

IN THIS ISSUE:  
**FOCUS**  
 on  
 The Work of the Academy  
 Including the results of the Independent Annual Meeting Survey, beginning on page 10.

**2008 Annual Meeting News**

Annual Meeting 2008 .....4  
*Beautiful Chicago*

Introducing the Program Planner .....5  
*Details on Our New Annual Meeting Publication*

Important 2008 Annual Meeting Dates.....5  
*Registration Deadlines*

New Program Units.....5  
*15 New Units*

Where to Stay in Chicago .....5  
*Annual Meeting Hotels*

Eating, Drinking, and Entertainment .....6  
*Around the City*

Changes to AAR's Career Services .....7  
*Introducing Our New Job Postings and Job Center*

Chairs Workshop .....8  
*Taking Religion(s) Seriously: What Students Need to Know*

**2007 Annual Meeting News**

A Successful and Popular Meeting .....22  
*San Diego Had Greatest Number of Sessions*

2007 Annual Business Meeting Minutes .....22  
*Bylaws Revision Results in New Treasurer*

Media Coverage .....23  
*Over 40 Journalists Attend the Meeting*

Co-Sponsors of International Scholars.....23  
*Five Schools Co-Sponsor Chinese Scholars*

Outgoing Program Unit Chairs .....23  
*Our Thanks to These 43*

Employment Information Services Center .....24  
*Surge in Registration Numbers Continue*

**FEATURES**

In the Public Interest. ....19  
*Going Public on Religion: Paradise or Pitfall?*

From the Student Desk .....20  
*Getting Stuck Overseas? Reflections on Graduate Studies Abroad*

Research Briefing .....21  
*A Pivotal Decade in the Life and Work of I. B. Horner*



**RELIGIOUS STUDIES NEWS**

March 2008

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**AAR President Emilie Townes discusses her thoughts on her journey and her goals for the Academy as its new president. See her interview on page 9.**

**From the Editor** .....3

**A Conversation with the President** .....9  
*Emilie Townes*

**2008 Committee Roster** .....16  
*Scholars Serving the AAR*

**Call for Committee Nominations** .....17  
*Available Positions for 2009*

**Outgoing Committee Members** .....18  
*35 Members Rotating Off*

**2008 Student Liaison Group**.....20  
*Advisors to the Student Director and the Graduate Student Committee*

**Academy Fund** .....27  
*Contributors to the AAR*

IN THIS ISSUE OF  
*spotlight on*  
**Theological Education**  
*Teaching Critical Thinking and Praxis*

# 2008

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*Religious Studies News* (USPS 841-720) is published quarterly by the American Academy of Religion in January, March, May, and October. Letters to the editor and features examining professional issues in the field are welcome from all readers. Please send editorial pieces in electronic uncompressed file format only (MS Word is preferred) to: [cgifford@aarweb.org](mailto:cgifford@aarweb.org).

Subscriptions for individuals and institutions are available. See [www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn](http://www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn) for more information.

Deadlines for submissions:

January	October 15
March	December 15
May	February 15
October	June 15

**Advertising**

For information on advertising, please see [www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn](http://www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn).

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Stephanie Gray

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825 Houston Mill Road, Suite 300  
Atlanta, GA 30329  
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# 2008 Member Calendar

Dates are subject to change. Check [www.aarweb.org](http://www.aarweb.org) for the latest information.

## March

*Religious Studies News* March issue.

*Spotlight on Theological Education*.

*Journal of the American Academy of Religion* March issue. For more information on AAR publications, see [www.aarweb.org/Publications/](http://www.aarweb.org/Publications/) or go directly to the *JAAAR* home page hosted by Oxford University Press, <http://jaar.oxfordjournals.org/>.

**March 4.** Humanities Advocacy Day, an event organized by the National Humanities Alliance and co-sponsored by the AAR and more than 20 organizations to promote support for the National Endowment for the Humanities. For more information, see [www.nhalliance.org](http://www.nhalliance.org).

**March 7–9.** Southeast regional meeting, Atlanta, GA.

**March 14–16.** Southwest regional meeting, Dallas, TX.

**March 15.** Publications Committee meeting, New York, NY.

**March 20.** Nominations due for Awards for Excellence in the Study of Religion book awards. For details, see [www.aarweb.org/Programs/Awards/Book\\_Awards/rules-excellence.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/Programs/Awards/Book_Awards/rules-excellence.asp).

**March 27–28.** Mid-Atlantic regional meeting, New Brunswick, NJ.

**March 28–29.** Rocky Mountains–Great Plains regional meeting, Denver, CO.

**March 28–29.** Upper Midwest regional meeting, St. Paul, MN.

**March 29–30.** Governance Task Force meeting, Atlanta, GA.

**March 29–31.** Western regional meeting, Pasadena, CA.

(For more information on regional meetings, see [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/regions.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/regions.asp)).

## April

Annual Meeting registration materials mailed.

**April 1.** Notification of acceptance of Annual Meeting paper proposals by program unit chairs.

**April 4–5.** Midwest regional meeting, River Forest, IL.

**April 11.** Regionally Elected Directors meeting, Atlanta, GA.

**April 11.** Executive Committee meeting, Atlanta, GA.

**April 12–13.** Spring Board of Directors meeting, Atlanta, GA.

**April 21.** Annual Meeting registration and housing opens for 2008 Annual Meeting.

**April 21.** Registration for the Annual Meeting Job Center opens.

**April 25–26.** History of Religions Jury meeting, Atlanta, GA.

(For more information on regional meetings, see [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/regions.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/regions.asp)).

## May

*Religious Studies News* May issue.

*Spotlight on Teaching* Spring issue.

**May 1.** Nominations (including self-nominations) for committee appointments requested.

**May 1.** Annual Meeting Additional Meeting requests due for priority consideration.

**May 2–4.** Pacific Northwest regional meeting, Newberg, OR.

**May 2–3.** Eastern International regional meeting, Montréal, Quebec.

**May 15.** Change of address due for priority receipt of the *Annual Meeting Program Planner*. *Program Planners* will be mailed to members in late May.

(For more Annual Meeting information, see [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual\\_Meeting/Current\\_Meeting/](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting/Current_Meeting/)).

## June

*Journal of the American Academy of Religion* June issue.

**June 15.** Membership renewal deadline for 2008 Annual Meeting participants.

**June 15.** Submission deadline for the October issue of *Religious Studies News*. For more information, see [www.aarweb.org/Publications/RSN/](http://www.aarweb.org/Publications/RSN/).

## July

Annual Meeting program goes online.

**July 1.** New fiscal year begins.

**July 31.** Deadline for participants to request audiovisual equipment at the Annual Meeting.

## August

**August 1.** Research Grant applications due. For more information, see [www.aarweb.org/Programs/Grants/](http://www.aarweb.org/Programs/Grants/).

**August 1.** Regional development grant applications due to regionally elected directors.

**August 15.** Membership renewal period for 2009 begins.

## September

*Journal of the American Academy of Religion* September issue.

**September 5.** Program Committee meeting, New Haven, CT.

**September 6.** Executive Committee meeting, New Haven, CT.

**September 22–October 20.** AAR officer election period. Candidate profiles will be published in the October *RSN*.

## October

*Religious Studies News* October issue.

*Spotlight on Teaching* Fall issue.

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

**October 15.** Submissions for the January 2009 issue of *Religious Studies News* due. For more information, see [www.aarweb.org/Publications/RSN/](http://www.aarweb.org/Publications/RSN/).

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

**October 30.** Executive Committee meeting, Chicago, IL.

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

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

## November

**November 1.** Research Grant Awards announced.

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

**November 3.** Annual Business Meeting at the Annual Meeting. See the *Program Planner* for day and time.

**November 14.** New program unit proposals due.

## December

*Journal of the American Academy of Religion* December issue.

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


**December 15.** Submissions for the March 2009 issue of *Religious Studies News* due. For more information, see [www.aarweb.org/Publications/RSN/](http://www.aarweb.org/Publications/RSN/).

**December 31.** Membership renewal for 2009 due. Renew online at [www.aarweb.org/Members/Dues/](http://www.aarweb.org/Members/Dues/).

## And keep in mind throughout the year...

Regional organizations have various deadlines throughout the fall for the Calls for Papers. See [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/regions.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/regions.asp).

**In the Field.** News of events and opportunities for scholars of religion. *In the Field* is a members-only publication that accepts brief announcements, including calls for papers, grant news, conference announcements, and other opportunities appropriate for scholars of religion. Submit text online at [www.aarweb.org/Publications/In\\_the\\_Field/submit1.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/Publications/In_the_Field/submit1.asp).

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

  
RELIGIOUS STUDIES NEWS

*Religious Studies News* is the newspaper of record for the field especially designed to serve the professional needs of persons involved in teaching and scholarship in religion (broadly construed to include religious studies, theology, and sacred texts). Published quarterly by the American Academy of Religion, *RSN* is received by some 11,000 scholars and by libraries at colleges and universities across North America and abroad. *Religious Studies News* communicates the important events of the field and related areas. It provides a forum for members and others to examine critical issues in education, pedagogy (especially through the biannual *Spotlight on Teaching*), theological education (through the annual *Spotlight on Theological Education*), research, publishing, and the public understanding of religion. It also publishes news about the services and programs of the AAR and other organizations, including employment services and registration information for the AAR Annual Meeting.

For writing and advertising guidelines, please see [www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn.asp](http://www.aarweb.org/publications/rsn.asp).



FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers:

Beginning with the January issue of *RSN*, there has been a change to the editorial leadership of the Academy's quarterly newspaper. I will now be the executive editor and Stephanie Gray will be the editor. Stephanie joined the executive office in 2005 as our office manager. Her exceptional organizational skills and her MTS from Boston University will help her with these new responsibilities. For me this is a return to the newspaper that I edited from 2002 to 2005. This editorial change was precipitated by a realignment of the executive office staff last fall, which will be discussed in Jack Fitzmier's article.

One of the ways in which the Academy's president communicates with the membership is through the annual "Conversation with the President" article in *RSN*. This month we are happy to have Emilie Townes' thoughts on her journey and her goals for the Academy as its new president.

The Focus section, "The Work of the Academy," includes two exciting topics: the results of our Member Survey regarding the Annual Meeting, and the announcement of our receipt of a planning grant from the Henry Luce Foundation. The purpose of the survey was to provide a forum for members to express their opinions about several features of the upcoming independent Annual Meeting. The Luce planning grant will allow us to begin preparation for summer seminars on comparative theology.

This issue also includes the second *Spotlight on Theological Education*, published under the supervision of the Theological Education Steering Committee. Editor Larry Golemon (Alban Institute) has assembled 12 impressive articles around the theme "Teaching Critical Thinking and Praxis."

Attendance at the Annual Meetings of the AAR and the SBL in San Diego was over 10,000. We surveyed you to see how satisfied you were with the meeting and the results show a very high level of satisfaction. In this issue you will

begin to see information about the upcoming Annual Meeting in Chicago, November 1-3, 2008.

Also in this issue are some impressive figures for the number of employers and candidates who were assisted by the Employment Information Services Center.

The work of the Academy cannot be accomplished without the help of our 11,000 members. In this issue we have recognized our outgoing Annual Meeting Program Unit members, and new and outgoing committee members.

Another way in which you serve the Academy is by means of your generous contributions to the Academy Fund. Margaret Jenkins, our new director of development, is proud to list all those who contributed to the Fund last year.

As always, if you have suggestions regarding the newspaper, please do contact me at [cgifford@aarweb.org](mailto:cgifford@aarweb.org).

Carey J. Gifford  
Executive Editor



MEMBERSHIP FORM

2008 Calendar Year

A calendar year is January 1-December 31.

