



Fostering Excellence In the Study of Religion

American Academy of Religion

In This Issue

Greetings from the American Academy of Religion! This edition of the AAR e-Bulletin is full of important information about our upcoming Annual Meeting in Chicago. Our Executive Staff, our Program Unit Chairs, and our Board have worked hard to deliver our members another wonderful Annual Meeting. By all indications, the Chicago gathering is poised for success. We received a record number of paper proposals, we have added new Program Units, and earlier this week our registration numbers topped 5,000. So take a look at the items listed here and also visit the AAR's website as you plan your meeting.

Look forward to seeing you in Chicago!

Sincerely yours

Jack Fitzmier

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Account Information

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Important Dates

October 31:
2009 Annual Meeting
Registration Opens

November 1-3:
2008 Annual Meeting in
Chicago, IL

ANNUAL MEETING

Annual Meeting Program Book

The online [Program Book](#) is continually updated with last minute changes, so check it often. The complete *Program Book* will be inserted into the tote bag. Redeem your tote bag ticket that came with your name badge at the Tote Bag counter in the Lower Level of the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel to receive the bag. The print *Program Book* went to press on October 3; last minute changes will be posted in the online *Program Book* and on the Program Updates board in the Registration area.

Name badges

Name badges are in the mail for preregistrants. Pick up a badge holder and your tote bag onsite and head directly to sessions and exhibits. If you have not received your badge before leaving for Chicago, you can pick one up at Registration, in the Lower Level of the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel. If you lost your name badge, a replacement costs \$5 at the Name Badges registration booth.

Welcome Reception and AAR Members Party

Join your colleagues for a wine and cheese reception on Friday, October 31, 7:00–9:00 pm. Light jazz and a relaxed atmosphere makes it a great place to catch up with friends new and old. On Saturday night from 9:00 pm–12:00 am, we'll turn it up a notch at the Members Party — bring your dancing shoes!

\$250 Shopping Spree

Visit the Exhibit Hall on Friday, October 31 from 7:00–9:00 pm and get your Montréal postcard (available onsite) stamped at five of the eight participating exhibitors for a chance to win a \$250 shopping spree. The postcards and list of exhibitors will be available at the front of the Exhibit Hall. Drop off the postcard at the AAR booth (booth 501) and see some of the things that the 2009 Annual Meeting in Montréal has to offer!

Mentoring Lunch

The Status of Women in the Profession Committee is pleased to invite new scholars and graduate students to its Mentoring Luncheon (A2–137) during which time you will have the opportunity to connect with mid-level and senior women in the field. Anyone wishing to be a part of this event (as mentor or mentee) should contact SWP Committee member Nadia Lahutsky (n.lahutsky@tcu.edu) by October 26.

Going Green at the Annual Meeting

The AAR is taking steps to reduce its carbon footprint at the Annual Meeting. The tote bags are made out of 100 percent recycled plastic bottles. When you are ready to depart the Annual Meeting, please drop your name badge holder into a labeled bin so that it can be reused. All of the signs used at the meeting are made out of corn and vegetable by-products and will break down fast naturally. The Chicago Hilton Towers and Palmer House Hilton Hotels have recycling programs. Food left over at AAR functions will be donated to local food banks. AAR is committed to continuing these and other efforts to make the Annual Meeting a more sustainable enterprise in the future.

Lounges

We are pleased to offer a Prayer Room in the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel, Conference Room 4A; this space is reserved for people of all faiths who need a moment of prayer, quiet reflection, or meditation. Mothers needing a quiet place to nurse can find it in the Women's Lounge in the

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Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel, PDR Room 6 (child care is also available in the Chicago Hilton Towers. Reserve your child's space [online](#).) Students can enjoy the comforts of the Student Lounge in the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel, PDR Room 7.

Hungry at the Annual Meeting?

Chicago has a ton of a great places to eat, but if you are looking for something quick and easy, visit the food concessions area in the Northeast Hall on the Lower Level of the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel, behind Registration. Sandwiches, drinks, and snacks will be available during Exhibit Hall hours Saturday through Monday.

Things to Do in Chicago

Chicago has a wealth of sights, sounds, restaurants, and opportunities worth exploring. Here are a few you may want to consider: [Chicago Humanities Festival](#) is hosting several panels that might be of interest during the days of the Annual Meeting. Chicago History Museum offers free admission to AAR members who show their meeting badge at the door. Check out the [Catholic Chicago exhibit](#). The Smart Museum at the University of Chicago features an exhibit called [Idol Anxiety](#) examining theological and secular perspectives on how objects become idols. The final day of the exhibit is Sunday, November 2, so schedule your visit early in the meeting.

For those interested in seeing Chicago but who need to save a buck or two, check out *CNN.com*'s recent article on [Chicago on the cheap](#).

