and/or the figure of the sage.
- **Scripture and Violence**
It is often assumed that when religious actors engage in violent acts, they are inspired to do so by commitments derived from their scriptural traditions. We invite papers that address the relationship between scripture and acts of violence (or commitments to non-violence). How do scriptural reading practices motivate, encourage, condone or condemn acts of violence in the public sphere? What connections, if any, can be drawn between specific scriptural passages and real-world acts of violence?

We invite those who are not familiar with the history or practice of SR to review the *Journal of Scriptural Reasoning* for examples of the type of scholarship that characterize this unit.

Mission Statement:

Scriptural Reasoning (SR) is a practice of inter-religious text study in which participants from the three "Abrahamic" religions (and increasingly, from other traditions as well) study short selections of their scriptures together in an open-ended but structured way. When scholars read scripture across inter-religious difference, the effect is to put traditional wisdom and

academic formation into play simultaneously. Over the years, this practice has proved effective at making familiar texts strange and offering a window into the 'deep logics' of these different traditions.

The Scriptural Reasoning Unit facilitates within the AAR a unique mode of academic engagement rooted in this practice. It cultivates an approach to the academic study of scriptural traditions centered on the ways in which scriptures generate communities of religious practice: practices of study, of interpretation, of reflection, of ritual, and of social life. Its scholars seek to develop methods for analyzing aspects of this process and to offer philosophical or theological interventions in the ongoing life of the traditions.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)

E-mail with Attachment (proposal is in attachment, not in body of e-mail)

Leadership:

Chair - Barer, Deborah, Towson University, dbarer@towson.edu

Chair - James, Mark, Hunter College, mcjames@caspia.com

Secularism and Secularity Unit

Call:

The Secularism and Secularity group encourages submissions that address the following topics through original empirical research:

- **Secularism and Social Justice Activism**
How does the divide between secular and religious map (or fail to map) onto struggles for rights and recognition, such as those of indigenous people or activists fighting for racial and gender equality?
- **Secularism, Race, and Gender**
Why are atheists, humanists, and other kinds of nonbelievers more likely to be white and male?
- **Secularization and History**
How do we narrate the emergence of the secular? Is it a story of continuity or rupture, and what are the effects of these historical narratives? How does these questions relate to political theology?
- **Secularism, Science, and Technology**
How does the growth of secularism relate to the emerge of empiricism as a culture? What do we make of scientific narratives of progress or impending destruction? What is the role of scientific materialism in the twenty-first century, especially in Communist and formerly Communist nations?
- **Secularism, Medicine, and Healing**
When do claims about the religiosity or secularity of healing practices have consequences in the world? How do factors like race and gender pattern these consequences?

Mission Statement:

The Secularism and Secularity Unit explores a broad a set of questions associated with the secular, including its complex entanglements with religion and spirituality. This inquiry entails the study of political secularism and its role in the construction of religion, as well as the study of secular people, who can be described with a variety of labels including atheist, agnostic, humanist, and freethinker. It also includes an ongoing reappraisal of the historical transformations named by “secularization,” which signal the emergence of the modern and presuppose a break from the premodern. The Unit fosters new directions in secular studies by encouraging theoretically informed research that makes empirical contributions and engages with the subfield’s rapidly growing interdisciplinary literature.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - VanAntwerpen, Jonathan, Henry Luce Foundation, New York, NY,
vanantwerpen@hluce.org

Chair - Blankholm, Joseph, University of California, Santa Barbara, blankholm@ucsb.edu

Sikh Studies Unit

Call:

- Sikh Studies' scholars have often found themselves facing demands from a variety of publics including different governments, media, the judiciary, the Sikh community and religious clergy both in its local and central institutional formations. Despite this, the kind of academic training given to Sikh Studies scholars, and other scholars of religion, continues to privilege scholarly publics, academic presses, and university students. The Sikh Studies Unit invites proposals that seek to rethink the opportunities available to train scholars to more aptly, responsibly, and ethically react to the demands of an increasing number of publics.
- Since 9/11, there has been an increased prominence given to questions about religion in the public sphere. Sikhs in North America have responded to human rights violations, (mass) killings, and questions about accommodating religious communities through an upsurge of social activist networks. The realities of a living, highly reactive, and potentially volatile community that is engaged with scholarly discourse places Sikh Studies scholars in a precarious position vis-à-vis autonomy and public responsibility. Therefore, the Sikh Studies Unit also invites proposals that consider the risks associated with scholarly engagement with publics that exist beyond the university. We ask for proposals that consider the ethical responsibilities of scholars who are increasingly studying communities whose self-interest helps create endowed research chairs in religious studies and/or area studies. In what ways does this alter the traditional role of remaining aloof to communitarian expectations of scholarship? How does this put scholars in a bind between often opposed publics? Are there opportunities for new and more engaged forms of scholarship that can arise from this changing landscape? What is the role of altering traditional forms of scholarly training in consideration of these increase public demands?
- Hindu-German Conspiracy Trial
2018 marks the centenary anniversary of the conclusion of the Hindu–German Conspiracy Trial. The trial was, at the time, the most expensive in American legal history in which eight members of the Ghadar Party were indicted on charges of conspiring to violate US neutrality with England (before US entry into WWI) by conspiring with Germany to initiate revolt against the British in India. We invite papers that speak to both directly to the Hindu-German Conspiracy Trial and its aftermath, as well as papers that address the many matters that the trial touches upon, including but not limited to: the Ghadar Party and other anti-colonial movements in the early-twentieth century, state surveillance, and religious sites and universities as places of anti-colonial resistance and organization. Co-sponsored with the Sikh Studies Unit and the Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Unit.

The Sikh Studies Unit welcomes both fully developed paper panel and round table proposals. Individual paper proposals are also welcome.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a forum for highlighting the most recent and innovative scholarship in the area of Sikh studies. Our work draws from a broad range of methodological and theoretical approaches — history, postcolonial theory, performance theory, popular culture, philosophy, literary criticism, gender studies, etc. — by both established scholars as well as those new to the field. Seeking a balance between critical theory and substantive content, we seek to call into question key critical terms, challenge established frames of reference, and offer innovative and alternative ways in which Sikhs and Sikhism can be understood and studied in the academy.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Singh, Pashaura, University of California, Riverside, psingh@ucr.edu

Chair - Hawley, Michael, Mount Royal University, mhawley@mtroyal.ca

Sociology of Religion Unit

Call:

Statement of Purpose:

The Sociology of Religion Program Unit of the American Academy of Religion serves as a bridge between religious studies and the subdiscipline of sociology of religion. The group operates as a two-way conduit to bring sociological research into the field of religious studies and to make findings in the broader study of religion available to sociologists. Through cross-fertilization transgressing disciplinary boundaries there can be breakthroughs in research in both fields. The group has a wide conception of sociology of religion. It is open to a multiplicity of approaches utilized in the discipline of sociology. We work to cultivate theoretical contributions founded upon empirical data from a variety of established methodologies such as quantitative, qualitative, and comparative-historical approaches. By liaising with other Program Units, the Sociology of Religion Group is able to bring the rich diversity of critical and analytical perspectives that are housed in the American Academy of Religion into mainstream sociology of religion. Concurrently, it aims to provide scholars of the study of religion with a deeper understanding of the landscape of sociology of religion.

Sociology of Religion as part of a larger discipline is marked by a canonization of its theory and its division by paradigms and methodologies--whether these be the classics (Weber and Durkheim), the old paradigm (functionalism and social constructionism), or the new paradigm (rational choice) on the one hand and quantitative, qualitative, or historical-comparative sociology on the other. As it intersects with sociology of religion, the study of religion has drawn from theories and methodologies in conversation with anthropology, critical theory, psychology, history, and other related disciplines. We are interested in papers that utilize the methods and theories in the study of religion and bring them into the sociological canon as well as those that help religious studies gain a better grasp of the sociological theory of religion. We encourage papers that draw from both the theory and methodology of sociology of religion and religious studies and use them as frames for analysis of concrete cases. We invite papers covering both historical and contemporary topics pertinent to the sociological study of religions. In particular, we request papers that touch upon social divisions examining race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, region, age, etc.

Critics of sociology of religion have pointed out that the field is dominated by North American scholars primarily interested in Protestantism. The discipline of religious studies provides a clear antidote to these perceived limitations. Therefore, we encourage contributions from academics who study the various religious traditions around the world as well as those studying North American religious communities. In particular, we would like submissions from scholars from all academic ranks across the lines of nationality, region, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc.

The purpose of the Sociology of Religion program unit of the American Academy of Religion is to bridge the gap and generate cross-fertilization between the Sociology of Religion and Religious Studies. We are open to papers in all areas and therefore encourage submissions of any topic relevant to the sociology of religion. This year, we are particularly interested in the following topics:

- Measuring Religiosity and Secularity
- Religion in the Public Sphere (theme of the conference)
- Appropriation and Limitations of Western Sociological Theory
- Politics and Religious Demographics (Demography of Religion) (i.e., voting)
- Regionalism: Issues relevant to Colorado (water rights, religion and ecology, indigenous religions, etc.)
- Networks approach (metatheoretical analysis)
- Global Religions and the Media
- Christian Nationalism
- Discourse, Religion, and Law

The Sociology of Religion Group of AAR regularly co-sponsors panels with the peer-reviewed print and online journal *Critical Research on Religion* (CRR) (<http://crr.sagepub.com>). Published by SAGE Publications, the journal has over 8000 subscriptions worldwide. Presenters of promising papers in SOR panels will be invited to turn their papers into articles and submit them for peer review to CRR.