You may also establish your membership online at [www.aarweb.org/membership](http://www.aarweb.org/membership).

Complete/update your contact information.

Dr.  Prof.  
 Ms.  Mr.  
 Other Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
If your last name is not the final word in your name, please circle it (e.g., [Kim] Kyong Min, Juana [González Nuñez])

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Department/School: \_\_\_\_\_  I am the department chair.

I am a new member.

ID Number (for renewals): \_\_\_\_\_

Office Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Circle the appropriate dues category. See below for information on applicable discounts.

Annual Income (in US Dollars)	AAR		SBL MEMBER DISCOUNT	
	Standard	Retired	Standard	Retired
\$120,000 or More	\$195	\$156	\$156	\$117
\$105,000 - \$119,999	175	140	140	105
\$90,000 - \$104,999	150	120	120	90
\$75,000 - \$89,999	135	108	108	81
\$60,000 - \$74,999	115	92	92	69
\$50,000 - \$59,999	95	76	76	57
\$40,000 - \$49,999	80	64	64	48
\$30,000 - \$39,999	60	48	48	36
\$20,000 - \$29,999	45	36	36	27
Under \$20,000	40	32	32	24
Under \$15,000 and non-U.S. ④	15	12	12	9
Student ①	\$30			

DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE

- ① Student:  I am including a copy of my current student ID and I have not already been a student member for 10 or more years.
- ② Retired:  I am retired from full-time employment.
- ③ SBL:  I am also a current member of the SBL (SBL dues must be paid separately to SBL).
- ④ Int'l:  My annual income is below \$15,000 and I am a non-U.S. citizen living outside the U.S.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

DONATE TO THE ACADEMY FUND

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

Amount:  \$250  \$150  \$100  \$50  \$\_\_\_\_\_

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

PAYMENT DUE

Circle the appropriate dues category in the chart to the left and enter the amount owed in the space provided below. ⑤ Non-U.S. residents must include an additional \$10 for postage.

Calendar Year (Jan. 1-Dec. 31) 2008

Membership Dues \$\_\_\_\_\_

⑤ Non-U.S. Postage (add \$10) \$\_\_\_\_\_

Academy Fund Donation \$\_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL DUE \$\_\_\_\_\_

METHOD OF PAYMENT

Payment in full, drawn on a U.S. bank or Canadian bank (if on a U.S. dollar account) is required.

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Cardholder Name (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Signature \_\_\_\_\_

\* Card Identification Number (required for all cards): 4 digits on front of American Express; 3 digits on back of other cards

Return via postal mail: American Academy of Religion  
825 Houston Mill Road NE Suite 300  
Atlanta, GA 30329-4205

Or fax to: 1-404-727-7959

Membership Inquiries? Call 1-404-727-3049 or e-mail [membership@aarweb.org](mailto:membership@aarweb.org). Visit us on our website at [www.aarweb.org](http://www.aarweb.org).

Manage Your AAR Membership

Did you know that you can take care of many membership activities using the My Account feature from the "Members" tab on the AAR website?

You can:

- Update your contact information
- Generate membership fees receipts
- Check on Annual Meeting registration status
- Set your privacy settings
- and much more!

Log in at this link to do so:  
[www.aarweb.org/Members/My\\_Account/](http://www.aarweb.org/Members/My_Account/)

Questions?

Contact us at [membership@aarweb.org](mailto:membership@aarweb.org) or via phone at 404-727-3049.



## Annual Meeting 2008: Chicago

**J**azz it up in Chicago this November at the 2008 AAR Annual Meeting. Chicago is world renowned for its culture and architecture. The Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel and Palmer House Hilton Hotel are the headquarter hotels. As the host of the first independent AAR meeting in more than 35 years, the location represents a homecoming; Chicago was home to some of the earliest meetings of the newly minted American Academy of Religion in the 1960s. Chicago's vibrant cityscape of the arts, architecture, cuisine, shopping, and more provide the perfect background for the 2008 AAR Annual Meeting.

**Registration and housing opens  
Monday, April 21, 2008,  
at 9:00 am EDT!**

**Mark your calendars!**

FAX: 330-963-0319

WEB: [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual\\_Meeting](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting)

MAIL: AAR Annual Meeting  
Registration & Housing  
c/o Experient Registration and Housing  
Bureau  
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+1-330-425-9330 (outside U.S. & Canada)

E-MAIL: [aarreg@experient-inc.com](mailto:aarreg@experient-inc.com)

### *AAR Annual Meeting Job Center*

The 2008 AAR Annual Meeting Job Center will be located in the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel. Candidates and employers who wish to participate should visit the AAR website, [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual\\_Meeting](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting). Registration opens on April 21, 2008, along with Annual Meeting registration and housing.

### *Childcare*

AAR is proud to provide childcare service at the Annual Meeting for the convenience of our members. Childcare is available at an hourly or daily rate. It will be located in the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel.

### *Disability Accessibility*

AAR members with disabilities or who may have difficulty getting around the meeting are encouraged to note this during registration and housing. AAR will make every reasonable attempt to accommodate you, whether by arranging special services such as sign language interpreters, assigning accessible hotel room space, or through the AAR's taxi reimbursement policy. More information can be found at [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual\\_Meeting](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting).

### *Find A Friend*

Please note the box on the registration form that gives permission for your name, institution, and hotel (if any) to be posted on a list of attendees available online at [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual\\_Meeting](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting) and onsite on the Find A Friend board. If you do not check the box, your information will not be listed.

### *International Attendees*

It is necessary for those entering the United States to clear customs and immigration. International visitors, including those coming from Canada and Mexico, must present a passport in order to enter the United States. Please note that Chicago O'Hare Airport is participating in a test program that requires all international visitors to be fingerprinted upon arrival. Non-U.S. citizens should inquire about possible visa requirements from their own country. Official letters of invitation to the Annual Meetings to support visa applications are available. E-mail [annualmeeting@aarweb.org](mailto:annualmeeting@aarweb.org) with your name, address, and the full contact information of the consulate of your country.

### *Membership*

Don't forget to renew your membership dues before you register or else you won't be able to get the lower member registration rates. If you are not certain about your current 2008 membership status, please see [www.aarweb.org/members](http://www.aarweb.org/members) or call 404-727-3049.

### *Getting Around*

Sessions will be held at the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel and Palmer House Hilton Hotel. The hotels are five city blocks apart. Limited shuttle service will run between the hotels. Chicago has excellent public transportation to get to other areas of the city.

Check online at [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual\\_Meeting](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting) for more travel information including maps and travel discount opportunities!

### *Additional Meetings*

Requests for Additional Meeting space are being accepted through the new online Additional Meeting system at [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual\\_Meeting](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting). All requests are handled on a space and time-slot available basis. The Additional Meetings program, held in conjunction with the AAR Annual Meeting, is an important service to AAR members. Additional Meetings must have an AAR member listed as the primary contact. All Additional Meeting participants are expected to register for the Annual Meeting. Be sure to read the instructions carefully before completing and submitting your space request. The deadline for priority scheduling is May 1, 2008. For more information about the Additional Meetings, please see [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual\\_Meeting](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting). Questions should be directed to:

Robert Puckett  
E-MAIL: [rpuckett@aarweb.org](mailto:rpuckett@aarweb.org)

### *AAR Annual Meeting Online Services*

At [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual\\_Meeting](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting) you can:

- Register for the Annual Meeting
- Reserve your hotel room
- Find a roommate
- Request Additional Meeting space
- Register for the AAR Annual Meeting Job Center
- View the complete AAR program
- Discover more about Chicago including tours, museums, houses of worship, restaurants, and much more!



## Introducing the Program Planner


**K**EEP AN EYE on your mailbox in early June for the all-new *Annual Meeting Program Planner*! The *Annual Meeting Program Planner* features:

- Program Highlights — full descriptions of special speakers and sessions.
- A thematic listing of all AAR and Additional Meetings sessions by date and time.
- A program participant index.
- Information on new and forthcoming publications from the leading publishers in the field.

The *Annual Meeting Program Planner* will let you get a look at the program earlier than ever — months earlier than the September mailing in previous years! It will be mailed to all 2007 and 2008 AAR members. Please remember that receipt of the *Program Planner* is separate from Annual Meeting registration.

For full session details including session descriptions, room listings, individual paper titles, and abstracts, check the online *Annual Meeting Program Book* at [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual\\_Meeting](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting) any time after July 1. The online *Program Book* allows you to receive the most complete and up-to-date information in a searchable format right up to the meeting.

At the Annual Meeting, you will be able to pick up the familiar printed *Annual Meeting Program Book*. The *Annual Meeting Program Book* will be the comprehensive program guide with the complete session details, room locations, and more.

It is our hope that these innovations will make navigating the Annual Meeting program easier than ever. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Annual Meeting Team at [annualmeeting@aarweb.org](mailto:annualmeeting@aarweb.org). 

## Annual Meeting 2008 Important Dates

### April 21

Registration and Housing opens for the 2008 Annual Meeting. You must be registered to secure housing!

AAR Annual Meeting Job Center registration opens. Register for the meeting and then register for the Job Center!

### Early June

*Annual Meeting Program Planner* mailed to all 2007–08 AAR members. Please allow 3–4 weeks for delivery.

### June 15

All AAR Annual Meeting participants must be current members and registered for the Annual Meeting or else their names will be dropped from the program.

### July 1

Online *Program Book* is available at [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual\\_Meeting](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting). The online *Program Book* will list the full session description and room locations for all Annual Meeting sessions.

### September 16

Second-tier premeeting registration rates go into effect.

### October 13

Annual Meeting Job Center preregistration deadline. CVs due for inclusion in binders.


### October 15

Special housing rates end (continue to contact Experient for housing throughout the meeting).

### October 25

Preregistration refund request deadline. Contact Experient for refunds (see premeeting registration form for details). All further registrations received after this date will be processed and the materials will be available in Chicago at the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel.

### November 1-3

AAR Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL. 

## Where to Stay in Chicago



**A**FTER A LONG DAY of attending sessions at the Annual Meeting, it is good to have a haven to relax and recharge for the next day. AAR has negotiated special conference rates at a number of luxurious and convenient hotels for the convenience of meeting attendees. Hotel room rates do not include the 15.4 percent hotel room tax. Please note that the single/double/triple/quadruple room designation denotes the number of room occupants, not the number of beds. A triple room means three people are sharing two double beds unless a rollaway bed is requested at an extra charge.


