

November 2017 Annual Meeting News



We're just over a week away from our Annual Meeting in Boston, and we can't wait to see you there. Read on for some final announcements about just-added sessions, program highlights, and safety during the conference.

## New Sessions

In response to events that have occurred since the call for papers, we've added the following sessions:

**New!** **Varieties of Protest Experiences in the Age of Trump: Religious Studies and Direct Action in Charlottesville, St. Louis, and the NFL**

Saturday, 1–3:30 PM  
A18-244

**New!** **Puerto Rico and Maria: Histories and Vulnerabilities in the Eye of the Storm**

Sunday, 7–9 PM  
A19-407

**New!** **Sign up for Small-Group Conversation with Displaced Syrians or Iraqis Abroad**

Saturday and Sunday, 7 AM–12 PM



Using a [Shared Studios Portal](#), videoconference for 30 minutes with displaced Syrians or Iraqis abroad who want to talk with AAR members. The AAR's aim is to humanize the refugee crisis in

## In this Issue

[New Sessions](#)

[Making the Most of Your Meetings](#)

[Program Highlights and Notable Sessions](#)

[Student Programs](#)

[Safety and Security](#)

---

ways that inspire members to better educate their students and the broader public about its religious dimensions. Conversations will open with a prompt such as “What does home mean to you?”

By November 14, schedule an appointment for Saturday or Sunday between 7 AM and noon, at <https://www.sharedstudios.com/aar>. You will need to arrive 30 minutes ahead for an orientation. Please schedule only if you can punctually honor your commitment.

---

## Making the Most of Your Meeting

### Guides to the Annual Meeting

Check out the [Guide to the 2017 AAR Annual Meeting](#). For the veteran and first-time attendee, this guide has everything you need to know about preparing for the Annual Meeting. There is also an additional [Guide for New Members](#) that includes valuable information for international members as well.

### Mobile App

The free AARSBL17 Mobile App for Android and iOS is available for download using the links below.

iOS



Android



All other smart phones can use the web version:

A vertical promotional banner for UNC Press. The top section is black with 'UNC PRESS' in white. Below is a teal section with 'Save 40%' in white and yellow. The text continues: 'on our new and recent books in Religious Studies (and on any UNC Press book) — plus, if your order totals \$75.00, shipping is free!' in white and yellow.

**UNC PRESS**

**Save 40%**

on our new and recent books in **Religious Studies** (and on any UNC Press book) — plus, if your order totals \$75.00, **shipping is free!**

For all other devices  
**Web Version**

The app is chock-full of useful information: Use it to plan your conference schedule, add meetings, flag must-attend sessions, search for speakers, view maps, and find things to do and places to eat around Boston. Visit [here](#) to learn about all its available features.

## Program Highlights

### Focus on the Refugee Crisis

In addition to signing up for small-group conversations with Syrian refugees or internally displaced Iraqis, attendees can learn about the refugee crisis through other program events:

#### **Refugee Crisis Exhibit**

Exhibit Hall, Booth # 2707, adjacent to the AAR Booth

This exhibit brings moving visual and textual portraits illustrating the plight of millions of Syrian and Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons. The greatest humanitarian crisis since World War II calls for our informed response.

#### **Forcibly Displaced Syrians & Iraqis: What to Know and What You as a Religion Scholar Can Do**

Monday, 9–11:30 AM  
A20-153

The centerpiece of this session will be a video conversation with Syrian refugees and/or displaced Iraqis speaking live from an audio-visual studio at a displaced persons camp in Iraq or from a studio in Jordan or Germany. Plenary includes panelists Mark Juergensmeyer, Diane L. Moore, and Sarah Tobin and a livestream conversation, co-facilitated by Amir Hussain and Alice Su, with internally displaced persons in a camp in Iraq. [Learn more](#)

### Notable Sessions

**Back From the Front Lines of Diplomacy: A Religion Scholar Reflects on the Role of Religion Expertise in US Foreign Policy**



THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH

Drawn to  
**EDINBURGH**  
by our world-class university

[Find out more](#)



Sunday 1–3 PM  
A19-201



Former director of the State Department's Office of Religion and Global Affairs, Shaun Casey, and Elizabeth Dias, *Time* correspondent covering politics and religion, discuss Casey's term as inaugural director of the Office of Religion and Global Affairs serving under former Secretary of State John Kerry.