Mission Statement:

The Sociology of Religion Unit of the American Academy of Religion serves as a bridge between religious studies and the subdiscipline of sociology of religion. It functions as a two-way conduit not only to import sociological research into religious studies but also to export the research of religious studies into both the subdiscipline and the broader field of sociology. Only through a cross-fertilization transgressing departmental boundaries can there be breakthroughs in research in both fields. The unit has a wide conception of sociology of religion. It is open to a multiplicity of paradigms and methodologies utilized in the subfield and sociology more broadly: theoretical as well as empirical, quantitative, qualitative, and comparative-historical. By liaising with other Program Units, the Sociology of Religion Unit is able to bring the rich diversity of critical and analytical perspectives that are housed in the American Academy of Religion into mainstream sociology of religion. Conversely, it aims to provide scholars of the study of religion with a deeper understanding of the landscape of sociology of religion.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - King, Rebekka, Middle Tennessee State University, rebekka.king@mtsu.edu

Chair - Goldstein, Warren S., Center for Critical Research on Religion, Newton, MA,
goldstein@criticaltheoryofreligion.org

Space, Place, and Religion Unit

Call:

We welcome individual papers, papers sessions, and roundtable proposals for topics exploring space and place as they relate to religion. We are particularly interested in papers and sessions that employ theoretically or methodologically self-conscious and innovative approaches to understanding space as it relates to, conditions, and constitutes aspects of religious life including: belief, ritual, meaning, aesthetics, and experience. We also welcome ethnographically-informed studies of sites and historically-informed studies of texts that shed light on the role of space and location in religious traditions. We desire to have one session focusing on religious spaces in Asia. This year we particularly interested in sessions on the following topics:

- Soundscapes, Place, and Religion
What is the role of sound in the making of religious space?
- Religion, Ecology, and Place
Papers or panel proposals on the role of religious traditions in place-based ecological actions or campaigns, especially regarding extractive industries. For a joint session with the Space, Place, and Religion Unit and the Religion and Ecology Unit.
- The Repurposing of Space/Historical Layering across a Space
- Author-Meets-Critics Book Panel Examining an Important Work on Space, Place and Religion
(Be sure to contact the author and "critics" to confirm interest and availability)

Proposals of complete sessions on other topics will be considered.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is a forum for exploring religious sites and the spatial dimensions of religions. We feature ethnographically-informed studies of living sites, historically-informed studies of texts and artifacts, and analyses of architecture and landscape. Our work seeks to shed light on the role of space and place in religious traditions and communities or to examine religious activity (performance, ritual, and practice) in spatial contexts.

This Unit recognizes that spaces and places, real and imagined/visionary, are constitutive elements in religious life; it is dedicated to investigating how they contribute to contemplative, ritualistic, artistic, economic, ethnic, or political aspects of religious life using a variety of approaches and methods. We expect to include at least one session focused on spaces and places in Asia, in addition to sessions focused on other themes, regions, traditions or advancing the theoretical analysis of space and place.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Nichols, Brian J., Mount Royal University, bnichols@mtroyal.ca

Chair - Graham, Susan L., Saint Peter's University, sgraham@saintpeters.edu

Student Lounge Roundtable

Call:

The Student Lounge Roundtable Series (SLRS) consists of a series of roundtable workshops/conversations dedicated to professional development and the current needs of graduate students. These roundtable conversations/workshops are meant to encourage dialogue, learning, and collaboration that allow graduate students to engage with the various topics in a collegial setting. Rather than being traditional conference presentations, the SLRS workshops are meant to stimulate discussion and learning over a particular area of focus. The SLRS is sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee and are led by graduate students, professors, and other professionals with relevant expertise to offer.

Please note: Submissions to the SLRS do not count toward the two-proposal submission limit within the PAPERS system.

The Graduate Student Committee invites scholars of religion to share their hard-earned wisdom in the Student Lounge Roundtable Series. We are looking for individuals who will be responsible for leading a conversation or workshop (60-90 minutes) about a topic of practical interest to student members. A variety of formats are welcome. Possible topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Online resources and computer programs to aid research, writing, or teaching
- Managing a specific stage of graduate school (courses, exams, thesis, ABD, etc.)
- Research project design or methods
- Balancing graduate school with other dimensions of life and identity
- Coping with the mental and emotional pressures of graduate school and/or the job search
- Strategies for thriving as a member of an underrepresented community in the academy
- Creating or managing an online presence (websites, blogging, online portfolios, etc.)
- Job market (applications, interviews, alt-ac, etc.)
- Publishing (open access vs. peer review; alternative forms of publishing, etc.)
- Teaching (activities, online, technology, controversial issues, etc.)
- Presenting research to the public
- Networking
- Grant writing
- CV writing
- Leadership

Please send a brief proposal (~150 words) and a CV to Emma Rifai at emma-rifai@uiowa.edu by March 1, 2018 and cc: GSC Chair and AAR Student Director, Rachel Toombs at Rachel.Toombs@baylor.edu. Please indicate if you are willing to co-present if your topic aligns with another proposal. Roundtable time slots are flexible. If accepted, please be prepared to

create a short video to be used by the GSC for publicity purposes prior to the annual conference.

Mission Statement:

The Student Lounge Roundtable Series (SLRS) consists of a series of roundtable conversations/workshops dedicated to professional development and the current needs of graduate students. These roundtable conversations/workshops are meant to encourage dialogue, learning, and collaboration that allow graduate students to engage with the various topics in a collegial setting. Rather than being traditional conference presentations, the SLRS workshops are meant to stimulate discussion and learning over a particular area of focus. The SLRS is sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee and are led by graduate students, professors, and other professionals with relevant expertise to offer.

Please note: Submissions to the SLRS do not count toward the two-proposal submission limit within the PAPERS system.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)

E-mail with Attachment (proposal is in attachment, not in body of e-mail)

Leadership:

Chair - Toombs, Rachel, Baylor University, rachel_toombs@baylor.edu

Chair - Rifai, Emma, University of Iowa, emma-rifai@uiowa.edu

Study of Islam Unit

Call:

This Unit encourages individual paper, paper session, and roundtable proposals in all areas of Islamic studies. Successful proposals will reflect theoretical and methodological sophistication and engagement with existing scholarship along with innovative examination of Muslim practices, texts, and material culture in diverse contexts and geographies. We encourage the submission of coherent pre-arranged sessions involving multiple scholars, including roundtables or other creative presentation formats.

As a new explicit requirement of our unit, a successful pre-arranged paper session or roundtable proposal must incorporate gender diversity. Diversity of race and ethnicity, theoretical method, and rank are also highly encouraged.

If your proposal is accepted and you agree to be on the program, we expect you to show up to participate in your session at the annual meeting, barring unforeseeable exceptional circumstances. Please note that the Islamic studies program units have a policy according to which no-shows may be barred from the program for the following year.

After great success last year, we will again have a session centered on graduate student research in Islamic Studies. This session will offer graduate students the opportunity to present for 5 minutes on their dissertation research, followed by short responses from other panelists and open discussion. If you are an advanced graduate student and interested in talking succinctly about your research in this session, please submit a paper proposal through the PAPERS system with the abstract and proposal the same text and length (maximum 150 words) and indicate that your submission is for this special session format at the top of the proposal.

As always, we welcome submissions dealing with the Qur'an and the Sunna, law, philosophy, theology, mysticism, ritual, gender and sexuality, modernity and globalization, teaching, religious pluralism, and other areas of general interest. Furthermore, we encourage proposals dealing with Shi'ism within and across these areas.

For the 2018 meeting in Denver, we are also especially interested in paper and/or panel proposals on:

- Martyrdom and Resistance
- Disability
- Education and Institutions of Learning
- Digital Polemics
- Family and Kinship
- Lived Qur'an
- Bodies, Corporeality, and Ritual
- Emotions

All proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria: a descriptive title; a clearly formulated argument; engagement with secondary literature; articulation of a contribution to the field; and clearly identified methodology and sources.