### *\*Headquarters Hotel\** Chicago Hilton Towers 720 South Michigan Avenue

The Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel is a landmark downtown property located on the “Cultural Michigan Avenue Mile” overlooking Grant Park and Lake Michigan, Millennium Park, and Museum Campus. The hotel features richly appointed guest rooms and suites fusing historic luxury and contemporary amenities. The Hilton Towers boasts a full-service business center, fitness facilities, indoor pool, and diverse dining options. Serenity Bed manufactured by Serta® provides plush-top mattresses that offer plenty of support and luxury with fabulous down and feather pillows and fine European-style 250 thread-count linens. High-speed wireless Internet access available in all guest rooms and suites. \$149/\$175/\$195/\$200

### *\*Headquarters Hotel\** Palmer House Hilton 17 East Monroe Street

Ideally located in the heart of the Chicago Loop, the Palmer House Hilton Hotel offers modern conveniences combined with over one hundred years of elegance. For the demanding traveler, the Palmer House Hilton provides a fitness center and indoor pool. Although standard in name, the interior design and appointments of the standard bedroom are equal to what other hotels refer to as deluxe. Each room has Hilton's new Serenity Dreams bed providing a plush-top mattress to give plenty of support and luxury. Fine European-style, 250 thread-count linens adorn the beds. It is easy to set the alarm clock with pre-set radio stations and MP3 connectivity. High-speed Internet access is available in all rooms. \$149/\$175/\$195/\$200

### Essex Inn 800 South Michigan Avenue

The Essex Inn's 254 guest rooms and suites offer all the comforts of home. Many of them offer spectacular views of the lakefront and of the sparkling city below. Rooms are tastefully decorated with an Art Deco flare and framed art posters, many of them from the Art Institute's finest reproductions. Accommodations come with some extra touches like a personal free shuttle to the Magnificent Mile, free coffee in the room, fitness center with state-of-the-art equipment, free wireless Internet connection, and more. \$156/\$156/\$166/\$176 

## Future AAR Annual Meeting Dates and Sites

- 2008 — Chicago, IL, November 1–3
- 2009 — Montréal, QC, Canada, November 7–10
- 2010 — Atlanta, GA, October 30–November 2
- 2011 — San Francisco, CA, November 19–22
- 2012 — Atlanta, GA, November 3–6

## New Program Units

**A**AR'S PROGRAM Committee approved the following new program units for the 2008 Annual Meeting:

- Cognitive Science of Religion Consultation
- Comparative Philosophy and Religion Seminar
- Liberation Theologies Consultation
- Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions
- Music and Religion Consultation
- Religion and Humanism Consultation
- Religion Education in Public Schools: International Perspectives Consultation
- Religion in Southeast Asia Consultation
- Religion in the American West Seminar
- Religion, Food, and Eating Seminar
- Sex, Gender, and Sexuality in Premodern Christianity Consultation
- Sikh Studies Consultation
- Theology and the Political Consultation
- Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogy Consultation
- Transhumanism and Religion Consultation 

# Annual Meeting Eating, Drinking, and Entertainment

For more Chicago visitor information, guidebooks, and maps, contact the Chicago Convention and Visitor's Bureau or see their website at [www.meetinchicago.com](http://www.meetinchicago.com).



## EATING

Price Guide (for average entree):

\$ = up to \$10  
 \$\$ = \$11-20  
 \$\$\$ = \$21-30  
 \$\$\$\$ = \$31 and over

### Atwood Cafe

1 West Washington Street  
 312-368-1900

Atwood Cafe serves all-American comfort foods and cafe cuisine prepared in a traditional style. Specialties include pot pie with a flaky buttermilk crust and a maple-glazed grilled pork chop. \$\$\$

### Billy Goat Tavern

430 North Michigan Avenue  
 312-222-1525

Ever hear of the "Curse of the Billy Goat," also known as the Cubs Curse? Do you recall the *Saturday Night Live* sketch in which a short order cook would yell out to incoming patrons: "Cheezborger! Cheezborger! No fries, cheeps! No Pepsi, Coke!" All of the above have one thing in common: the World Famous Billy Goat Tavern, a Chicago legend since 1934. \$

### China Grill

230 North Michigan Avenue  
 312-345-1000

China Grill provides a culinary adventure in a spectacular setting. Asian flavors and techniques are an influence; the menu is labeled as world cuisine. Portions are generous and meant to be shared. \$\$\$

### Custom House

500 South Dearborn Street  
 312-523-0200

The frequently changing menu may include appetizer choices like roasted quail, charred sashimi-style sirloin, and marinated shrimp. Entrees may include diver sea scallops, beef short ribs, and bone-in filet of beef. Lunch features a mix of fancy salads, hearty main courses like prime sirloin, organic chicken, steak sandwich, risotto, an artisanal cheese selection, and more. \$\$\$

### Emerald Loop Bar & Grill

216 North Wabash Avenue  
 312-263-0200

Serving breakfast, lunch, dinner, and late-night menus featuring bar and grill favorites as well as Irish specialties. Carvery at lunch, TVs, and lively bar at night. \$\$

### Exchequer Restaurant and Pub

226 South Wabash Avenue  
 312-939-5633

The atmosphere is casual and you're surrounded by more than 500 pieces of Chicago memorabilia to view. Four-star ribs and pizza are a must. Enjoy sports on one of our many satellite TVs. \$\$

### Exposure Tapas Restaurant

1315 South Wabash Avenue  
 312-662-1082

Exposure features a lineup of sharable hot and cold small plates, plus a raw bar roster. Menu highlights include Moroccan Lamb Lollipops with feta cheese, green beans, and olives; pork ribs with peach barbecue sauce, crispy onions, and slaw; and crab-stuffed jumbo shrimp with Israeli couscous and shallot cream sauce. \$\$

### Fornetto and Mei's Kitchen

1108 South Michigan Avenue  
 312-294-2488

Fornetto is set up food court-style with a variety of stations like rotisserie, pasta, panini, Asian, and wood-fired thin crust pizza. Staffers give you a "credit" card; move from station to station, pay at the end, and staffers will bring the food to your table. The decor is as global as the menu; each station is themed to match the cuisine. There is a showy floor-to-ceiling walk-in wine tower; grab a glass at the 40-foot wine bar or take a bottle to go. \$\$

### Giordano's

130 East Randolph Street  
 312-616-1200

Way back before we had the dizzying array of options like wood-fired, organic, and gourmet pies, there were the hefty stuffed pizzas at Giordano's (which opened in the early 1970s). The belly-busting pies come loaded with the usual suspects (like sausage or Canadian bacon). If you're looking for upscale items like rapini or truffles, you're out of luck. If extreme carb-loading isn't in the forecast, go for a thin crust disc instead. Pie-snobbers can opt for choices like lasagna, baked mostaccioli, or an Italian beef sandwich. \$-\$\$

### Ma & I

1234 South Michigan Avenue  
 312-663-1234

South Loop Thai spot featuring Thai classics such as satay, crab Rangoon, curry dishes (red, green, massaman), and noodle choices like pad Thai and lad nar. House specialties include "rumbling ocean," seafood stir-fried with Thai chili paste, and "millennium duck," boneless duck sauteed in a red wine sauce. \$\$

### Max's Take Out

20 East Adams Street  
 312-553-0170

Max's is the quintessential Loop hole in the wall. It's a narrow room with just a row of stools along one wall; in back, a sweltering kitchen churns out fast food. Breakfast is popular, with egg combos and even French toast for just a couple of bucks. \$

### Nick's Fishmarket Grill

51 South Clark Street  
 312-621-0200

The owners of Nick's Fishmarket remodeled the upstairs bar into this more laid-back spot. The Grill offers a more casual (and affordable) menu than the upscale, seafood-heavy Fishmarket, with choices like a burger with blue cheese, tequila chicken flatbread, and pecan-crusted tilapia. The Grill offers daily drink specials and a "bar bites" menu of cheap eats after 5 PM. \$\$-\$\$\$

### Oasis Cafe

17 South Wabash Avenue  
 312-558-1058

Oasis features daily specials such as the veggie combo, a platter of hummus, baba ghanoush, falafel, and stuffed grape leaves or tabbouleh. Daily luncheon specials include Moroccan couscous on Fridays. The house-made baklava is the specialty dessert. \$

### Oysy

888 South Michigan Avenue  
 312-922-1127

Oysy, or "delicious," sports a relaxed, contemporary decor (designed by Chicago architect Douglas Garofalo) and creative menu of sushi and Japanese cuisine. Almost 50 varieties of sushi and maki are available as well as tempura and entrees like sauteed scallop with garlic ginger sauce. \$\$

### Park Grill

11 North Michigan Avenue  
 312-521-PARK (7275)

Park Grill received "Best New Restaurant" in *Chicago Magazine* and "Top Newcomer" in *Zagat's 2004 Restaurant Guide*. The menu features contemporary American cuisine infused with distinctive Chicago flavors and seasonal ingredients, offering something for the whole family. \$\$

### Patty Burger

72 East Adams Street  
 312-987-0900

Patty Burger features hand-formed Angus beef burgers with toppings like lettuce and secret sauce; add-ons include bacon, mushrooms, and avocado. Burgers take less than four minutes to prepare and are priced under \$4 for a single. \$

### Pizano's Pizza and Pasta

61 East Madison Street  
 312-236-1777

Deep dish pizza with flaky crust and thin crust varieties. Entrees include sandwiches, homemade pastas, and Italian chicken specials. \$

### Potbelly Sandwich Works

55 East Jackson Boulevard  
 312-683-1234

Specializing in made-to-order sandwiches, Potbelly exudes a colorful charm. A dark-wood decor, vintage knickknacks, and street signs add to the ambience. It's a bit corny, but the roomy booths and comfortable chairs keep the cozy factor dominant. Italian-style and vegetarian subs are the best bets. \$

### Russian Tea Time

77 East Adams Street  
 312-360-0000

Not just a tea house as the name suggests, Russian Tea Time is a full-service restaurant, whose slightly Americanized Russian dishes have been well received by Chicagoans, especially the presymphony concert crowd. \$\$\$

### Yolk

1120 South Michigan Avenue  
 312-789-9655

This South Loop breakfast and lunch spot, which is close to the Museum Campus, features all-day breakfast choices such as banana-nut French toast and a Santa Fe frittata with bacon, avocado,

chilies, onions, grilled potatoes, and a trio of cheeses. Lunch selections include a Dublin pot roast sandwich (with mushroom Cabernet sauce and Swiss) and a balsamic chicken wrap. \$\$

### Zapatista

1307 South Wabash Avenue  
 312-435-1307

The menu at this South Loop Mexican spot includes low-key offerings like hand-made tamales and tacos, plus more upscale fare like grilled twin lobster tails in guajillo cream salsa and a Negro Modelo-marinated filet mignon. \$\$\$



## DRINKING

### Buddy Guy's Legends

754 South Wabash Avenue  
 312-427-0333

Although its large size may be less welcoming than many of the city's older clubs, it offers amenities that are a factor of that size: a tasty menu (shrimp Creole, jambalaya, barbecued ribs) and a great collection of blues memorabilia on the walls. Live blues is presented seven nights a week — generally local acts during the week and national touring acts on Friday and Saturday nights.

### Kasey's Tavern

701 South Dearborn Street  
 312-427-7992

Overall it's your typical neighborhood pub, with Bulls, Bears, and baseball on television, friendly bartenders, and cushy places to sit. But there's history here and the place is warmer and more inviting than other bars in the area. "It's a real old neighborhood saloon," says Bill White, the owner. "Real old" meaning since 1889.

### Tantrum

1023 South State Street  
 312-939-9160

Tantrum is a sophisticated cocktail lounge in the South Loop. Fans of the place say they keep coming back for the A+ chocolate martini and the eclectic jukebox with songs ranging from Van Morrison to Morphine. Martinis are the rage here, but the mahogany bar is also stocked with imported beers, scotches, and wines. Try the house drink: A Tantrum Martini made with Stoli Orange, Triple Sec, and a splash of orange juice.

### Villains Bar & Grill

649 South Clark Street  
 312-356-9992

You may know him as The King, but at this South Loop spot, he's known as the No. 1 rock n' roll villain. In fact, black-and-white prints of Warhol's Elvis with a gun are repeated along the 47-foot bar; black and gold wallpaper with jewel-toned accents and a texturally rich recycled cardboard "weave" dress the other walls. Super villain-inspired martinis and B-movie nights make this a hip neighborhood hang for 20- and 30-somethings looking for a laid-back, irreverent scene.

(continued on next page)



## Changes to AAR's Career Services

ON APRIL 1, 2008, the AAR will open its new AAR Career Services where members can find job postings, upload CVs, plan for interviewing at the annual meeting, and find timely expert opinions to help in the increasingly competitive academic job market.

The new service will replace the current *Openings* and EIS Center Services that AAR members have come to count on for locating future employment or their next faculty member. Members and departments will feel comfortable with the streamlined new services: *AAR Job Postings* will replace *Openings* and the AAR Annual Meeting Job Center will replace the EIS Center.