The Religion Major and Liberal Education

The AAR invites you to kick off the Annual Meeting by attending and participating in the special session, "The Religious Studies Major in a Post-9/11 World: New Challenges, New Opportunities." The session (A1-100) opens the Annual Meeting at 9:00 am. on Saturday in the Salon Room of the Palmer House Hilton Hotel. The 18-month study of the state of the religion major culminates at this session to discuss the "White Paper" the AAR Working Group produced and published in the October 2008 *Religious Studies News* (pages 21-25). At this session, working group members will summarize its findings and opportunities, with ample time for dialogue with those in attendance. We encourage all AAR members to attend.

Annual Meeting Job Center 2008

Registration for the [Annual Meeting Job Center](#) closes October 13. The Job Center is an efficient way for employers and candidates to communicate and participate in job interviews. Those who register by the deadline will receive full benefits. Job Postings advertisers and Annual Meeting Job Center employers can now view the online CVs of Job Center candidates. The CVs are organized according to subspecialty. To view the CVs, go to http://www.aarweb.org/Programs/Career_Services/CV/Review/orderid.asp.

Early Bird Registration and Housing for the 2009 AAR Annual Meeting opens on November 1!

Register early to receive a discount on your 2009 registration and have first crack at Annual Meeting housing! Early Bird registration is open only during the dates of the 2008 Annual Meeting, November 1–3. Early Bird registration is available online only. You can register online for the Early Bird discount at any Internet accessible computer around the world. If you are attending the 2008 Annual Meeting in Chicago, come by the AAR booth (booth 501), the free Cyber Café in the Exhibit Hall, or the self-serve registration kiosks at Registration. Housing is also available! You must be a renewed 2009 AAR member to register for the 2009 meeting at the discounted member price.

Public Radio's Speaking of Faith is Looking For Your Help

[Speaking of Faith](#), public radio's weekly conversation about religion, meaning, ethics and ideas is increasingly being adopted as an in-depth, free curriculum resource. They would like to hear from you how they might develop new resources to make *Speaking of Faith* an even more useful tool for your courses. They would like to invite you to participate in a focus group at the Annual Meeting in Chicago. This is not a sales meeting, but rather a chance to hear your voice and what is important to you as you select materials for use in your courses. You will receive an honorarium for your time. To learn more about the group, please email debbi@kievermarketing.com with your name, a phone number, and the subject areas you teach. And please pass along this invitation to colleagues attending the Annual Meeting.

Daylight Savings Time

Attendees are reminded that Daylight Savings Time will end during the Annual Meeting at 2 AM Sunday morning, November 2. Please move your clocks and watches back one hour before going to bed Saturday night.

MARTIN E. MARTY AWARD

The nomination deadline for the AAR's [Martin E. Marty](#) Award is January 30, 2009. The award recognizes extraordinary contributions to the public understanding of religion by those whose work speaks to the public as well as to scholars.

AAR ELECTION

You should have received notice of the electronic ballot for the 2008 AAR

elections a few weeks ago. The Vice President position is to be filled during this election. Each candidate has written her own [statement](#). (You will need to log in to use this page, using your surname, "[lname]," and member ID, "[aar_id].") The successful candidate will take office at the conclusion of the 2008 Annual Meeting. This is a wonderful opportunity to influence the governance of the AAR, so please cast your vote for the candidates. The election will close on Monday, October 20 at 11:59 pm EST.

IN THE FIELD

As you make your Annual Meeting plans, please remember to check [In the Field](#) for additional events that will be held during the Annual Meeting in Chicago. (You will need to log in to use this page, using your surname, "[lname]," and member ID, "[aar_id].")

AAR AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

The Committee on Teaching and Learning seeks nominations for the [AAR Award for Excellence in Teaching](#). Nominations of winners of campus awards, or any other awards, are encouraged. Procedures for the nomination process are outlined on the AAR website.

ESPECIALLY FOR STUDENTS

Nichole R. Phillips (2008–2009 AAR Student Director) would like to extend her heartiest congratulations to Carl S. Hughes, who has been chosen as the *From the Student Desk* Editor. *From the Student Desk* is a regular feature in *Religious Studies News*, the official news publication of our professional society. Carl is a doctoral student at Emory University with impressive writing and editing credentials. Out of an extremely competitive applicant pool, he was selected to serve a two-year term, 2009–2010. We hope you will join Nichole in congratulating Carl on a job well done!

AAR IS ON FACEBOOK

There is an AAR group on the social networking site, [Facebook](#). You are invited to join the "Student Members and Friends of the American Academy of Religion." This group is for past and current student members of the AAR. You must have a profile on *Facebook* to view or join the group. To join, please search for this group within *Facebook* and select the "request to join" button. Contact Director of Membership Development, [Myesha D. Jenkins](#) if you have questions. You do not need to make contact in order to join, but should make your request via *Facebook*.