Further suggestions for AAR proposal writers can be found in Kecia Ali's "Writing a Successful Annual Meeting Proposal": <https://www.aarweb.org/node/204>

Selected presenters will be notified of their acceptance approximately a month after the PAPERS deadline. Our unit requires that the full text of each presentation be submitted for pre-circulation among session participants by November 2, 2018.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is the home for the academic study of Islam within the AAR. This Unit encompasses various approaches and subjects, from Qur'anic studies to modern reform movements and from textual research to sociology. The Unit also has an enduring interest in pedagogical issues associated with the teaching of Islam. The purpose of the Unit is both to provide a forum for dialogue among differing approaches and projects within Islamic studies and also to provide opportunities for the discussion of work that affects the overall field of the study of religion. We normally meet for five to seven sessions at each Annual Meeting. We coordinate our work with other Islam-related AAR Program Units, including the Contemporary Islam Unit, the Islam, Gender, Women Unit, the Islamic Mysticism Unit, the Qur'an Unit, and the Material Islam Seminar.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Morgenstein Fuerst, Ilyse, University of Vermont, ilysermf@gmail.com

Chair - Hammer, Juliane, University of North Carolina, jhammer@email.unc.edu

Study of Judaism Unit

Call:

This Unit welcomes individual paper, papers session, and roundtable proposals from the wide scope of Judaism, Jews, and Jewish studies—from late antiquity to the present. For 2018, we are particularly interested in the following topics:

- Jewish Christians and "Judeo-Christian", from antiquity to the present
- Relationship between Jewish Studies and Religious Studies
- Presumed masculinity implicit in Jewish thought, role of gender in the field
- Jews and Race
Conversations with theologies of color. How do themes of Blackness and anti-Blackness work in Jewish thought or history? For scholars of Black theology, how are Jewishness, anti-Semitism, and supersessionism being treated in their canon of sources? How is Jewish studies constructing Blackness? How is Black studies constructing Jewishness? Co-sponsorship with the Black Theology Unit and the Study of Judaism Unit.
- Judaism and Anthropology
- Jews and Empire
- Judaism and Food
- Nora Rubel's (forthcoming) book, *Recipes for the Melting Pot: The Lives of the Settlement Cook Book* offers a cultural biography of *The Way to a Man's Heart: The Settlement Cook Book*, the most successful fundraising cookbook in American history, having seen forty printings and sold over two million copies. Non-kosher from the start, the book that emerged from a turn-of-the-century Jewish Settlement House featured traditional Jewish recipes alongside a multi-ethnic fusion that reflected not only its Midwestern, acculturated Jewish origins, but also projected cosmopolitan aspirations. Accordingly, the Study of Judaism Unit and the Religion and Food Unit are interested in submissions that will engage this book. Topics include, but are not limited to:
 - The impact of *The Settlement Cook Book* on the construction of a Jewish American religio-culinary culture
 - The challenges of cultural memory in maintaining religio-culinary tradition
 - The cultural impact of carrying on food traditions in a new land (or we could say in diasporic contexts?)
 - Food and religion's impact on serving sub-cultural communities
 - Connections between domestic reform and religious reform movements
- Jay Geller's *Bestiarum Judaicum*
Co-sponsored with Animals and Religion Unit and the Study of Judaism Unit.

Mission Statement:

The goal of this Unit is to develop and expand the relationship between the study of Judaism and the broader study of religion. We work to meet this goal in three primary ways:

- Methodologically
- Topically
- By co-sponsorship with other program units

First, this Unit engages in active conversation with the methodologies common to the study of religion by exploring the historical, social, aesthetic, and political aspects of Jewish religion in its various contexts. All the while, we challenge methodologies in place at the AAR and offer new approaches to the study of religion through our focus on textual studies and the engagement between texts/doctrines and other aspects of religious culture. Second, we wrestle with topics of concern to the community of religious scholars in general, including community and commitment, gender, and the intersection between religion and politics. Finally, we actively pursue co-sponsorship with other AAR Program Units. Recently, we have worked with the Study of Islam Unit, the Mysticism Unit, the Theology and Continental Philosophy Unit, and several SBL Sections. In the future, we look forward to continuing to work with various AAR — and whenever possible, SBL — Program Units.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Imhoff, Sarah, Indiana University, seimhoff@indiana.edu

Chair - Nahme, Paul, Brown University, paul_nahme@brown.edu

Tantric Studies Unit

Call:

- Bengali and Assamese Tantra in Colonial and Contemporary Contexts
Keith E. Cantu, UCSB (kecantu@umail.ucsb.edu)
- Tantra and Popular Culture
Scott Brown, CU-Boulder (scott.l.brown@colorado.edu)
- Jain Tantra
Michael Slouber, Western Washington University (Michael.Slouber@wwu.edu)
- Comparative Tantra and Longevity Practices and the Body
Shaman Hatley, UMass-Boston (Shaman.Hatley@umb.edu)
- Chakra Systems and Mantra Systems
Patricia Sauthoff, SOAS (249292@soas.ac.uk)
- Theory and Practice of Yoga and Bodily Disciplines in India and China
We are taking the term “yoga” in a broad sense, to include bodily disciplines, hygienic regimens, inner alchemy, breathing techniques, body maps, pursuit of physical immortality, etc. Approaches can be historical, descriptive, theoretical, etc. The goal is to begin an informed exchanged of information between scholars working on Indian yoga traditions and those working on comparable practices in China. Comparative proposals are welcome, as are proposals focusing on a single work, lineage, set of techniques, etc. from either India or China. Co-sponsored session with Indian and Chinese Religions Compared Unit, the Daoist Studies Unit, the Tantric Studies Unit, and the Yogacara Studies Unit.
Dan Lusthaus, Harvard University (lusthaus@fas.harvard.edu)
Michael Allen, Univ. of Virginia (msa2b@virginia.edu)
- Tantric Doxographies: How Tantra-inflected Philosophers Distinguish between Traditions
Co-sponsored with the Buddhist Philosophy Unit and the Tantric Studies Unit.
(Daniel McNamara, dmcnamara4@wisc.edu)

Mission Statement:

This Unit brings together scholars who utilize a range of methodological and theoretical perspectives in their studies of the complex religious, social, and cultural phenomena known collectively as tantra. “Tantra” refers to a range of esoteric religious traditions that developed in India and were disseminated throughout Asia during the first millennium CE. These diverse traditions have used mental and bodily disciplines, devotional and ritual practices, and

gendered cosmologies, and have created elaborate artistic as well as sociopolitical systems. The collective study of tantra has led to several important conclusions:

- The demonstrated diversity of tantric practices and ideologies demands a plurality of methods, theories, and interpretative strategies by scholars
- These richly varied tantric traditions became, by the twelfth century CE, central to many Asian religious and sociopolitical systems, including those of India, Nepal, Tibet, Mongolia, Cambodia, Japan, and China
- Various traditional Asian forms of tantra have been brought to the Western world since the early twentieth century and are undergoing a vital process of reinterpretation and appropriation

Our goal is to provide a venue for scholars of different areas of tantric studies to collaborate across traditional boundaries of religious traditions (e.g., Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism), present-day nation-states, geography (e.g., India, Tibet, China, Japan), and academic disciplines (e.g., history of religions, anthropology, art history, linguistics, sociology). We seek to be a cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary enterprise. Tantra as a set of practices — a religious technology — and as a set of doctrines explaining, justifying, and rationalizing those practices in fact exists across religious, national, and geographical boundaries. For example, an adequate understanding of Japanese Tantric Buddhist practice and doctrine requires not only locating it in an East Asian Buddhist context, but also in an Indian and South Asian context where the juxtaposition of Buddhist and Hindu tantras can fruitfully reveal aspects that might otherwise remain obscured. Similarly, by setting Buddhist materials in relation to Hindu traditions — both of which might otherwise be seen either as uniquely Hindu or Buddhist — will be highlighted as part of a broader, shared tantric discourse. This Unit will also allow scholars to present new methodologies for the study of tantra and help to bridge more traditional academic approaches, such as textual-based and fieldwork-based studies. We seek to further the study of tantra as a global, transnational phenomenon and as an important new religious movement. Finally, the Unit will also explore new perspectives for studies of gender, power, identity, and sexuality that are so germane to modern religious scholarship.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Bühnemann, Gudrun, University of Wisconsin, gbuhnema@wisc.edu

Chair - Nemeč, John, University of Virginia, nemec@virginia.edu

Teaching Religion Unit

Call:

This Unit critically examines pedagogical theory and practice. We invite proposals that join innovative teaching practice with the scholarship of teaching and learning. Preference will be given to presentation formats that model engaged, interactive, and experiential pedagogy.

This Unit critically examines pedagogical theory and practice. Proposals are sought that join innovative teaching practice with the scholarship of teaching and learning. Preference will be given to presentation formats that model engaged, interactive, and experiential pedagogy. For 2018, paper and panel proposals that address the following themes are especially welcome:

- **Self-Disclosure in the Classroom**
In our present age, who we are in the classroom, what we represent, and how students re/present themselves have all become major point of conversation. Presenters in this session will examine how self-disclosure in the classroom works for and against their students' learning, their institutional culture, and the current moment.
- **Supporting SoTL (Scholarship on Teaching and Learning)**
The Teaching Religion Unit seeks to support scholars engaged in studying teaching and learning at a variety of levels. "Supporting SoTL" will focus on presenters' own works in progress. In your "proposal" for this session, please submit an abstract of a SoTL work in progress or research topic you would like to develop. Participants selected for this workshop-style session will circulate paper drafts in advance of the November meeting and practice abbreviated peer-review following the guidelines provided for Teaching Theology and Religion reviewers.
- **Recent Publications on Teaching Religion and/or Theology**
The Teaching Religion Unit will sponsor a session on a recent scholarly publication on teaching and/or on teaching in the fields of religion and theology. We welcome suggestions for texts and (self-)nominations for panelists. We anticipate both accepting and inviting panelists to read and respond to the text.
- **Pedagogy**
This year, a co-sponsored session with the Islam, Gender, Women Unit and the Teaching Religion Unit will focus on teaching practices, strategies, and challenges in teaching about Islam, gender, and women. The session will be organized around a brief presentation (5-6 minutes) from each session participant of a particular technique, classroom exercise, text, assignment, syllabus, or assessment that they have found effective in their particular institution setting. These brief presentations will serve as the foundation for subsequent discussion by session attendees seated at small discussion tables, where attendees may share their own pedagogical experiences and tools. Therefore, for this co-sponsored session, IGW and Teaching Religion are not accepting proposals for standard full-length conference papers or for prearranged paper panels.