Within the AAR Career Services, *Job Postings* will include easier advertisement submission processes and enhancements to organization and content. "I think our members will find it easier to post a job on the new website," said Jack Fitzmier, AAR executive director. "Our staff has worked hard to improve the process."


Also within the Career Services will be the new AAR Annual Meeting Job Center. It will operate much the same as the joint EIS Center did. The Job Center will be offered every year at the Annual Meeting and is designed to ease the communication process between candidates looking for jobs in the field of religion and employers who have jobs to offer. To accomplish this, we offer services such as advertisement listings, candidates' credentials both online and in hardcopy, an interview facility, and a message center through which employers and candidates communicate.

The 2008 Job Center will be located in the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel, a headquarters hotel of the Annual Meeting. From 7–9 PM, Friday night, October 31, we will be open with the exception of the interview hall. Come review CVs or ad listings and use the message center. We will be fully operational all day Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, November 1–3.

To take advantage of the earlier Annual Meeting dates this year (November 1–3), Job Center preregistration opens on April 21, 2008, and closes on October 13, 2008. Candidate CVs are also due October 13.

For complete information about *Job Postings* and the AAR Annual Meeting Job Center, please see [www.aarweb.org/jump/careers](http://www.aarweb.org/jump/careers).

Also posted within the AAR Career Services will be information to help in the job hunt process, notices of workshops from the Academic Relations Committee, Teaching and Learning Committee, Theological Education Steering Committee, and others, and articles discussing career issues — from leaving graduate school to retirement.

"I think you will find the Career Services a 'must stop' location on our website," Fitzmier said. "We are excited about this new service, and always encourage feedback on how to make it better." 

**Job Center Preregistration  
Deadline is October 13!**

(continued from previous page)

**Weather Mark Tavern**  
1503 South Michigan Avenue  
312-588-0230

Set sail for a night of food and drink at this South Loop spot decked out in a nautical theme. Real sails hang floor to ceiling to create semiprivate seating areas of couches and cocktail tables. Go tropical and sip from a large selection of rums and tequilas, and sample fare from a menu of upscale bar food with a Southwestern flair.



**Art Institute of Chicago**  
111 South Michigan Avenue  
312-443-3600

Escape to the Art Institute and delight in treasured collections that have lured visitors to the museum from all over the world for more than a century. Journey through Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas as renowned works of art spanning 5,000 years inform and inspire you. Experience the artistic genius of Monet, Seurat, Renoir, van Gogh, Cassatt, Hopper, and more. Open Monday–Wednesday, and Friday 10:30 AM–5 PM; Thursday 10:30 AM–8 PM; and Saturday–Sunday 10 AM–5 PM. Admission: Adults \$12; children 12 and up, students and seniors \$7; members and children under 12 free.

**Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum**  
1300 South Lake Shore Drive  
312-922-STAR

Opened in 1930 as the first Planetarium in the Western Hemisphere, the Adler fuels the imagination of its visitors with all new exhibits and state-of-the-art computer technology in the world's first StarRider Theater, while showcasing a renowned collection of historical astronomy artifacts, including one of the world's oldest telescopes. Open Monday–Sunday 9:30 AM–4:30 PM. Admission plus one show: \$19 adults; \$15 children (4–17); and \$17 Chicago residents and seniors. Each additional show is \$5.

**Chicago Cultural Center**  
78 East Washington Street  
312-744-6630

Chicago's acclaimed landmark home of the arts. Daily programs and exhibitions covering a wide range of the performing, visual, and literary arts are presented by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs. See the world's largest Tiffany stained-glass dome. Open Monday–Thursday 10 AM–7 PM; Friday 10 AM–6 PM; Saturday 10 AM–5 PM; and Sunday 11 AM–5 PM. Free admission. For weekly updated event listings dial F-I-N-E A-R-T (312-346-3278) or log onto [www.cityofchicago.org/CulturalCenter](http://www.cityofchicago.org/CulturalCenter).

**DuSable Museum of African American History**  
740 East 56th Place  
773-947-0600

Celebrating 45 years of sharing history, DuSable Museum is the nation's first and oldest independent museum dedicated to the collection, preservation, and study of the history and culture of Africans and Americans of African descent. Exhibits, concerts, films, children's events, and literary discussions are just a few of the institution's various programs offered. Open Tuesday–Saturday 10 AM–5 PM.

**Field Museum**  
1400 South Lake Shore Drive  
312-665-7600

Discover Sue, the largest and most complete T. rex ever found! At the Field Museum, you can get a bug's-eye view in Underground Adventure, descend into an Egyptian tomb, watch a glowing lava flow, be dazzled in our Halls of Gems and Jades, come nose-to-nose with the man-eating lions of Tsavo, and walk among dinosaurs in our new, renovated dinosaur hall Evolving Planet. Open daily 9 AM–5 PM, last admission at 4 PM. Adults \$12, students and seniors \$7, children (4–11) \$7. Some exhibits require an additional ticket.

**McCormick Tribune Freedom Museum**  
445 North Michigan Avenue  
312-222-4860

Dedicated to America's freedoms and focusing on First Amendment rights, the McCormick Tribune Freedom Museum inspires generations to understand, value, and protect freedom through interactive experiences. Open Wednesday–Monday 10 AM–6 PM. Closed Tuesday. Free Admission.

**Notebaert Nature Museum**  
2430 North Cannon Drive  
773-755-5100

Located in Lincoln Park, the Nature Museum engages visitors, especially urban dwellers, in new ways to connect with and preserve the natural world through a unique indoor/outdoor experience. Open weekdays 9 AM–4:30 PM; and weekends 10 AM–5 PM. Cost: \$9 adults, \$7 seniors (60+), \$7 students (13–22), \$6 children (3–12). Free on Thursdays. Chicago residents always save \$1 off general admission.

**Shedd Aquarium**  
1200 South Lake Shore Drive  
312-692-3315

The aquarium offers more than 22,000 aquatic animals from around the world. See all Shedd has to offer with the All Access Pass, which includes the original aquarium building, Wild Reef, Amazon Rising, and the Oceanarium. Open weekdays 9 AM–5 PM; weekends 9 AM–6 PM; and some holidays. Adults \$23, seniors and children (3–11) \$16. Group rates are available.

**Spertus Museum/Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies**  
610 South Michigan Avenue  
312-322-1700

Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies includes Spertus Museum, the research facilities of the Asher Library and the Chicago Jewish Archives. Highlights include a unique display of over 1,000 objects from Spertus Museum's world-class collection, a series of special changing exhibitions, and site-specific installations of work by leading international artists. Open Sunday–Wednesday 10 AM–6 PM; Thursday 10 AM–7 PM; and Friday 10 AM–3 PM. Spertus is closed Saturday for the Jewish Sabbath, and public and Jewish holidays. Museum Admission \$7, students and seniors \$5. Spertus members and children under 5 free. Free museum admission for everyone every Tuesday from 10 AM–12 PM and every Thursday from 3 PM–7 PM.



Chicago's Magnificent Mile is a world-renowned shopping district. Shoppers can enjoy magnificent department stores and boutiques comprising a diverse mix of American and international style. With over 460 retail stores, there is something for every taste.


**900 Shops**  
900 North Michigan Avenue  
312-915-3916

Anchoring the chic north end of Michigan Avenue, The 900 Shops features six levels of shopping, including Bloomingdale's, MaxMara, Gucci, Coach, Marina Rinaldi, Ethel's Chocolate Lounge, Preggers, The Silk Trading Co., and 60 other exclusive retailers. Open Monday–Saturday 10 AM–7 PM; and Sunday 12 PM–6 PM.

**Chicago Place**  
700 North Michigan Avenue  
312-266-7710

North Michigan Avenue's most unique shopping experience! Over 50 shops and restaurants featuring Saks Fifth Avenue, Chiaroscuro, Design Toscano, Talbots, and much more! Open Monday–Friday 10 AM–7 PM; Saturday 10 AM–6 PM; and Sunday 12 PM–5 PM.

**Water Tower Place**  
835 North Michigan Avenue  
312-440-3166

Water Tower Place is Chicago's premier shopping destination. Its stunning eight-level atrium features more than 100 of your favorite stores, spas, and restaurants, plus a mix of distinctive specialty shops and boutiques. It offers a unique, high-energy urban shopping experience you simply won't find anywhere else in the city. Open Monday–Saturday 10 AM–9 PM; and Sunday 11 AM–6 PM. Visit their website for more information and visitor incentives at [www.shopwatertower.com](http://www.shopwatertower.com). 

# Annual Meeting Leadership Workshop

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

**T**HE ACADEMIC RELATIONS Committee will address student learning at its Leadership Workshop during the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion in Chicago on Friday, October 31.

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

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

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

"Exchange of experience and ideas will be central to the day's work," Glennon said.

The interactive workshop will feature several speakers, panelists, and breakout sessions. Following the opening introduction by Chester Gillis, Georgetown University, a discussion will address two questions concerning "Educating Students for Public Life:"

1. How could and how does your institution contribute to the understanding of religion(s) through your students?
2. How are your students prepared to engage religion(s) in the public realm?

A panel discussion will follow, addressing: "How does this interact with the mission and culture of your institution?"

"The Academic Relations Committee strives to speak to the multitude of institutional contexts influencing the study of religion," said Kyle Cole, AAR director of professional programs.

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

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

Colleagues in your institution, such as chairs, other faculty members, faculty being developed to assume leadership responsibilities, and deans, may be interested in attending this workshop. Chairs may want to bring a team of faculty or send a designated faculty person.

Registration is limited to the first 75 participants, and last year's workshop filled up long before the annual meeting. The cost for the workshop is \$75, which includes the entire day of sessions, lunch, and a book on the topic.

The topics for past workshops have been:

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

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

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

**2004 Annual Meeting  
Chairs Workshop** - *Being a Chair in Today's Consumer Culture: Navigating in the Knowledge Factory*

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


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

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

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

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

We look forward to seeing you in Chicago!

The Academic Relations Committee: Fred Glennon, chair, Chester Gillis, DeAne Lagerquist, Steve Young, Rosetta Ross, Edwin David Aponte, and Kyle Cole, staff liaison. 



## TAKING RELIGION(S) SERIOUSLY: WHAT STUDENTS NEED TO KNOW

**Friday, October 31, 2008,  
Chicago, IL**

That all students learn to think seriously about the ways religion(s) impacts public life and their role as citizens. This may be a common goal of religion courses offered at all sorts of institutions; however, this objective is not always articulated and may be submerged in more specialized concerns. In this workshop we explore what this goal

entails and then invite chairs to consider how the curriculum they oversee addresses (or could address) it, how the mission and culture of their institution shapes this objective, and how it might contribute to assessment of their program's effectiveness. Exchange of experience and ideas will be central to the day's work.

### PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

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

9-9:15	Introductions	10:15-11	Panel discussion: How does this interact with the mission and culture of your institution?	1:15-2	Assessment of your institution: Addressing the question — How should this be assessed and how do you assess it?
9:15-9:45	Educating students for public life	11-12	Break-out session	2-3:30	Plenary session on objectives and assessments
9:45-10:15	Break-out session	12-1:15	LUNCH		

The workshop will be of benefit to a range of participants: faculty, administrators, and graduate students. The goal is to bring a diverse group of AAR members together in a lively and open discussion.

### TO REGISTER

Complete the information below, arrange payment, and send via fax or surface mail. You can also register online as a part of the Annual Meeting registration process: [www.aarweb.org/meeting/annual\\_meeting/current\\_meeting](http://www.aarweb.org/meeting/annual_meeting/current_meeting).

Name		
Department		
Institution	Serving as Chair since	Number of faculty in department

Registration is limited to the first 75 participants.