**Inside the State Department: Scholars Reflect on Working for the Government**

Sunday, 9–11:30 AM  
A19-101

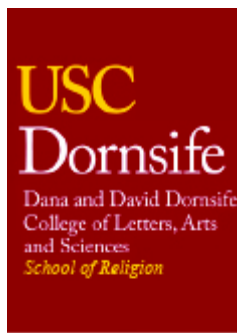
How is academic knowledge about religion practical to public policymakers? What are the ethical implications of engaging—and of declining to



engage—in such work? Panelists include three recent AAR-Luce fellows in the State Department, a former chair of the AAA's Ad Hoc Commission on the Engagement of Anthropology with US Security and Intelligence Communities, and a former vice-chair of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom.

**Religious Literacy College-Wide Project**

Saturday, 9–11:30 AM  
A18-139



The USC School of Religion now offers doctoral studies in

Asia Pacific Religions, Comparative Christianities, and Global Islam.

Find out more at [dornsife.usc.edu/religion](http://dornsife.usc.edu/religion)

University of Southern California

Help the AAR develop guidelines identifying the religion-related knowledge and skills that all undergraduates ought to gain prior to graduation. This session will discuss the latest draft of the guidelines, available by contacting [sherrick@aarweb.org](mailto:sherrick@aarweb.org).

**Sleepwalking into Extinction: Elaine Scarry's S.O.S. to Scholars of Religion**

Sunday, 5–6:30 PM  
A19-328

This forum brings Elaine Scarry into conversation with scholars of religion to discuss why our species may be sleepwalking into a thermonuclear extinction. How do we make sense of human passivity in the face of possible imminent extinction? The roundtable will be a space in which to think ethnographically about different religious groups—their theologies, ethics, eschatologies, etc.—and what shapes them into (not) caring about the threat of nuclear war. Six scholars with diverse specialties will converse with Elaine Scarry before opening the floor to audience voices.

**Pre-Conference Workshop: Confronting Islamophobia**

Friday, 8 AM–5:30 PM  
A17-102

The deadline for this [workshop](#) has been extended to November 14 with more slots added. Sign up using the [online form](#).

**Plenary Address: Deval Patrick**

Saturday, 7–8 PM  
A18-409



Deval Patrick is a politician, civil rights lawyer, and businessman who served as the 71st governor of Massachusetts from 2007 to 2015. He is the only African American to have served as governor of Massachusetts. Raised by a single mother on the South Side of Chicago, Patrick grew up to practice law with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, to serve as US assistant attorney general for the civil rights division of the Department of Justice, and to become the first African American governor of Massachusetts. Patrick is now a managing director at Bain Capital and currently serves as the chairman of the board for Our Generation Speaks, a fellowship program and startup incubator whose mission is to bring together young Israeli and Palestinian leaders through entrepreneurship.

**Presidential Address: Eddie Glaude on Religion and the Most Vulnerable**

Saturday, 8–9 PM

A18-410



Eddie S. Glaude Jr. is the William S. Tod Professor of Religion and African American Studies at Princeton University. He is chair of the Department of African American Studies. His books on religion and philosophy include *Democracy in Black: How Race Still Enslaves the American Soul*, *In a Shade of Blue: Pragmatism and the Politics of Black America*, and *Exodus! Religion, Race and Nation in Early 19th Century Black America*. Currently, Glaude is at work on a book about James Baldwin, tentatively titled *James Baldwin's America, 1963–1972*. Known to be a convener of conversations and debates, Glaude takes care to engage fellow citizens of all ages and backgrounds—from young activists, to fellow academics, journalists and commentators, and followers on Twitter in dialogue about the course of the nation. Glaude has written for *The New York Times* and *The Huffington Post*. He is a columnist for *Time Magazine* and regularly provides commentary on radio and television news programs like *Democracy Now!*, *Morning Joe*, and *The 11th Hour*.

Prior to Dr. Glaude's address, a group of former AAR Presidents will present a tribute to executive director Jack Fitzmier, who will be retiring in 2018.

Presented by 2017 AAR president Eddie Glaude Jr. around the topic of "religion and the most vulnerable," the conference's [plenaries](#) also

include an address by feminist Muslim activist and Women's March organizer **Linda Sarsour** as well as a panelist-led conversation with forcibly displaced Syrians and Iraqis.