Rather, we invite proposals for presentations (5-6 minutes) that engage specific pedagogical strategies, texts, and tools used in undergraduate classrooms. We welcome proposals from instructors who teach a range of courses (that is, proposals need not be limited to courses in Islamic Studies).

- Papers that expose barriers for people with disabilities to accessibility in liturgical, community, and educational spaces and/or that consider the theological and ethical implications for both continued exclusion and genuine change. For a co-sponsorship with the Religion and Disability Studies Unit and Teaching Religion Unit.

- Embodied Pedagogy Teaching Tactics in Large Introductory Courses
We are interested in papers discussing teaching tactics that focus on ritual and embodied pedagogy in undergraduate courses (e.g. World Religions, Introduction to Religion, etc.). Co-sponsored with the Body and Religion Unit, the Ritual Studies Unit, and the Teaching Religion Unit. Proposals should:
 - State succinctly the context within which you used the strategy including: characteristics of your students, the institution and the course, when in the semester you use this tactic, and how long it takes;
 - State the pedagogical purpose of the strategy;
 - Describe the strategy itself in brief, clear language -- demonstrating a quick version of the tactic is encouraged;
 - State why and how the strategy was effective (or not effective) – i.e., how it supported (or failed to support in some way) student learning; and
 - Address potential challenges or obstacles -- i.e., avoiding cultural appropriation, avoiding the appearance of 'practicing' religion in public institutions, and potential ethical issues.

- Teaching Mysticism
How do we professors go about teaching courses on mysticism? What particular challenges or opportunities present themselves with regard to mysticism as a pedagogical topic? Co-sponsorship with the Mysticism Unit and the Teaching Religion Unit.

- Open call

Mission Statement:

This Unit critically examines pedagogical theory and practice. We invite proposals that join innovative teaching practice with the scholarship of teaching and learning. Preference will be given to presentation formats that model engaged, interactive, and experiential pedagogy.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Howell, David B., Ferrum College, dhowell@ferrum.edu

Chair - Bassett, Molly, Georgia State University, mbassett@gsu.edu

Theology and Continental Philosophy Unit

Call:

We seek paper proposals, panel proposals, and roundtable proposals that address any of the following themes:

Papers that discuss Continental Philosophy of Religion in relation to weird, fantastic, or enchanted figures; this might include post-secular perspectives on angels, demons, spirits, ghosts, golems, witches, magic, and jinn or figures from Afrofuturism and Black science fiction/fantasy writers (e.g. Octavia Butler, N.K. Jemisin, Samuel Delaney).

Papers that explore the debate over Continental Philosophy of Religion as cryptotheology; possible topics might include notions of purity, objectivity, heresy and orthodoxy in the debate, or might discuss the contours of the debate itself.

Reflections on the relationship between Continental Philosophy of Religion and the work of Talal Asad, particularly papers that look toward *Genealogies of Religion* on the 25th anniversary of its publication.

Critiques of Giorgio Agamben's work from Black studies and/or critical race studies, particularly responses to *The Use of Bodies*.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to further discussions at the intersection of post-Kantian philosophy in its various permutations with historical and contemporary theological reflection. While we remain centered on continental European thought on the philosophical side, the term “theology” in our parlance extends to critical reflection on a range of religions worldwide, and we are particularly interested to expand our offerings in Judaism and Islam in coming years. Contact the Program Unit Chairs if you seek further information on the Unit’s activities.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Marovich, Beatrice, Hanover College, beatrice.marovich@gmail.com

Chair - Kotsko, Adam, North Central College, akotsko@gmail.com

Theology and Religious Reflection Unit

Call:

Theology and Religious Reflection is soliciting papers in any of the following areas:

- Religion, Sexual Violence, and the Public (with special interest in perspectives working in diverse religious traditions)
- The Intelligibility of Transcendence
- Black Catholic Arts
- Religion, Death, Dying: Re-thinking Existential Themes
- What is the discipline of "academic theology"?
- The Crisis in Evangelical Identity
- Open Prompt: What makes you weary, and what keeps you going?

Mission Statement:

The Theology and Religious Reflection Unit is committed to fostering broad, interdisciplinary conversations in the study of religion and theology. We aim to cultivate a site of intersection and engagement for scholars working in various religious contexts who also have interests in the wider aspects of mutual interest in our field (theological, theoretical, methodological, political, ethical). Our Unit promotes constructive work that typically includes an emphasis on critical engagement as well as conceptual and social transformation.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Jones, Tamsin, Trinity College, Hartford, tamsin.jones@trincoll.edu

Chair - Peter Dass, Rakesh, Hope College, rpeterdass@gmail.com

Theology of Martin Luther King Jr. Unit

Call:

The work of this Unit is focused on creating conversations around the unique contributions of Martin Luther King Jr. to the Christian theological tradition in the twentieth century and to the religious, cultural, political, and economic consequences of his work. We are particularly interested in the many facets of the Civil Rights Movement, of which King was a significant part. These explorations have included a focus on the role of women in the movement, the economic dimensions of King's work, and his use of both the theological traditions and rhetoric of the Black Church. In all of our sessions, we are interested in fostering inter- and multidisciplinary approaches to this project.

On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr. was in Memphis to support the labor struggles of Black sanitation workers. At the same time, the Poor People's Campaign was preparing to put a face on the realities of poverty and economic injustice in the United States by erecting a city in Washington, D.C. and enact a well-organized lobbying plan to force Congress to act. King's assassination stalled the momentum of the Movement as the focus shifted from the work that was underway. Fifty years later, King's question, "Where Do We Go from Here?" remains significant as we consider the civic responsibilities, opportunities, and risks facing religious scholars and socio-religious activists throughout the world.

Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr. Unit invites paper proposals for the 2018 annual meeting in the following areas:

- The enduring legacy (including the continuities and discontinuities in freedom struggle) of Martin Luther King, Jr. 50 years after his assassination. We encourage papers that first explore the nature, contours, and utility of a King-ian ethic of non-violent direct action during the civil rights movement and, second, take up how freedom fighters appropriate such an ethic in the in the contemporary moment.
- The unfinished work of King and the Civil Rights Movement. We welcome papers that offer insights about the Poor People's Campaign of 1968 and the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival of 2018.
- "Dangerous Spirituality" (a designation offered by Vincent Harding for the spirituality of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Howard Thurman), and the challenge of living into the civic responsibilities, opportunities, and risks of Kingian ethics in the 21st century.
- Other paper proposals that advance the critical engagement of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life, theology, and ethics are also welcomed.

We also invite papers for possible co-sponsorship:

- To mark the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination in Memphis, the Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr. Unit, the Afro-American Religious History Unit, and the Religion and Cities Unit plan to co-sponsor a session at the 2018 meeting. We are

seeking papers that focus on surveillance of religious communities including socio-religious movements in cities, making connections to FBI surveillance of King in his last year. Papers that address the ways Black and Brown activists continue to be surveilled today (including the 2017 revelation of the FBI's construction of "Black Identity Extremists") and a critical analysis of historic and contemporary religious-theological responses to surveillance are welcomed.

- **Breaking White Supremacy**

The Ethics Unit, the Theology of Martin Luther King Jr. Unit and the Liberal Theologies Unit invite papers that discuss Gary Dorrien's 2017 book *Breaking White Supremacy: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Black Social Gospel* for a co-sponsored session at which Gary Dorrien will be a respondent. Papers might address such topics as the importance of *Breaking White Supremacy* in understanding the Black social gospel and continuing the work begun in Dorrien's *The New Abolition: W.E.B. DuBois and the Black Social Gospel* (2015); the theological insights of the civil rights movement and the way those insights inform, critique, and are critiqued in contemporary settings by the Movement For Black Lives; the claim that the civil rights movement ultimately failed to break white supremacy, and the implications of that claim for communities working to break white supremacy today; and contribution of *Breaking White Supremacy* considered against the backdrop of Dorrien's body of scholarly work. Liberal Theologies Unit will be handling this call.

Mission Statement:

The work of this Unit is focused on creating conversations around the unique contributions of Martin Luther King Jr. to the Christian theological tradition in the twentieth century and to the religious, cultural, political, and economic consequences of his work. We are particularly interested in the many facets of the Civil Rights Movement, of which King was a significant part. These explorations have included a focus on the role of women in the movement, the economic dimensions of King's work, and his use of both the theological traditions and rhetoric of the Black Church. In all of our sessions we are interested in fostering inter- and multidisciplinary approaches to this project.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Mingo, AnneMarie, Pennsylvania State University, amingo@psu.edu

Chair - Lee, Hak Joon, Fuller Theological Seminary, hjlee@fuller.edu

Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Unit

Call:

We invite papers on the following topics:

- Mountains in Himalayan Religions (Frances Garrett, frances.garrett@utoronto.ca)
- Religion and Violence in Tibet and the Himalayas (Antonio Terrone, terrone@lycos.com and Natasha Mikles, n.mikles@txstate.edu)
- Material Culture (Elizabeth Williams-Ørberg, elizabeth.oerberg@hum.ku.dk)
- Tibetan Contemplative Techniques (Michael Sheehy, ms4qm@virginia.edu)
- Religion and the Ecology of the "Third Pole" (Janice Poss, janice.poss@cgu.edu)
- Spirits, Buddhas and Violent Encounters in Tibetan Religions (Ivette Vargas-O'Bryan, ivargas@austincollege.edu)

Mission Statement:

This Unit's mission is to create an environment that promotes discussion among scholars taking diverse approaches to the study of Tibetan and Himalayan religions. Our identity and cohesion derive from the fact that we deal with a delimited geocultural space, but the intellectual excitement comes from the fact that we are specialists in different historical periods and cultural areas, from the fact that we are interested in different religious traditions, and from the fact that we have different methodological approaches to the study of religion. In particular, we encourage scholarship that approaches Tibetan and Himalayan religions through a wide range of approaches:

Multidisciplinary focus — we are committed to methodological diversity and to promoting scholarship that challenges the traditional disciplinary dichotomies through which the field has defined itself, such as text/practice, written/oral, philology/ethnography, and humanistic/social scientific study.