Send your registration form and payment of \$75.00 \*\*\* before October 1, 2008 (\$100.00 after and onsite).

### PAYMENT INFORMATION


- Check:** (payable to "AAR Annual Meeting," memo "Leadership Workshop")
- Credit Card (Check one):**
- Visa    Mastercard    American Express    Discover

For more information, contact Kyle Cole, Director of Professional Programs, at [kcole@aarweb.org](mailto:kcole@aarweb.org), or by phone at 404-727-1489.


The Leadership Workshop is arranged by the Academic Relations Committee of the American Academy of Religion, chaired by Fred Glennon.

Credit Card Number	Expiration Date
CID*	
Cardholder Signature	
Name on Card (Please Print)	

\* Card Identification Number: 4 digits on front of American Express; 3 digits on back of other cards

 **Register online** (as part of Annual Meeting registration): [www.aarweb.org/meetings/annual\\_meeting/current\\_meeting](http://www.aarweb.org/meetings/annual_meeting/current_meeting)

 **Register by Fax:** 330-963-0319

 **Register by surface mail:**  
AAR Leadership Workshop  
c/o Experient  
2451 Enterprise PKWY  
Twinsburg, OH 44087  
USA



# A Conversation with AAR President Emilie Townes



*Emilie M. Townes, an American Baptist clergywoman, is a native of Durham, North Carolina. She holds a DMin from the University of Chicago Divinity School and a PhD in Religion in Society and Personality from Northwestern University. Townes is the first Andrew W. Mellon Professor of African American Religion and Theology at Yale University Divinity School, and in the fall of 2005 she was elected to the presidential line of the American Academy of Religion. She currently serves as President, the first African-American woman to do so. In July 2008, she will become the first African-American and first woman to serve as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the Divinity School. She is the former Carolyn Williams Beaird Professor of Christian Ethics at Union Theological Seminary. Editor of two collections of essays, *A Troubling in My Soul: Womanist Perspectives on Evil and Suffering* and *Embracing the Spirit: Womanist Perspectives on Hope, Salvation, and Transformation*, she has also authored *Womanist Ethics, Womanist Hope; In a Blaze of Glory: Womanist Spirituality as Social Witness*; and *Breaking the Fine Rain of Death: African American Health Issues and a Womanist Ethic of Care*. Her most recent book, *Womanist Ethics and the Cultural Production of Evil*, was released in November 2006. She continues her research on women and health in the African diaspora with attention to Brazil and the United States. She is a founding member of the Initiative on Religion and Politics at Yale that seeks to bring a progressive religious voice to the education of seminarians, spark lively debate on the interplay of religion and politics in the university, and speak to the pressing social issues of the day. She is also the founder of the Middle Passage Conversations on Black Religion in the African Diaspora Initiative at Yale.*

**RSN:** How did your parents and extended family influence your early career and education?

**Townes:** Both of my parents were college professors and spent the latter years of their careers as administrators. Dad was a department chair and Mom was, over the years, department chair, dean of the graduate school, and dean of the college (at one point, she was both deans!) and they instilled in both my sister and me a love of books and a love for learning. Both of them were “firsts” in their families to go to college and to go on and earn doctorates. Mom was the oldest of her five siblings and grew up in West Southern Pines, North Carolina. She was known as a bookworm growing up, and this inspired no small amount of pride in that close-knit community of black folks. She excelled throughout grade school and high school and won a scholarship to North Carolina Central College at Durham for Negroes (now North Carolina Central University), where she began as a first-year student and 49 years later retired as dean of the college. In Dad’s case, he was the baby of his

family of seven siblings and orphaned at a fairly young age. Growing up in the family of one of the neighbors, he realized that one of the ways he could make it out of Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, was through the military and through education. He served in World War II and used the GI Bill to go to college. Not stopping there, he went on to get a doctorate and began his teaching career at Wiley College and ultimately settled in at North Carolina Central College. It’s at Central where my parents met and made the home I grew up in, where learning was revered and expected. Although never pushy, they were clear with both my sister and me that no less than our best was expected in our studies and that our best was enough.

My maternal grandmother was, I think, the one who started this education ball rolling. Although she never got past the eighth grade, she instilled in all her children the importance of getting an education. For her, the Holy Grail was to complete high school — and everyone did whether they wanted to or not! When Mom was away for a year completing her doctorate at the University of Michigan (she was the first black woman to earn a doctorate in molecular biology there), I spent the year with my grandmother. I spent that year in the same grade school that my mother attended and had the older black men and women of that close-knit southern black community encouraging all of us to do well in school. Most of those folks were like my grandmother — not a good bit of book learning, but a world of common sense and a deep belief in the necessity of the next generations getting a good education.

Years later, I would walk from my grade school in Durham up to the biology building where I sat outside of Mom’s classroom while she lectured. I loved to hear her lecture — such precision in speech, such love of the subject matter, such command of it. I didn’t consciously think of teaching as a vocation then, but years later I had to admit that teaching was in my genes and that all those days spent outside of Mom’s class listening to her lecture and care about what and how her students learned had their effect.

I think the simplest way to describe the effect my family has had on me is that they taught me to demand nothing less than my best.

**RSN:** At what point did you decide you wanted to become a scholar of religion?

**Townes:** This was a two-step process for me. I had avoided what I call the family business, teaching, for years. I wanted to be my own person and find a different path than my folks did. It was not that I had an aversion to teaching, it was more that I thought I would live my professional life either as a lawyer or later in some form of social justice ministry work in a community agency. But, in 1982, when I was working as a bookstore manager for the Lombard, Illinois, satellite of the Seminary Cooperative Bookstore in Chicago, I got a call from Henry Young at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston. I had just finished my DMin at the University of Chicago Divinity School and was enjoying the world of bookselling. Garrett was experiencing an increase in black women in the student body and they had begun to ask why there were no black women on the faculty — a question that could have applied to most of the Chicago-area schools and most theological schools at that time. I was close at hand and had a DMin. I remembered what it was like for me as a student to have no black female role models to draw on, so I met with him

and Rosemary Keller and together we developed a course on black women in the church. When I opened my mouth to greet the class and began talking with them about what we would be doing throughout the semester, I had the strongest sense of call I’ve ever had in my life. This was both a joy and a curse, though, because I knew that I’d have to go back to school to earn a PhD — something I was not keen on doing, as I had gone straight through from kindergarten to graduate school without a break and, after 25 years, I wanted to get away from that grind. Such was not to be!

It was through my teaching that I realized I wanted to become a scholar of religion. They go hand in hand for me, as I can’t be a good teacher if I am not constantly challenging myself as a scholar to explore, to understand, to remain inquisitive and never satisfied. It is these same qualities that compel me as a teacher. I have learned from wonderful teachers (and those who have not been so wonderful) that a scholar’s true mettle is tested in the classroom and public speaking outside of scholarly enclaves. If I can’t translate my work to a variety of audiences, then there is much more work for me to do to understand what I am thinking about and exploring.

**RSN:** What has compelled you to research, publish, and lecture in the area of Christian social ethics?

**Townes:** I am that young black girl Alice Walker talks about in her first definition of “womanist” — wanting to know more than what was considered good for me. I drove my parents and teachers crazy at times with all the questions I had and wanted to understand. I think this kind of inquisitiveness pointed me in the direction of Christian social ethics. I am fascinated with structures and social phenomena and how they are created and maintained — something that is a strong feature found in social ethics. And for me, what is particularly fascinating is how we, as human beings, participate in them or not. How we dissent from inequalities and how we build systems of justice-making.

For me, justice is an important concept that I want to see embodied in our lives. Not only do I think this is important as a scholar, but I believe this as a religious person who finds her home in both Christianity and the Afro-Brazilian religion of Candomblé. From both, I have learned the importance of seeking balance and living a “good” life. I try to take these lessons and more into my research, lecturing, and publishing. All center on the lives of black folk in the United States by probing the worlds of black women to see who we unfold into our communities and the larger society. Social ethics, as a discipline, helps me get to this, as I think this is the way my brain works most naturally, creatively, and productively.

**RSN:** Can you tell us about your current academic life at Yale Divinity School, especially your work on religion and politics?

**Townes:** Well, that’s a lot right now. I will become associate dean for academic affairs in July 2008. I have eight areas I want to concentrate on during my term, but two of the most important areas are mentoring pretenure faculty and addressing the four areas of diversity we have identified (admissions, curriculum, ethos, and faculty hires). In addressing mentoring, we open up the possibility of exploring the ways to address curricular innovation and program and faculty research. We have talented pretenure faculty who can benefit from sustained

attention to their growth as an academician as well as scholar. The four areas of diversity touch on all areas of the academic environment of the school. A large part of my role as academic dean is to work with others as we develop ways to address these challenges, as well as to set a tone of collegiality and some vision to give excellent leadership in these areas.

I’m also a part of a group that began in 2006, the Initiative on Religion and Politics at Yale. The initiative seeks to provide a progressive religious voice to the sociopolitical issues of our day. We work with students to develop their sense of and abilities in social justice ministry, we want to develop a progressive religious think tank, and we also want to develop ways to provide a significant voice to the issues of our day on the local, national, and international level. One of the ways we want to get at the latter is developing partnerships with like-minded centers and initiatives in other colleges and universities.

One last area I’m invested in is growing the new Middle Passage Conversations on Black Religion in the African Diaspora Initiative here at Yale. We will launch the initiative this spring with a major conference here, April 3–5, that will feature eight conversation panels of over 40 black scholars from the United States, the United Kingdom, and Brazil. The conference is free and open to all — we are only limited by space!

**RSN:** What is your greatest joy in teaching?

**Townes:** Being a part of a student’s growth. Watching students gain confidence in their ideas and insights and expressing them with rigor and precision rather than as ad hominem statements are ways in which I hope to be a part of a student’s growth. For me, teaching is also about the moral formation of my students (as well as myself) and being a part of that process is also being a part of their growth — in other words, a student’s growth is about them as a whole person and helping them realize that the best of what we can be in our society is a person of head and heart, and trying to live that moment by moment.

**RSN:** What are your goals as the Academy’s president in 2008?

**Townes:** My primary goal is to deal with the issues and challenges we face in having an independent meeting and plot a way forward. My hope is that we will find a compromise in which the goods outlined in 2003 and the problems we face in 2008 can find a good resolution. Part of this will be addressed in the task forces begun by Jeffrey Stout last year to look at our governance and to consider the environmental footprint we leave at our Annual Meeting. But the board must sort through the Annual Meeting survey results (which include 629 often-detailed comments) and look at location, structure, book exhibits, EIS, receptions, meeting with scholarly societies, scholarly interactions, and how we relate to the SBL. Of particular interest to me is the impact the independent meeting decision has on colleagues at institutions that have few financial resources; student members; groups that have members from the AAR and the SBL that used the additional meeting time to meet because they would not be able to do so on their own; and scholars of color who often had scholarly commitments in both the AAR and the SBL.

The AAR is a very big tent and our membership has diverse interests — trying to find a way to address the majority of these while fostering scholarly rigor and justice are my chief goals in 2008.

# FOCUS

ON

## *The Work of the Academy*

### Independent Annual Meeting Survey

#### IN THIS ISSUE

Independent Annual Meeting Survey .....10

Academy Plans for Summer Seminars on Theologies of Religious Pluralism and Comparative Theology.....14

Realignment of the AAR Executive Staff .....15

**T**HE AMERICAN ACADEMY of Religion invited members from 2005, 2006, and 2007 (even if their memberships had lapsed during one or two of those years) to take the Independent Annual Meeting survey. The purpose of the survey was to provide a forum for members to express their opinions about several features of the upcoming independent Annual Meetings. The survey was not intended as a referendum or as a prelude to a return to traditional AAR-SBL joint meetings. The AAR Executive Office contacted members four times about the survey.