---

## **Student Program: Religion Scholars as Humanitarians**

The Graduate Student Committee will be hosting a special topics forum this year entitled Religious Scholars as Humanitarians: Publications, Pedagogies, and Protecting the Most Vulnerable. This panel debates the ethical obligations that scholars of religion owe to the most vulnerable members of global society, particularly in the wake of the 2016 US presidential election. The forum will take place on Saturday morning from 9 to 11:30 AM at the Sheraton Boston-Grand & Independence (2nd level).

Also, be sure to check out the program book for all the student lounge roundtables being held throughout the Annual Meeting this year! Share, print, and distribute [a flyer](#) of all student-centered events!

---

## **Safety and Security at the Annual Meeting**

The American Academy of Religion is committed to the safety and well-being of all persons who attend or work at our Annual Meetings. Our meetings are large and complex, and they take place in a busy urban environment. Such an environment always carries various security concerns, including the possibility of theft, threats of violence, and acts that cause physical harm and property damage. There may also be inherent or avoidable dangers in the physical environment, and anyone at our Annual Meetings may also experience medical emergencies. For more information, see the AAR's [Annual Meeting Safety Policy](#).

## **Name Badges and Emergency Numbers**



**Print your badge prior to arrival and wear your badge every day.** The badge is your pass to all conference sessions, speakers, and the exhibit hall. We encourage our attendees to print their badge prior to arrival and have sent links and instructions to all registrants on how to do this. If you did not receive this email, please contact us at [reg@aarweb.org](mailto:reg@aarweb.org).

Bins will be located in the Hynes Convention Center – Lobby outside Exhibit Hall C and D where you will be able to pick up your lanyards and plastic name badge holders. ***If you have printed your name badge prior to arrival, you do not have to go to the registration desk to pick up anything.*** Just take your lanyard, plastic name badge holder from the bin and proceed to the sessions and exhibits and enjoy!

The back of your folded name badge includes the security contact information for each of the locations holding Annual Meeting events. If you or someone you know is in imminent danger or experiencing verbal or physical assault, or in case of any other emergency in one of the Annual Meeting venues, contact security in the building in which you require assistance.

<b>EMERGENCY NUMBERS</b>		
In case of an emergency during the meeting, please do not call 911. Instead, please call the numbers listed below, which will connect you with hotel security. They will be able to dispatch emergency responders with the most speed and accuracy.		
Facility	From a House Phone	From a Cell Phone
Hynes Convention Center	x2111	(617) 954-2111
Fairmont Copley Plaza	0	(617) 267-5300
Hilton Back Bay	0	(617) 236-1100
Marriott Copley Place	x6666	(617) 937-5641
Park Plaza	x4444	(617) 457-2307
Sheraton Boston	x1000	(617) 236-6025
Westin Copley Place	x7777	(781) 570-9378

Security numbers are also included in the Annual Meeting Guide, the Mobile App, and page six of the *Program Book*.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a discriminatory practice that is unethical, unprofessional, and threatening to intellectual freedom, and it has no place in the AAR at any organizational level—formal or

informal. As a member of the AAR, it is your responsibility to behave in a manner that will minimize the possibility that someone else will regard your conduct as sexual harassment. The AAR trusts that all members will act respectfully and responsibly in maintaining a pleasant academic and working environment free of harassment. Please read AAR's [Sexual Harassment Policy](#), including the grievance procedure.

## **Professional Conduct Statement**

AAR's Professional Conduct Task Force has been charged by the Board to craft a Professional Conduct Statement that will:

- Stress our commitment to robust support of academic freedom and to the expectation that all AAR members will conduct themselves in a professional manner
- Clearly state AAR's desire to build communities that are free from discrimination and harassment and that foster inclusivity, mutual respect, and diversity
- Update and revise our current statement on Sexual Harassment
- Make clear how the above relate to AAR gatherings and activities (national, regional, and other)
- Recommend policies for handling infractions of professional conduct

The Task Force has drafted a Professional Conduct Statement to be recommended to the Board for its consideration in 2018. This draft will be posted on the AAR website on November 13, 2017. Annual Meeting attendees are strongly encouraged to review the draft online and attend the public forum (A19-237) on Sunday, 1:00–2:30 PM in the Marriott Copley Place-Grand A (fourth level). This public session aims to have a wider conversation and solicit feedback about the draft statement. There will also be an online platform to solicit feedback from AAR members after the session.

---



---

*Copyright © 2017 American Academy of Religion, All rights reserved.*