Transregional focus — we encourage a holistic approach to the study of Tibet and the Himalaya as a region, albeit a diverse one. One of the most important features of religious traditions in our field — perhaps in every field — is the degree to which they are inextricably connected, and it is only through the exploration of such interconnections that the phenomenon of religion in the Tibeto-Himalayan region can be understood. Such interconnections often cut across ethnonational boundaries.

Focus on cultural history — in the last decade, the study of Asian religions has taken a quite drastic cultural/historical turn. Nowhere is this more evident than in the study of Tibetan and Himalayan religions. A previous generation of scholars was concerned principally with elite religious institutions — and more specifically with their doctrinal/philosophical texts. Today scholarship is much more diverse. A new generation of scholars is concerned, for example, with folk religious practices, religion and material culture, the politics of religious institutions, the

representation of Tibetan religions in the media, and the historical construction of the field itself.

This Unit is committed to fostering such a multifaceted approach to the cultural history of Tibet and the Himalayas.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Willock, Nicole, Old Dominion University, nwillock@odu.edu

Chair - Bogin, Benjamin, Skidmore College, bbogin@skidmore.edu

Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture Unit

Call:

The Tillich Unit will host 2 sessions this year:

- Tillich believed the arts create symbols for a level of reality, which cannot be reached any other way. In Tillich's theology of culture, art occupies an important position as a cultural formation that can impart unconditional meaning. This panel session welcomes scholars using the work of Tillich or correlational theology to understand the arts in contemporary culture. Presentations on the visual arts, music, film, performance art and other contemporary artistic expressions are welcome.
- We will also sponsor a book panel on, *The Religion of White Supremacy in the United States*, by Eric Weed (Rowman and Littlefield). *The Religion of White Supremacy in the United States* is a theo-historical account of race in America. Based on Paul Tillich's idea of ultimate concern, Eric Weed argues that white supremacy is a religion in the United States. In showing the ultimacy of white supremacy, Weed also argues that this form of religion qualifies as demonic based on Tillich's formulation. While the book is shaped by Tillich, it also employs other disciplines, including American History and Critical Whiteness Studies. Direct responses to this book are welcome.

Mission Statement:

This Unit fosters scholarship and scholarly exchanges that analyze, criticize, and interpret the thought or impact of Paul Tillich (1886–1965) and that use his thought — or use revisions of or reactions against his thought — to deal with contemporary issues in theology, religion, ethics, or the political, social, psychotherapeutic, scientific, or artistic spheres of human culture. We cooperate with the North American Paul Tillich Society (a Related Scholarly Organization of the AAR), which is linked with the German, French, and other Tillich societies. Papers at our sessions are published in the Society's quarterly Bulletin without prejudice to their also appearing elsewhere.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Stahl, Devan, Michigan State University, devanstahl@gmail.com

Chair - Ray, Stephen G., Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, stephen.ray@garrett.edu

Traditions of Eastern Late Antiquity Unit

Call:

We propose three panels for 2018:

- “Hatin’ on Jesus” in the East
We welcome paper proposals that explore how non-Christian religious communities in Eastern Late Antiquity understood, accepted, rejected, polemicized, parodied or resisted the person or idea of Jesus. We would also welcome papers on how marginal or minority Christian communities in the non-Roman East reacted to, polemicized against or incorporated such critiques. (90 mins)
- Parody, Polemics, and Wordplay through Scriptural Interpretation
Together we propose an invited panel that focuses on Parody, Polemics and Wordplay through Scriptural Interpretation across religious communities in the (very) Late Ancient East and into Early Islam. Co-sponsored with the Quran Unit and the Traditions of Eastern Late Antiquity Unit.
- Online Resources and Traditions of Eastern Late Antiquity
This joint session with the SBL's Digital Humanities group will include both a selection of invited papers and proposals. We are accepting papers that explore online resources relating to traditions and literature in Syriac, Hebrew, Aramaic, Iranian, etc. We are especially interested in proposals that analyze these resources with an eye toward imagining the discipline in a digital age. We are also interested in papers exploring the use of social media for contemporary group identity among communities and diasporas that stem from Eastern Late Antiquity (such as Parsi, Mandaean, and Yezidis, as well as Jews and Christians in and from Iraq and Iran), and how they represent themselves and their traditions online. Co-sponsored with SBL's Digital Humanities group.

Mission Statement:

This program unit focused on Late Antiquity in the East aims to provide a home for the study of religious traditions that are rooted in Mesopotamia, Persia, and western Asia, particularly those parts that were outside the Roman cultural reach such as Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, and Mandaeism. While the unit will focus on late antiquity, many of these traditions, and particularly their extant texts come to us from much later periods, and this scholarly issue will be part of our discussions. In addition, many of the traditions that were born in this time and place also spread to other parts of the world, and the study of them in those forms and contexts also has a place within this program unit, as does investigation of their response to the rise of Islam in the region. In addition, this unit's focus is not exclusively on those traditions that developed uniquely in this region, but also those which, when transplanted there, had significant evolutions in that milieu that differ from their counterparts in other times and places (e.g. Christianity, Judaism). We likewise encourage research which focuses on the interaction between the various communities and traditions of this place and time.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

E-mail with Attachment (proposal is in attachment, not in body of e-mail)

Chair - Koltun-Fromm, Naomi, Haverford College, nkoltunf@haverford.edu

Chair - McGrath, James, Butler University, jfmgrat@butler.edu

Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogy Unit

Call:

The Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogy Unit seeks to provide a forum for exploring transformative scholarship and pedagogy across religious traditions, scholarly disciplines, and institutional types, challenging the traditional boundaries between scholarship and activism while experimenting with alternative approaches to teaching and the production of knowledge. This includes learning and research in conversation with activist communities, non-academic partners, and others who might challenge and expand traditional academic epistemologies, methods, and boundaries. For the 2018 AAR meeting, we invite proposals for a two-hour workshop on implicit bias that builds the capacity of participants to recognize, understand, and develop skills for reducing unconscious bias in the classroom (perhaps with relevance to other higher education pursuits such as faculty recruitment and retention, faculty and staff evaluation, etc.). While many institutions populated by AAR members offer implicit bias trainings, many others do not; such trainings can be part of an ecosystem of bias reduction that makes learning more equitable. We welcome proposals for a two-hour, hands-on workshop designed to help participants begin to build their own bias-reduction toolkit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to provide a forum for exploring transformative scholarship and pedagogy across religious traditions and scholarly disciplines, challenging the traditional boundaries between scholarship and activism while experimenting with alternative approaches to teaching and the production of knowledge.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Ray, Darby, Bates College, dray3@bates.edu

Transnational Religious Expression: Between Asia and North America Seminar

Call:

Our seminar's second year will critically engage the theme of Border Crossings: Mutability & Multidirectionality. We invite analyses of specific case studies with respect to the movement of people, institutions, spaces, ideas, practices, and materials between Asia and North America. Potential topics include migration, missions, pilgrimage, religious tourism, diaspora communities, conversion, and multiple religious identities. We particularly encourage theoretical engagement with respect to larger multidirectional processes and issues of mutability in transnational religion that complicate institutional, national, cultural, spatial, and ethnic boundaries as religious ideas, technologies, and actors move between Asia and North America. Papers will be posted to the AAR website in advance of the annual meeting, so the seminar can focus on discussion among participants and observers. Submissions by committed seminar participants will be given preference before final selection, but this is an open call, and we welcome all potential contributors. Please contact the seminar chairs with any questions.