- Every AAR member received a postcard, via USPS, explaining the survey and inviting them to take it.
- Every AAR member received a letter, via e-mail, from Jeffrey Stout, AAR President, and Emilie Townes, Vice President, explaining why the AAR was doing a survey and inviting them to take it. The e-mail contained a hot link to the survey on the AAR website.
- Each member received the October AAR E-bulletin, which contained a reminder about the opportunity to take the survey. The E-bulletin also contained a hot link to the survey on the AAR website.
- The October edition of *Religious Studies News*, sent to every AAR member, contained a reminder about the opportunity to take the survey and included the letter from Jeffrey Stout and Emilie Townes.

The Executive Office invited several leadership groups to encourage their AAR colleagues to take the survey. These included:

- All AAR volunteer leaders (Board Members, Program Unit Chairs, and Standing Committee members). Several Regionally Elected Directors sent e-mails to their regional members encouraging them to take the survey.
- Departmental Chairs whose names are included in the AAR Departments database.
- AAR members who serve as Presidents and Deans of schools who are members of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada.

The AAR Executive Office also sent a letter, via USPS, to over 500 persons who work with Annual Meeting exhibitors — publishers, acquisition editors, and publishing house staff members — inviting them to take the survey. Many of these persons are not AAR members, so the Executive Office made arrangements for them to receive a special login ID number that would allow them to participate in the survey.

In all, 15,367 members and exhibitors were invited and enabled to take the survey. The questions posed on the survey were presented to respondents in random order to prevent order bias. The survey was available online from September 21, 2007, through October 15, 2007, and 2,706 persons participated, answering some or all of the questions. This represents a response rate of 17.61 percent.

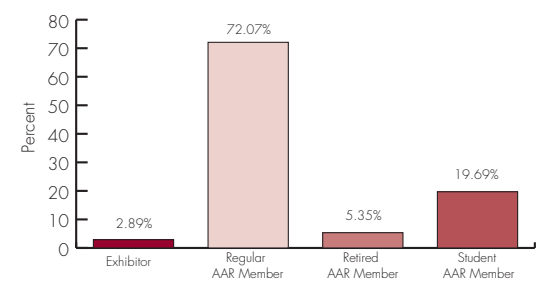
The survey itself contained two major sections: one captured demographic information about respondents and the other posed questions about the Annual Meeting. In addition, at three places in the survey we invited respondents to make comments; we did not place a limit on how much text respondents could type into the comment boxes. Respondents made

an unusually high number of comments, and some of the comments were quite lengthy. Question 12 (about the 2011 meeting) drew 1,454 comments (from 53.73 percent of respondents); 1,170 comments (from 43.24 percent of the respondents) were recorded after Question 13 (about attendance at next year's Annual Meeting); and 629 comments (23.24 percent of the respondents) were recorded at the end of the survey. Our Board is continuing to review and assess these comments, some of which contain personal identifying information. We will make the comments section of the survey available after the Board has had a chance to review it in its entirety and to make sure that no respondent's personal comments, intended to be made anonymously, are made public.

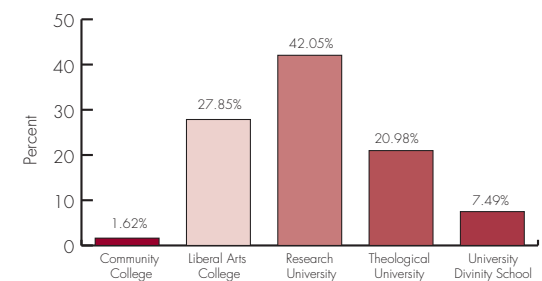
The results of the survey follow.

#### *Demographic Questions\**

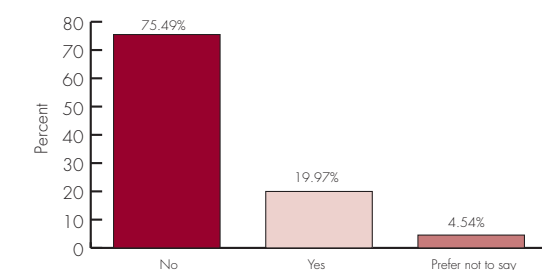
##### **Demographic 1: Please identify your AAR affiliation.**



##### **Demographic 2: Please identify your institutional home.**



##### **Demographic 3: Are you currently a member of the Society of Biblical Literature?**



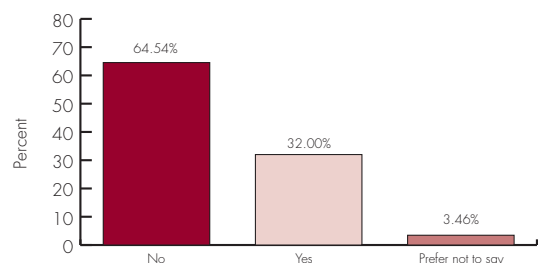
\* Note: Graph scales vary

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**Demographic 4: In the past have you been a member of the Society of Biblical Literature?**



**Demographic 5: Please identify and rank up to three religious tradition(s) on which you focus your research and teaching (Composite results below).**

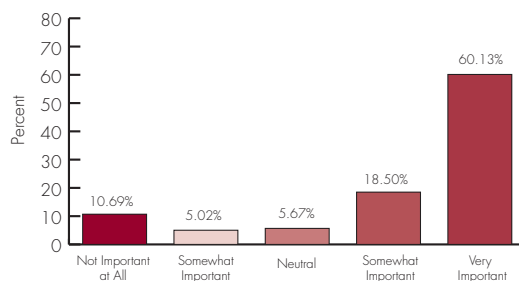
Religion	Choices	% of Total
Christian	3,247	47.20%
Postmodern	509	7.40%
Judaic	496	7.21%
Buddhist	357	5.19%
Islamic	323	4.70%
Popular and Folk Religions	278	4.04%
Ancient Greco-Roman	265	3.85%
African-American	242	3.52%
Hindu	219	3.18%
New Religions	209	3.04%
Ancient Near Eastern	182	2.65%
Indigenous Religions	108	1.57%
Taoist	84	1.22%
Native-American	82	1.19%
Gnostic	73	1.06%
African	72	1.05%
Confucian	68	0.99%
Jain	24	0.35%
Secular Shinto Modern	19	0.28%
Zoroastrian	12	0.17%
Sikh	10	0.15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,879</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Demographic 6: Please identify the methodological approaches you use in your work. Enter your first, second, and third most used approaches (Composite results below).**

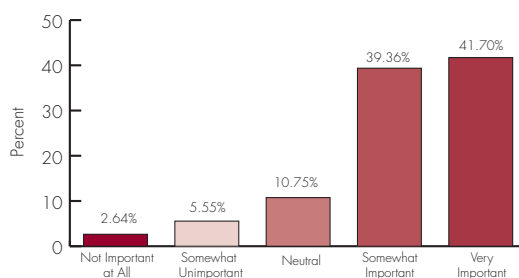
Approach	Choices	% of Total
Theology (Christian)	1,038	14.00%
History	643	8.67%
Historical	614	8.28%
Philosophy	518	6.99%
Cultural Studies	412	5.56%
Ethics	375	5.06%
Textual Studies	374	5.04%
Systematic	337	4.54%
Comparative	296	3.99%
Gender	278	3.75%
Theory of Religion	266	3.59%
Anthropology	246	3.32%
Literature	246	3.32%
Sociology	220	2.97%
Cultural Critique	185	2.49%
Practical	162	2.18%
Phenomenology	122	1.65%
liturgy/Worship	117	1.58%
Arts	110	1.48%
Psychology	108	1.46%
Ecumenical Studies	101	1.36%
Ideological	99	1.34%
Performance/Ritual Studies	99	1.34%
Philology	83	1.12%
Science	74	1.00%
Archaeology	71	0.96%
Pastoral Care/Counseling	63	0.85%
Myth	61	0.82%
Education	49	0.66%
Gay/Lesbian	48	0.65%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,415</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Questions about the Annual Meeting\***

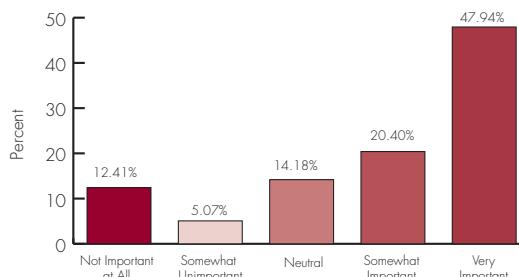
**Question 1: How important is it for you to attend Annual Meetings where the book exhibition includes displays, publications, and professional staff from both biblical studies and religious studies publishers?**



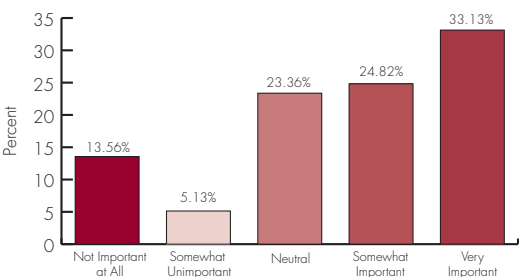
**Question 2: When you are deciding whether to attend the AAR Annual Meeting, how important a factor is the cost (to you) of attendance?**



**Question 3: Based on what you know about job candidates in your field, how important is it for the AAR and the SBL to offer a common center for interviews at a single convention site each year?**

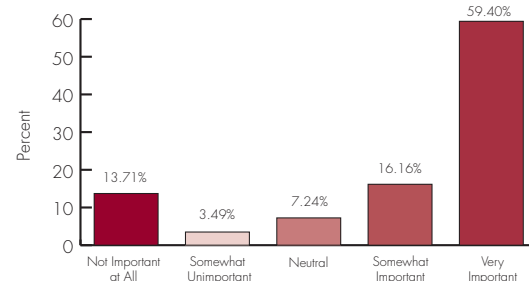


**Question 4: Given your institution's academic calendar, how important is it for the AAR to hold its Annual Meeting the weekend before the U.S. Thanksgiving holiday?**

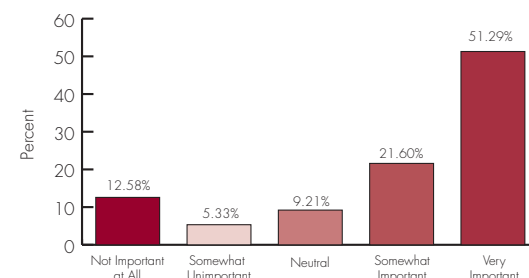


\* Note: Graph scales vary

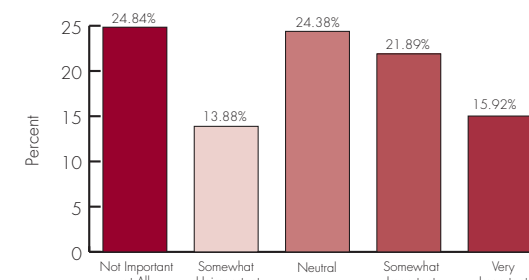
**Question 5: How important is it to you for the AAR to hold its Annual Meeting in the same city on the same days as the SBL?**



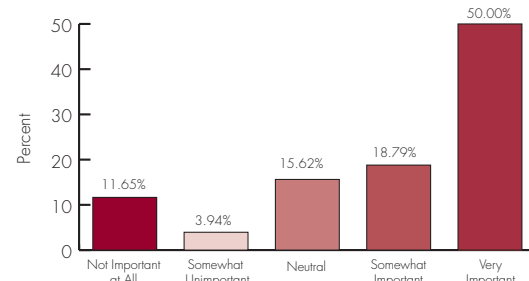
**Question 6: How important is it for you to be able to attend receptions, additional meetings, or workshops at an Annual Meeting that includes both AAR and SBL members?**