Mission Statement:

Our seminar aims to bring together scholars working on different traditions and regions to participate in a sustained conversation about the translation, transmission, and transformation of religious expressions between Asia and North America. We are interested in ideas and practices that exceed institutional, national, cultural, and ethnic boundaries, and use “transnational” to call attention to the boundaries crossed and re-crossed—through mediated and contested spaces—between different cultural contexts as religious ideas, technologies, and actors move across the Pacific and around the globe. In this way, “transnational” is meant to be both a descriptor of the complex realities of religious transmission and a promising analytical space to address related processes such as transculturation, adaptation, exploitation, appropriation, (de)territorialization, and globalization. Many of these processes erode the ground on which normative national and religious taxonomies depend, and we are interested on sharing theories and approaches less oriented toward reifying discrete traditions and more capable of analyzing the hybridity and fluidity of religious expression in the global age.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Carmichael, Lucas, University of Chicago, balance@uchicago.edu

Chair - Gayley, Holly, University of Colorado, gayley@colorado.edu

Vatican II Studies Unit

Call:

- **The Reception of the Second Vatican Council in the Americas**
The Vatican II Studies Group invites contributions which explore the unique ways that the orientations of the council's teachings were received into theology and practice, and took flesh in post-Vatican II Catholicism in the lives of the peoples and in the contribution of thinkers and leaders (theologians and not only) located in North, South, Central Americas. This includes the migration of European theologies into the social and political contexts of the Americas; the reception of particular council documents or themes; the intersection between theological reception and social-political expectations of the early post-Vatican II period in the Americas.
- **Fifty Years On: The Revolution of 1968 and the Interpretation of Vatican II**
The Vatican II Studies Group invites contributions which explore the relationship between Vatican II and the Catholic contribution to the "Sixties" culminating with 1968. The interpretation and reception of the council took place in an era of rapid social upheaval and change. To what extent did the social revolution of 1968 lead to interpretations of Vatican II, as symbolized in the meeting of CELAM at Medellin, the reception of *Humanae Vitae*, reflections on the war in Vietnam, the Cold War, and in resistance to the nuclear arms race? How were such interpretations reconciled with the teaching of the council, concluded just three years earlier? How did Vatican II help influence "revolutionary" thinking in many places and contexts? How did 1968 influence the interpretation of Vatican II in different contexts? What did the events of 1968 mean for some protagonists of Vatican II (for example, Joseph Ratzinger and Hans Kueng) and their interpretations of the council? What was the role of 1968 in the formation of ecclesial divisions within post-Vatican II Catholicism?

Mission Statement:

From 2012 to 2016, this Unit will pay scholarly attention to the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), one of the most significant events in the history of the Catholic Church — an event that had wide-ranging implications for other faiths, other Christian churches, and for the wider world alike. This Unit has a double focus. On one hand, we focus on deepening the understanding of the history of Vatican II, its link with movements of renewal in Catholic theology and in the Church in the decades prior to Vatican II, the history of the reception of the Council, and the redaction history of the different documents of the Council. On the other hand, we have a strong theological focus and will pay attention both to hermeneutical issues connected to methods of interpreting conciliar teaching and to the interpretation of the most important documents of Vatican II in the year of their anniversary, starting with the liturgical constitution (1963–2013). By looking more closely at the past, our Unit hopes to promote conciliarity and synodality in the Christian churches in the present.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Clifford, Catherine E., Saint Paul University, cclifford@ustpaul.ca

Video Gaming and Religion Seminar

Call:

Next year the Video game and Religion Seminar will, for our single session, host a prearranged roundtable on Religion and Cultural Heritage in Asia.

Mission Statement:

Just like films helped to illuminate and expose the religiosity of the twentieth century, video games now depict the religious within the twenty-first century. "Video games" describes electronic forms of play across all platforms, from personal computers, consoles to mobile devices. Often in the religious studies video gaming is not taken seriously. We aim to correct this by establishing and maintaining a multidisciplinary network for the discussion of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of religion and video gaming. We will collect, systematize and develop the various recent multidisciplinary approaches to research and teaching. We have two specific deliverables for the end of the five-year period. First, we will craft an edited volume, tentatively titled *Video Games and Religion: Methods and Approaches* that will bring together the cutting-edge work of leading scholars in this emerging field. Second, we will publish our results from our seminar in a special issue of the online journal *Gamevironments*.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

Other

For more information please contact Gregory Grieve (UNC Greensboro, gpgrieve@uncg.edu) or Kerstin Radde-Antweiler (Universität Bremen, radde@uni-bremen.de).

Chair - Radde-Antweiler, Kerstin, University of Bremen, radde@uni-bremen.de

Chair - Grieve, Gregory, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, gpgrieve@uncg.edu

Wesleyan Studies Unit

Call:

- **Health and Healing in Wesleyan and Methodist Traditions**
Anticipating the publication of volume 32 of the Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley, *Medical and Health Writings*, the Wesleyan Studies Unit calls for papers that examine issues about health and healing from the perspectives of Wesleyan and Methodist communities. Papers might address (but are not limited to) any of the following issues: John Wesley's writings on health and medicine; Charles Wesley's use of healing images in his poetry; activities and writings related to health and healing on the part of Methodist clergy and lay participants; development of Methodist medical services including hospitals; medical work as part of Methodist missionary enterprises.
- **Ecology and Creation in Wesleyan and Methodist Perspectives**
The Wesleyan Studies Unit calls for papers that offer Wesleyan and Methodist perspectives on ecology and creation. Papers might address (but are not limited to) any of the following: John Wesley's writings on the redemption of "the brute creation"; the creation itself as the subject of redemption in Charles Wesley's poetic corpus; Methodist encampments as loci for the appreciation of divine creation; the relevance of Wesleyan views of creation and ecologies to contemporary liberation perspectives; and insights arising from the volume *Wesleyan Perspectives on the New Creation* (ed. M. Douglas Meeks, 2004).
- **Lutheran and Wesleyan/Methodist faith traditions have both experienced strained unity, if not division, at regional, national and global levels over issues about human sexuality as well as other contemporary issues. We invite papers that explore how these two traditions experience and deal with these issues, and address the manner in which historic, moral, doctrinal, and polity commitments (including ecclesiologies) offer different nuances to these tensions. We are especially interested in papers that address this from a global, queer or other perspectives with attention to the themes of holiness and unity. (For a joint session with the Martin Luther and Global Lutheranism Unit)**

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to promote the critical understanding and appropriation of Wesleyan traditions. Our sessions are purposefully structured to encourage not only historical/sociological studies, but also theological reflection, critique, and extension. We understand Wesleyan traditions to include Methodist, Holiness, and other related strands of Christian tradition.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Campbell, Ted A., Southern Methodist University, tedc@smu.edu

Chair - Colon-Emeric, Edgardo, Duke University, ecolonemic@div.duke.edu

Western Esotericism Unit

Call:

- **Esotericism and the Transhuman**
The “referential corpus” of esotericism, comprising writings by late medieval and early modern authors (Ficino, Pico, Reuchlin, Agrippa, et al.), has often been related to the development of “Renaissance humanism”. However, the humanism of these key figures was one that emphasized the divine potential of humanity, its ability ultimately to transcend the limitations of bodily existence. In recent decades, an ideology of transhumanism has developed around the techno-utopian promises of life extension, artificial intelligence, and a coming technological singularity. It is not surprising that a convergence with old and contemporary esoteric ideas is taking place. This session will explore historical and contemporary relationships between esotericism and the transhuman, including: ideas on improving and overcoming human nature, esoteric speculations on the technological singularity, and the interactions between transhumanist and esoteric milieus.
- **Out of this World: Extraterrestrial Esotericisms**
Extraterrestrial beings get entwined with esoteric religious ideas in a variety of ways. C.S. Lewis drew on medieval cosmology to create a fantasy with theological dimensions in his space trilogy starting with *Out of the Silent Planet* (1938), in which the planetary angels were depicted as creatures of light inhabiting interplanetary space. Half a century earlier, Madame Blavatsky’s *Isis Unveiled* (1877) had already hinted at an alien role in the establishment of life on earth, while in the mid twentieth century, L. Ron Hubbard confirmed the notion in a cosmic theology holding in part that the immortal spirits of certain aliens adhere to humans, causing spiritual harm. Even in the past decade, Louis Farrakhan of the Nation of Islam re-conceptualized the wheel in Ezekiel as an actual spaceship hovering over the earth. This session seeks to illuminate connections between esoteric religion, science, and fictions of life in outer space, and invites papers exploring all varieties of links between heavenly spirits and extraterrestrials.
- **Revelatory Dreaming in Esoteric Religions**
Attention to dreams, including rules and guides for the interpretation of dreams, and oneiric techniques enabling active dream cultivation, are common globally in many religions, and esotericism has been especially rich in them. In late nineteenth- and twentieth-century occultism, the astral or inner planes were understood to be a place where subconscious states converged with higher consciousness; one might accidentally wander out on the astral in dreams, but also deliberately enter them through ritual work. In *Applied Magic*, Dion Fortune describes the inner planes as the planes of “causation for this world of form and matter”. It is well known that Carl Jung actively sought both to induce and interpret transformative dream experiences, but perhaps less commonly known that Immanuel Swedenborg kept a dream diary in 1743-44 believing that his dreams contained spiritual messages for him. This session invites papers

considering the esoteric use of lucid active dreaming and dream interpretation through time and across cultures.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to reflect and further stimulate the current process — reflected in the recent creation of new teaching programs, international associations, journals, book series, and reference works — of professionalization and scholarly recognition of Western esotericism as a new area of research in the study of religion. For more information on the field, see the websites of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism (ESSWE, <http://www.esswe.org>), the Association for the Study of Esotericism (ASE, <http://www.aseweb.org>), and the Center for the History of Hermetic Philosophy and Related Currents at the University of Amsterdam (<http://amsterdamhermetica.nl>). Information about the academic journal Aries and the Aries Book Series can be found on the website of Brill Academic Publishers (<http://www.brill.com/aries>; and <http://www.brill.com/publications/aries-book-series>).

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Fanger, Claire, Rice University, claire@celestiscuria.org

Chair - Aspren, Egil, Stockholm University, egil.aspren@rel.su.se

Wildcard Sessions

Call:

Wildcard sessions are intended to be experimental, creative, or exploratory sessions that address an area of interest that does not naturally fall within the purview of an existing Program Unit. These sessions offer members direct access to the Annual Meeting program outside of the normal Program Unit structure.