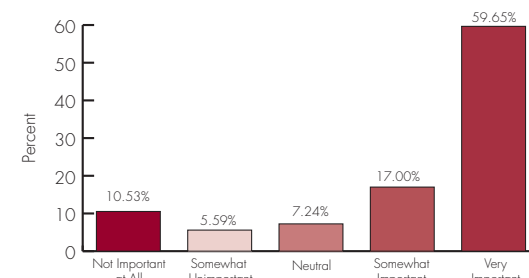
**Question 7: How important is it for you to attend an AAR Annual Meeting that is scheduled concurrently with scholarly organizations other than the SBL (e.g., Middle Eastern Studies Association, Society of Christian Ethics, Association for Jewish Studies, etc.)?**



**Question 8: Based on what you know about faculty conducting searches for your institution, how important is it for the AAR and the SBL to offer a common center for interviews at a single convention site each year?**



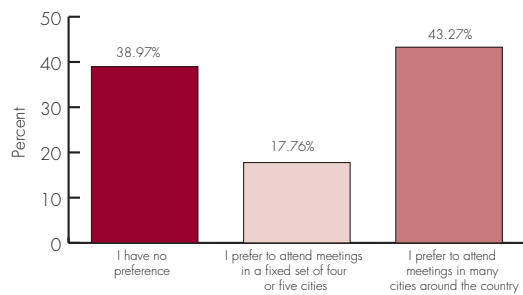
**Question 9: How important is it for you to attend Annual Meetings where you can share scholarly dialogue, in and out of formal sessions, with both AAR and SBL members?**



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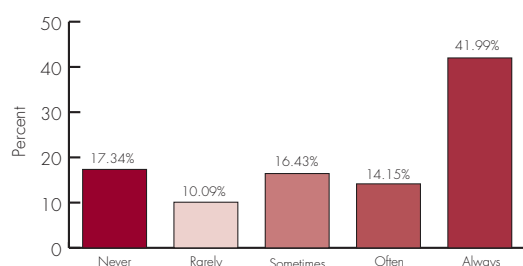
**Question 10: AAR Annual Meetings have been held in ten different cities over the last ten years. Some members have suggested that we rotate our Annual Meetings through a smaller, fixed set of four or five cities. Would you prefer to attend meetings in many cities around the country, or would you prefer to meet in a fixed set of four or five cities?**



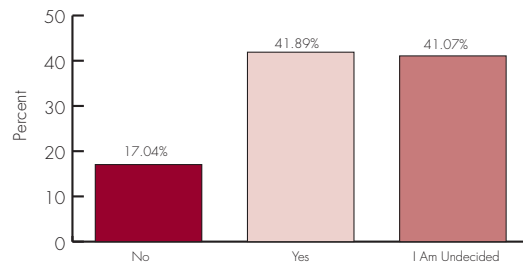
**Question 11: In your opinion, which three of the following are most important to you as you consider attending an Annual Meeting of the AAR? (Identify the three items most important to you).**

Why Attend the Annual Meeting?	Rank	Selections	% of Total
The opportunity to attend scholarly presentations (papers, panels, etc.)	1	1,439	18.79%
The opportunity to attend a large and comprehensive book exhibition	2	1,185	15.47%
The opportunity to make scholarly presentations (papers, panels, etc.)	3	1,070	13.97%
The opportunity to meet with AAR members in one's specialized field	4	1,021	13.33%
The opportunity to attend or participate in SBL sessions	5	621	8.11%
The opportunity to meet with AAR members outside one's specialized field	6	528	6.89%
The opportunity to be interviewed for a job	7	420	5.48%
The opportunity to meet with SBL members	8	380	4.96%
The opportunity to meet with acquisitions editors	9	309	4.03%
The opportunity to interview job candidates	10	288	3.76%
The opportunity to participate in receptions involving your alma mater	11	257	3.36%
The opportunity to meet with members of scholarly societies other than the SBL	12	142	1.85%
<b>Total</b>		<b>7,660</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Question 12: In 2011, the AAR plans to meet at the same time that the SBL meets in San Francisco. The two organizations will meet in different facilities, and will not co-publish a program book. After 2011, how often would you like to see Annual Meetings conducted on roughly this model (i.e., independently administered, but in the same city and on the same weekend as the SBL's meeting)?**



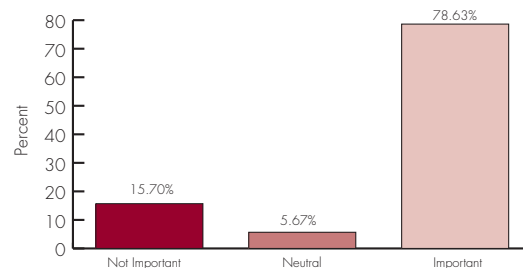
**Question 13: Do you intend to attend the 2008 AAR Annual Meeting in Chicago (held November 1st through November 3rd), the first Annual Meeting held independently of the SBL?**



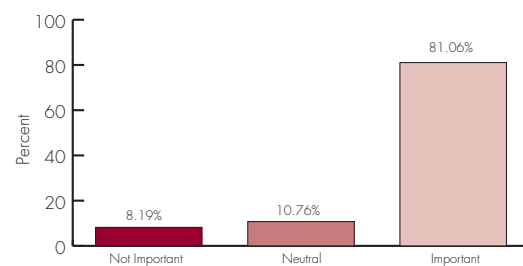
## Collapsed Responses by Percentage\*

Frequently, results given on a five-choice Likert scale survey are "collapsed" to show more general results. In such instances the "Not important at all" and "Somewhat unimportant" categories are combined, the "Neutral" response is left as is, and the "Somewhat important" and "Very important" categories are combined. The following charts show how the Independent Annual Meeting survey responses can be so "collapsed."

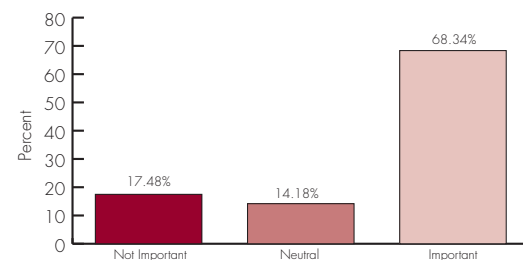
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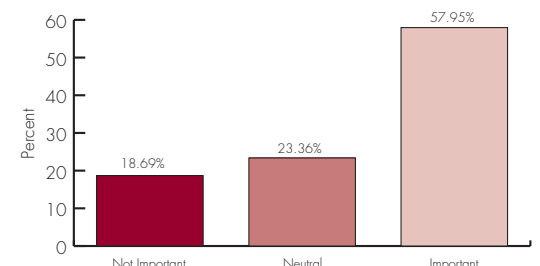
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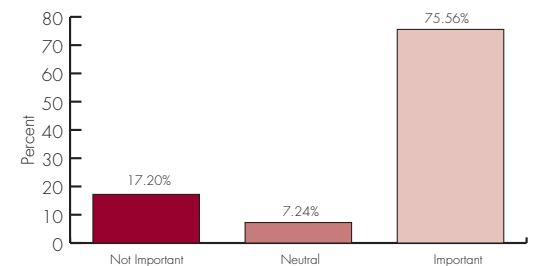
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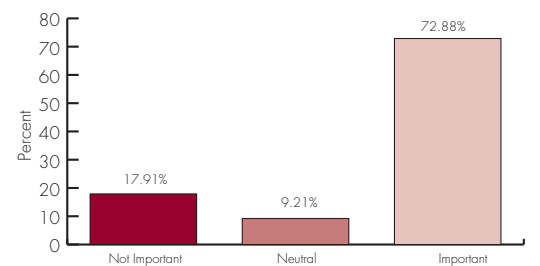
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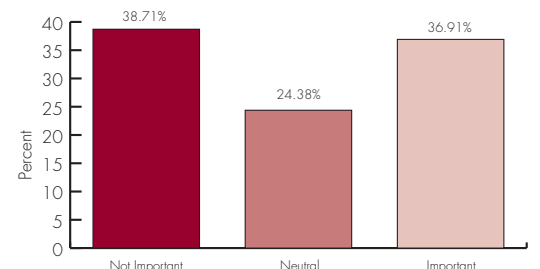
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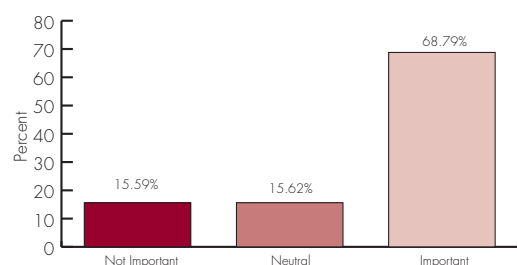
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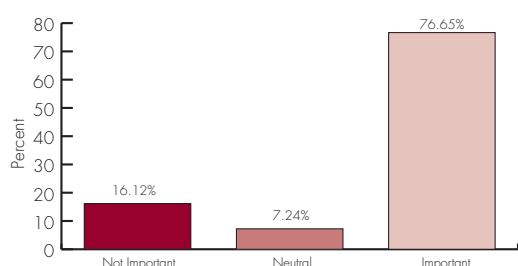


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**Question 9: How important is it for you to attend Annual Meetings where you can share scholarly dialogue, in and out of formal sessions, with both AAR and SBL members?**



### The "Shape" of the Sample

We know that 2,706 persons took the survey. But how do the respondents compare to the overall membership of the AAR? The survey was anonymous — we cannot tell how a particular respondent answered the questions. But our polling software does allow us to capture some demographic and participation information about the respondents. This can be compared to the overall "shape" of the AAR membership. This comparison can be done in five areas:

#### I. Membership Type

The AAR identifies its members in four ways: Regular, Student, Retired, and Joint (members who also belong to the SBL). Note that the Joint membership is not a discrete category: Joint members are spread across the Regular, Student, and Retired categories. The following shows how the survey respondents compare to the entire AAR membership for the years 2005, 2006, and 2007.

	2005, 2006, and 2007 Members	Respondents
Regular	62.91%	72.04%
Student	31.74%	19.72%
Retired	5.35%	5.35%
Exhibitors	0.00%	2.89%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Joint Membership Data: 19.97 percent of survey respondents identified themselves as Joint members. In September 2007, 8.46 percent of all current AAR members were Joint members.

**Conclusion:** Relative to the shape of the overall membership, a smaller percentage of Student Members took the survey, a greater percentage of Regular Members took the survey, and a greater percentage of Joint Members took the survey.

#### II. AAR Regional Identification

All AAR members, by virtue of where they work, are members of one of ten regions. The 2007 Regional Census of all AAR members is compared to the regional identity of all survey respondents below.

Region	2007 Regional IAM Survey	
	Census	Respondents
Southeast	16.62%	16.54%
Mid-Atlantic	16.38%	15.17%
Midwest	12.52%	12.47%
Western	12.23%	14.58%
New England-Maritimes	9.20%	8.33%
Other (non-U.S., non-Canada)	8.69%	6.53%
Eastern International	6.82%	6.45%
Southwest	6.29%	6.22%
Upper Midwest	5.32%	7.15%
Pacific Northwest	3.39%	3.87%
Rocky Mountain-Great Plains	2.55%	2.70%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Conclusion:** Relative to the 2007 Regional Census, those who took the survey are highly representative of the overall AAR membership.

#### III. Member "Activity" Relative to the Annual Meeting

The following chart compares how many Annual Meetings, of the last five, the 2005, 2006, and 2007 members attended, as compared with how many the IAM survey respondents attended.