Guidelines for Wildcard sessions:

- Wildcard sessions are accepted through PAPERS only.
- Wildcard sessions must use one of the prearranged session proposal formats (papers session or roundtable).
- Make sure the wildcard session does not cover an area already covered by an existing Program Unit. If a proposal fits within an established Program Unit's mission, the proposal will be forwarded to that Unit. If a proposal is submitted as a Wildcard session and also to another Program Unit, it will be eliminated from consideration as a Wildcard.

The Program Committee evaluates all Wildcard Session proposals. Notification of program acceptance will be announced by **April 1, 2018**.

Anonymity:

Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit

Call:

- *Sisters in the Wilderness: Classic Landmark Work Twenty-Five Years Later*
This year marks twenty-five years since the publication of Delores S. Williams' *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk* (Orbis, 1993). Drawing on the biblical figure of Hagar mother of Ishmael, cast into the desert by Abraham and Sarah, but protected by God, Williams finds a prototype for the struggle of African diasporic women. Hagar, an African slave, homeless exile, surrogate mother, serves as metaphor for an image of survival and defiance appropriate to Black women today. To commemorate the anniversary, we invite papers that address the interfaith/interreligious theological significance of this groundbreaking text then and today, and its role in the formation of womanist theological perspectives, epistemologies, methodologies, and pedagogies. Co-sponsored with the Black Theology Unit, the Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit, the Women of Color, Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Unit, SBL Feminist Biblical Hermeneutics, and SBL Women in the Biblical World.
- #MeToo: Sexual Trauma and Sexual Shaming in the Era of #45
Though Tarana Burke, creator of #metoo, designed the campaign in 2007 to promote solidarity between women of color survivors, the popularization of #metoo a decade later eclipses Burke's early efforts making the face of the movement against sexual trauma: white women. When Time magazine raised #metoo as the 2017 theme and named "The Silence Breakers" person of the year, the omission of Tarana Burke from the cover exposes how media often re-traumatizes and renders particular survivors invisible. The well-publicized sexual misconduct assaults pervasive in church institutions and faith communities where authorities move pastoral pedophiles from congregation to congregation, and the #metoo campaign has exposed men in the worlds of film and TV, sports, food, news media and publishing, academia, technology, and politics, including the current sitting U.S. President. This session invites papers that address sexual trauma and sexual shaming, including the way society weights trauma and race, and the need for therapy and pastoral care: the culture of violence disproportionately targets girls and women of color. Questions of identity, methodology, and ethics using psychological, theological, and religious perspectives animate these discussions in both activist and academic circles. For co-sponsorship with the Psychology, Culture, and Religion Unit and the Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit.
- Methodologies, Epistemologies, and Ontologies: Doing Womanist Theory and Praxis
With the growth of disciplines and our changing world, this session questions how identities, philosophies, and methodologies continue to develop over time, giving voice to the intersectional experiences of women with particular attention to the role of womanist thought. Moving from binary gender constructs is emerging as part of many conversations in women and religious studies. How do we unearth different ways of

knowing and locations of doing womanist engagement in its multiple iterations in the academy and the world? What are options regarding directions that womanist thought, theory, and praxis is moving? What is the nature of the various methodologies, and intersections, and what are the parameters for who gets to use this vocabulary. This session invites persons to propose a round table or panel. Papers will be posted prior to the meeting, with presenters offering a summary of their paper to allow time for greater dialog. Co-sponsored paper session with the Lesbian-Feminisms and Religion Unit and the Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a forum for religious scholarship that engages theoretically and methodologically the four-part definition of a Womanist as coined by Alice Walker. We nurture interdisciplinary scholarship, encourage interfaith dialogue, and seek to engage scholars and practitioners in fields outside the study of religion. We are particularly concerned with fostering scholarship that bridges theory and practice and addresses issues of public policy in church and society.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)

Chair - Fry Brown, Teresa L., Emory University, rev_drt@bellsouth.net

Chair - Kirk-Duggan, Cheryl A., Shaw University, cduggan@shawu.edu

Women and Religion Unit

Call:

The Women and Religion Unit invites individual papers and panel proposals from a variety of religious and cultural traditions exploring women's experiences in local and transnational contexts. We encourage the use of alternate and accessible presentation formats.

We are particularly interested in proposals related to one of the following themes:

- In keeping with the 2018 AAR presidential theme, we invite proposals engaging women, religion, and public/political theologies; the possibilities and perils of being a female public intellectual; and/or activist scholarship and the politics of recognition
- 2018 marks the 25th anniversary of the 1993 ecumenical "Reimagining" Conference held in Minneapolis, MN. We invite proposals revisiting Reimagining as well as broader ecumenical and global conferences and conversations around women and religion, such as the United Nations Decade for Women and its goals, the World Conferences on Women, the 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, International Women's Day and the Parliament of the World's Religions, critiques of Western feminism, interreligious and interfaith dialogue and activism from feminist perspectives, etc.
- In keeping with the AAR's 2018 meeting location in Denver, CO, we invite proposals engaging the following Colorado themes: sanctuary churches and immigration rights, particularly as they impact women and children; human trafficking; women, militarization, and/or military chaplaincy; women, gender, and the category of the religious "nones"; women, religion, and "conscious capitalism"; women, gender, and the wellness industry, including critical perspectives on "women's spirituality" and appropriation of religious traditions
- Women, religion, and environmentalism: "green state" policies and politics, eco-theology, and ecological ethics
- Women and clergy formation, or women and/as religious leaders
- Gender, Religion, and Violence
We seek papers that address topics such as genocidal violence and the construction of masculinities, rape, and sexual violence as tools in conflicts and genocide, religiously inflected and symbolic sexual violence, and the targeting and persecution of gender and sexual minorities. Co-sponsorship with the Comparative Approaches to Religion Unit, the Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Unit, the Women and Religion Unit, and the Men, Masculinities and Religion Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to promote inclusivity and excellence in scholarship. We have been intentional about including participants and presenters from interdisciplinary approaches and we encourage nontraditional ways of sharing scholarly work on women in religion. In the process

of making selections for Annual Meeting sessions, we work collaboratively with other program units to promote scholarly conversations across fields and methodologies. We are committed to providing an inclusive scholarly environment where new voices can be heard and critical analyses of women, gender and religion can be advanced.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Pae, K. Christine, Denison University, paec@denison.edu

Chair - May, Stephanie, First Parish, Wayland, MA, smay@uuwayland.org

Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Unit

Call:

This Unit fosters intellectual exchange in the fields of religious studies and theology as they are developing in diverse communities of color from a gendered analysis. While the AAR features Program Units from diverse communities of color, we provide a space for conversation between communities of color. This Unit does not assume a prior “women of color” identity, but centers a woman of color analytic that deconstructs the intersecting logics of gender and race. At the same time, we do not hold to a “post-identity” framework and are also concerned with the status of women of color in the academy, the politics of pedagogy, and the relationship between women-of-color-centered activism and scholarship. Understanding identity as performative and shifting, we make the very category of “women of color” itself a site for political and intellectual engagement.

As women of color scholars, teachers, and activists we seek proposals on:

- Women of Color responses to the Women’s March on Washington (2017)
- Women of color protest and radical body politics
- Politics of women of color mothering and other-mothering
- Women of color "street" theology
- Black Lives Matter activism among women of color
- Trauma, pedagogy, and women of color ways of knowing
- Women of color indigenous religious practices/practices of hope

- *Sisters in the Wilderness: Classic Landmark Work Twenty-Five Years Later*
This year marks twenty-five years since the publication of Delores S. Williams’ *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk* (Orbis, 1993). Drawing on the biblical figure of Hagar mother of Ishmael, cast into the desert by Abraham and Sarah, but protected by God, Williams finds a prototype for the struggle of African diasporic women. Hagar, an African slave, homeless exile, surrogate mother, serves as metaphor for an image of survival and defiance appropriate to Black women today. To commemorate the anniversary, we invite papers that address the interfaith/interreligious theological significance of this groundbreaking text then and today, and its role in the formation of womanist theological perspectives, epistemologies, methodologies, and pedagogies. Co-sponsored with the Black Theology Unit, the Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit, the Women of Color, Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Unit, SBL Feminist Biblical Hermeneutics, and SBL Women in the Biblical World.

Mission Statement:

This Unit fosters intellectual exchange in the fields of religious studies and theology as they are developing in diverse communities of color from a gendered analysis. While the AAR features Program Units from diverse communities of color, we provide a space for conversation

between communities of color. This Unit does not assume a prior “women of color” identity, but centers a woman of color analytic that deconstructs the intersecting logics of gender and race. At the same time, we do not hold to a “post-identity” framework and are also concerned with the status of women of color in the academy, the politics of pedagogy, and the relationship between women-of-color-centered activism and scholarship. Understanding identity as performative and shifting, we make the very category of “women of color” itself a site for political and intellectual engagement.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Chair - Krishnamurti, Sailaja, Saint Mary's University, sailaja.krishnamurti@smu.ca

Chair - Marshall Turman, Eboni, Yale University, eboni.marshall-turman@yale.edu

World Christianity Unit

Call:

The World Christianity Unit invites proposals on the following topics:

- Proposals that critically examine the long term global legacies and transnational implications for World Christianity of liberation movements across the globe emerging from Latin America, especially on the 50th anniversary of the Medellín statement (1968-2018), especially from interdisciplinary perspectives with a particular attention on:
 - Global impact, as well as the ecumenical, social, and political implications of Medellín on liberation movements impacting Christians in Africa, Asia, Oceania, Europe, and North America beyond Latin American Christianity, especially on the question of defining and shaping communal, societal, political, and ecclesial relations and dynamics;
 - impact and implications on transnational postcolonial and decolonial Christian movements beyond Latin America in other geographical regions;
 - the diverse and pluralistic dimensions of liberation movements with focus on the global, postcolonial, indigenous/first peoples, sociological, gender, sexuality, ecumenical, or interreligious implications of Medellín; or
 - proposals that offer creative and innovative re-thinking on the global significance or transnational implications of liberation movements from Latin America in the 1960s.

- **Method and Theory in World Christianity: Reassessing Our Scholarly Toolbox**
While colloquialisms in the study of World Christianity now exist that illustrate recent shifts in location (the centre of gravity has shifted South), demography (a largely non-Western religion), and type (enter Pentecostalism), what does current research project for the future and how are methods and theories (old and new) being used to break new ground? This panel seeks innovative proposals that go beyond the previous generation of scholarship and ask: what methodological and theoretical tools can we add or recover in order to better understand the past, present, and future of World Christianity. We especially welcome papers that offer innovations in material religion, quantitative methods, historical methods and archive materials, digital media and online religion, and theories related to migration, nationalism, networks, and generational studies.

- **Rethinking Middle Eastern Christians in the 21st Century: Movements, Migrations, and the Future**
Many Middle Eastern countries have faced political stress in the twenty-first century, which has included the Iraq War (2003), the Arab Spring (post-2010), the Syrian Civil War (since 2011), and the ongoing struggle of Palestinians against occupation. Middle Eastern Christian communities with long historical roots in the region are adapting to the circumstances in new ways; the circumstances of warfare, social reform, and

political change are faced by Christian communities with new technologies of social media, connecting them to international participants of many sorts, such that local matters involve remote agents. In these globalized conditions, Christian communities of the Middle East and their emigrant counterparts abroad are experiencing change. The Middle Eastern Christianity Unit and the World Christianity Unit are inviting paper proposals that address contemporary change involving Middle Eastern Christians. Proposals may focus on any Middle Eastern Christian community (whether in situ, or abroad) from any academic field of study. Successful proposals will provide a clear thesis, identify specific sources of study, and comment on the relevant theories and methodologies of the analysis. While the topic of the paper may be narrow, the argument should aim to capture a sense of a broader current “outlook” among an identifiable Middle Eastern Christian group or groups—whether it be a church denomination (e.g., Maronites), an organization (e.g., Middle East Council of Churches), an immigrant community, or a social movement.

- **Decolonization as Healing**

With a wide range of other units, we plan to co-sponsor a session on the theme of decolonization as healing, recognizing that colonization in Africa and in other parts of our world has resulted in both historical and ongoing threats to health and wellbeing. We are looking for papers that address facets of this theme, including but not limited to: “Place, Land, and Environmental Degradation,” “Decolonization/Restoration of Identities,” “Vocabularies and Pragmatic Applications of Rituals and Ceremonies,” “Reclaiming the Past, Imagining the Future,” and “Tradition as Healer”. Co-sponsored with the Religions, Medicines and Healing; African Diaspora Religions, African Religions; Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society; Body and Religion; Indigenous Religious Traditions; Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society; Native Traditions in the Americas; Religions in the Latina/o Americas; Religion in South Asia, Religion in Southeast Asia; and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism; and World Christianity Units. Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the Call for Papers, and will speak to its broader implications for African American religious history. This session is a panel. Please submit a proposal for a paper or presentation. If your proposal is chosen, your paper will be circulated ahead of the conference and you’ll be asked to give a brief (5-7 minute) summary of the paper during the conference session.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to explore the intercultural, inter-confessional, and interreligious dynamics of Christianity as a world religion, bringing into conversation scholars in the disciplines of history, mission studies, ecumenical studies, theology, sociology of religion, anthropology of religion, and religious studies.

Anonymity: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:

PAPERS

As a rule, we use anonymous submissions via PAPERS and adhere to this conscientiously. Exceptions include special sessions, e.g. author-meets-critics sessions and some co-sponsored panels.

Leadership:

Chair - Tan, Jonathan, Case Western Reserve University, jonathan@jonathantan.org

Chair - Williams, Corey, Leiden University, c.l.williams@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Yoga in Theory and Practice Unit

Call:

The Yoga in Theory and Practice unit seeks individual paper, papers session, or roundtable proposals on the topic of yoga in theory and practice using a variety of methodological approaches, including sociology, anthropology, history, philosophy, and social and cultural studies. We prefer complete session submissions rather than individual paper proposals whenever possible. You are encouraged to contact the individuals listed next to each suggested topic for more information about that topic or to contact the co-chairs to suggest other potential topics.

Suggested topics include:

- Theory and Practice of Yoga and Bodily Disciplines in India and China
We are taking the term “yoga” in a broad sense, to include bodily disciplines, hygienic regimens, inner alchemy, breathing techniques, body maps, pursuit of physical immortality, etc. Approaches can be historical, descriptive, theoretical, etc. The goal is to begin an informed exchanged of information between scholars working on Indian yoga traditions and those working on comparable practices in China. Comparative proposals are welcome, as are proposals focusing on a single work, lineage, set of techniques, etc. from either India or China. Co-sponsored session with Indian and Chinese Religions Compared Unit, the Daoist Studies Unit, the Tantric Studies Unit, the Yoga in Theory and Practice Unit, and the Yogacara Studies Unit.
(Dan Lusthaus, lusthaus@fas.harvard.edu)
(Michael Allen, msa2b@virginia.edu)
- Yoga Church: Yoga Communities with Religious Identities
(Christa Schwind, christaschwind@gmail.com)
- New Directions in Yoga Studies
(Seth Powell, sethpowell@g.harvard.edu)
- Proto Yoga in the Vedas
(Stuart Ray Sarbacker, stuart.sarbacker@oregonstate.edu)
- Yoga and Ritual
(Seth Powell, sethpowell@g.harvard.edu)

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to elucidate the religious and sectarian representations of yoga in South Asian history and the profoundly fascinating contemporary yoga culture that has emerged in the past century. Among other topics that are addressed in our Unit is the emergence of modern yoga out of the encounter between Indian and European cultures in the late nineteenth and early

twentieth century. In connection with this, it examines the relative pervasiveness of spiritual and religious ideologies in manifest or latent forms within the contemporary yoga scene, and the overarching sociological relevance of yoga within global culture. We also examine changing paradigms with respect to the nature and function of yoga in the larger South Asian religious context. Our goal is to provide a venue in which the body of scholars working in this area can collectively evaluate this extremely timely material. We actively pursue scholars from Europe, Asia, and other areas that have worked at length on these issues, so as to bring an important international component to the Unit.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Jain, Andrea, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, andrjain@iupui.edu

Chair - Borkatky-Varma, Sravana, University of North Carolina Wilmington, borkatkyvarmas@uncw.edu

Yogācāra Studies Unit

Call:

The Yogācāra Studies Unit is pleased to announce a call for papers for the 2018 Annual Meeting in Denver. We have one dedicated panel and can co-sponsor a second if another group is willing.

To date we have received three proposals for a text panel:

- The Mahāyāna-saṃgraha
(Douglas Duckworth: duckworth@temple.edu)
- Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra Chapter Two
(John Dunne: dunne@wisc.edu)
- The Bodhisattvabhūmi
Paul Hackett: ph2046@columbia.edu
Anyone interested in participating should contact the panel coordinator. This panel will follow the standard format from previous meetings: 7-8 minute presentations designed to stimulate discussion on issues relating to the text, followed by close reading of versions in Asian languages (Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan, etc.) and expanded discussion by attendees. Copies of the selected text will be placed in a Dropbox folder for those who plan to attend.

Suggestions for co-sponsored panels:

- Yogācāra's Influence on Korean Buddhism
(Charles Muller: acmuller@l.u-tokyo.ac.jp)
- Theory and Practice of Yoga and Bodily Disciplines in India and China
We are taking the term "yoga" in a broad sense, to include bodily disciplines, hygienic regimens, inner alchemy, breathing techniques, body maps, pursuit of physical immortality, etc. Approaches can be historical, descriptive, theoretical, etc. The goal is to begin an informed exchanged of information between scholars working on Indian yoga traditions and those working on comparable practices in China. Comparative proposals are welcome, as are proposals focusing on a single work, lineage, set of techniques, etc. from either India or China. Co-sponsored session with Indian and Chinese Religions Compared Unit, the Daoist Studies Unit, the Tantric Studies Unit, and the Yogacara Studies Unit.
Dan Lusthaus, Harvard University (lusthaus@fas.harvard.edu)
Michael Allen, Univ. of Virginia (msa2b@virginia.edu)

Mission Statement:

The Yogācāra tradition within Buddhism provides the seminal basis for many forms of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Yogācāra was the preeminent Buddhist school for many centuries in India, East Asia, and Tibet. Even after its relative decline as a distinct tradition, its teachings continued to provide the basis for both the theory and practice of subsequent Buddhist Mahāyāna schools throughout Asia, and it has seen a resurgence in the 20th and 21st century in Asia, including in China, Hong Kong, Japan, and among Tibetans.

Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:

PAPERS

E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)

E-mail with Attachment (proposal is in attachment, not in body of e-mail)

Chair - Tzohar, Roy, Tel-Aviv University, roytzo@post.tau.ac.il