How many Annual Meetings of the last 5?	2005, 2006, and 2007 Members	IAM Survey Respondents
0	37.00%	15.80%
1	25.30%	15.30%
2	13.30%	14.20%
3	8.90%	14.40%
4	7.80%	17.60%
5	7.60%	22.70%
<b>Total</b>	<b>99.9%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Conclusion:** IAM survey respondents are very active relative to the general membership when it comes to Annual Meeting attendance. A much higher percentage of the respondents have attended the Annual Meeting regularly than has the general membership.

#### IV. Member "Activity" Relative to Membership

We have tracked the number of years, in the last three, that respondents have been members of AAR and have measured this against all members from 2005, 2006, and 2007. The following chart shows this data:

Years	2005, 2006, and 2007 Members	IAM Respondents
3 of 3	47.30%	77.58%
2 of 3	22.50%	12.17%
1 of 3	30.20%	7.38%
0 of 3	0.00%	2.87%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Conclusion:** IAM respondents are more likely than most members to keep their AAR membership current.


#### V. Member Research and Teaching Interests

Respondents were asked to identify and rank up to three religious traditions on which they focus their teaching and research. The list of traditions we used in the survey was taken from another instrument we have, the Research Interest Survey (RIS). The RIS has been taken by over 8,500 AAR members in the last three years. One difference between the RIS and the demographic we used in the survey is that on the RIS, respondents are able to pick more than three religious traditions, whereas on the IAM survey, they are limited to three traditions. As it turns out, those who took the RIS chose, on average, 3.4 religious traditions, whereas IAM respondents chose, on average, 2.8 religions. Another difference is that the RIS includes four categories of Christianity (Christian, Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox) whereas the IAM survey has only three (Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox).

The chart below shows a comparison of the RIS and IAM surveys. It includes all the choices persons made and treats them equally (i.e., if a respondent clicked Islam once, it counts as one, regardless of whether it was his/her first, second, or third choice). It collapses all the subcategories of Christianity into a single category (Christian). The chart is arranged from highest number of choices to lowest number of choices.

	RIS		IAM	
	Choices	% of Total	Choices	% of Total
Christian	12,666	45.44%	3,247	47.33%
Postmodern	1,949	6.99%	509	7.42%
Buddhist	1,515	5.44%	357	5.20%
Judaic	1,460	5.24%	496	7.23%
Popular and Folk Religions	1,237	4.44%	278	4.05%
Islamic	1,153	4.14%	323	4.71%
New Religions	1,114	4.00%	209	3.05%
Hindu	984	3.53%	219	3.19%
African-American	722	2.59%	242	3.53%
Ancient Greco-Roman	715	2.57%	265	3.86%
Indigenous Religions	664	2.38%	108	1.57%
Native-American	601	2.16%	82	1.20%
Ancient Near Eastern	584	2.10%	182	2.65%
African	537	1.93%	72	1.05%
Gnostic	514	1.84%	73	1.06%
Taoist	502	1.80%	84	1.22%
Confucian	450	1.61%	68	0.99%
Zoroastrian	185	0.66%	12	0.17%
Jain	171	0.61%	24	0.35%
Sikh	147	0.53%	10	0.15%
Choices	27,870		6,860	
<b>Choices per respondent</b>	<b>3.27</b>		<b>2.78</b>	

**Conclusion:** The IAM respondents identify their areas of study in a manner very similar to the RIS respondents. A slightly higher percentage of those who study Christian, Ancient Greco-Roman, Judaic, African-American, Ancient Near Eastern, and Islamic traditions took the IAM survey. A slightly lower percentage of those who study Zoroastrian, Sikh, African, Native American, Jainist, Gnostic, Confucian, Indigenous, and Taoist traditions took the IAM survey.

At its November 2007 meeting, after an initial review of these results of the Independent Annual Meeting survey, the AAR Board of Directors voted to devote part of its April 2008 meeting to a discussion of future Annual Meetings. The Board and the Executive Office will inform members of any developments that may occur in light of this discussion. 

\* Note: Graph scales vary

# Academy Plans for Summer Seminars on Theologies of Religious Pluralism and Comparative Theology

*A Report from the Theologies of Religious Pluralism Planning Committee and the Theological Education Steering Committee*



John J. Thatamanil is Assistant Professor of Theology at Vanderbilt Divinity School. He is the author of *The Immanent Divine: God, Creation, and the Human Predicament* (Fortress Press, 2006). He is currently at work on a book tentatively entitled *Religious Diversity after "Religion"* (forthcoming from Fordham University Press). He is Chair of the Theological Education Steering Committee. He can be reached at john.j.thatamanil@vanderbilt.edu.

**RSN:** Congratulations on receiving the Planning Grant from the Henry Luce Foundation. What was the grant for, and what did you accomplish?

**Thatamanil:** First, let me say that the Theological Education Steering Committee (TESC) and the AAR are enormously grateful to the Luce Foundation for this grant. The grant enabled the TESC to gather a group of distinguished scholars who work on theologies of religious pluralism (TRP) and comparative theology to plan a series of summer seminars for theological educators on TRP and comparative theology. Convening as the Theologies of Religious Pluralism Planning Committee (TRPPC), the group included Francis X. Clooney, S.J. (Harvard Divinity School), Jeannine Hill Fletcher (Fordham University), Mark Heim (Andover Newton Theological School), Anantanand Rambachan (St. Olaf College), and myself (Vanderbilt Divinity School). Peter Ochs (University of Virginia) was unable to join us at our meeting, though he will be involved in our future work.

**RSN:** Let's back up for a moment. What is the TESC, and what is its overall mandate?

**Thatamanil:** Our charge reads as follows: "The Theological Education Steering Committee meets the scholarly and professional needs of theological educators by creating programs and services that bring theological studies into the wider conversation of the Academy and enriches the work of theological educators." The term "theological educator" in the first instance refers to all involved in graduate theological education. The term also includes those who teach in undergraduate theology departments or religious studies departments who take themselves to be theological educators. Anantanand Rambachan, a member of the TESC and the TRPPC is a good example. He is a constructive theologian, albeit one who operates from within the Hindu tradition.

**RSN:** So, the TESC's charge extends beyond Christian terrain and beyond graduate education?

**Thatamanil:** It hardly needs to be said that much, indeed most, of what goes by the name "theological education" in the North American

context is Christian. Hence, TESC has an obligation to attend carefully to the needs of AAR members whose scholarly, teaching and professional lives are lived out in seminaries and divinity schools. But I hasten to add that nothing that the AAR does is targeted exclusively for persons from a single religious tradition. Theology within the AAR takes a multiplicity of configurations and even names. Although some Buddhist scholars have demonstrated relative comfort with the term "theology" — as is evinced in the 1999 edited collection by Roger Jackson and John Makransky entitled *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars* (RoutledgeCurzon) — AAR groups tend to talk about "constructive-critical" work instead. The AAR explicitly "welcomes all disciplined reflection on religion — both from within and outside of communities of belief and practice" (emphasis added). Naturally, these communities are not just Christian. So, the term "theology," within the AAR and hence also for the TESC, cannot be understood as a narrowly Christian term.

Even on the graduate front, theological education encompasses the various university divinity schools which have long been and continue to be populated by persons from a variety of traditions. Some seminaries also are becoming multi-religious, both on the faculty side as well as among students. Hartford Seminary and Lutheran Theological Seminary in Chicago are examples that come readily to mind. Of course, graduate theological education also includes the various Jewish seminaries. I expect that in this decade, we will also see the rise of graduate Muslim institutions. Still more broadly, graduate and undergraduate theology and religious studies departments also include Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and others who would characterize their work as "constructive-critical" if not "theological."

**RSN:** And this religious diversity is central to the work of the TESC and the TRPPC?

**Thatamanil:** Yes, the work of the TRPPC is to plan summer seminars for faculty on TRP and comparative theology. While religious diversity has been a fact of life in America following the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, few scholars in theological education are trained in TRP and comparative theology. The trouble is that clergy and religious leaders from across traditions — who are by necessity generalists — have to deal routinely with questions about how to officiate at interreligious weddings or fulfill chaplaincy obligations that require engagement with persons across traditions. Life in an ever more pluralistic nation makes reflection about the nature and meaning of religious diversity a mandatory component in theological education. Speaking in Christian terms, we would hardly consider a student training for ordination well-prepared if she were unable to work up a good sermon; likewise, it is hard to see how we could call a minister well-prepared for her vocation if she finds herself unable to educate her congregation about how to respond to widespread resistance in her town when Muslims seek to purchase an unused church building.

The question of religious diversity also bears on every area within theological education and is not just a matter to be left to the theologians. Church historians have long known that encounter with religious diversity has been a reality in all historical periods, but that knowledge has not sufficiently trickled down to students. The reality of religious diversity is

**Editor's Note:**

RSN recently interviewed John J. Thatamanil regarding the results of work on behalf of the Academy's Theological Programs Initiative.

especially pressing for pastoral caregivers and chaplains in hospital and military settings, but seminary training remains largely monoreligious.

**RSN:** So, the summer seminars are not meant for those who are already experts in TRP or comparative theology?

**Thatamanil:** Right. The TESC and the TRPPC believe that most academic institutions — whether we are speaking of graduate seminaries or undergraduate religious studies departments — cannot afford to dedicate faculty lines to specialist scholars in these areas. Meanwhile, nonspecialists are keenly feeling the need to get up to speed on the relevant literature and incorporate theological reflection about religious diversity into their teaching and research.

*The core goal of these seminars will be to help faculty participants to formulate a working answer to the question, 'What significance does my neighbor's tradition have for my own?'*

**RSN:** You keep referring to theological reflection about religious diversity, but isn't such reflection exclusively a Christian preoccupation?

**Thatamanil:** Not at all. As Anant Rambachan observed during our planning meeting, religious traditions have always spoken about other traditions and communities. What is new, Rambachan insists, is that such speaking does and indeed must now happen in the presence of those others. On the research front, we are seeing the emergence of new work that goes beyond attending to Christian approaches to religious diversity. Kristin Kiblinger's *Buddhist Inclusivism: Attitudes toward Religious Others* (Ashgate, 2005) is a monograph that comes readily to mind. Paul Knitter's edited volume, *The Myth of Religious Superiority* (Orbis, 2004) includes Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jewish, and Muslim approaches to religious diversity. Likewise, David Ray Griffin's edited collection, *Deep Religious Pluralism* (WJK, 2005) also includes a variety of religious perspectives.

**RSN:** Is the work of the TRPPC finished?

**Thatamanil:** Hardly! Although our work as a planning group is largely complete, all members of TRPPC, Peter Ochs included, have agreed to serve as part of the teaching team for the first run of our summer seminars, providing of course, that we receive funding.

**RSN:** So what will these summer seminars look like? What are your basic instructional goals?

**Thatamanil:** Well, we took our mark from Rambachan's argument that we must generate a religiously diverse group to think about religious diversity. That will be a basic consideration. Second, we agreed that these summer seminars cannot amount to remedial coursework in world religions. No doubt faculty participants will learn a great deal about traditions other than their own, but by way of focused learning and reflection on theologies of religious pluralism and comparative theology.

The core goal of these seminars will be to help faculty participants to formulate a working answer to the question, "What significance does my neighbor's tradition have for my own?" At the end of the summer seminar, faculty participants will have worked out the basic elements of their own TRP and have substantive familiarity with current literature in TRP and comparative theology. We also hope to equip faculty participants to incorporate their learning into restructuring their courses. How might the basic course in theology include a unit on TRP and comparative theology? How might a course in Hebrew Bible, New Testament, or pastoral care take up questions of religious diversity?

As far as content goes, we begin with the assumption that religious traditions have long histories of speaking about other communities and traditions. So, part of our work will be to unearth and to articulate those histories. The subsequent question is this: What should our traditions say about our religious neighbors? What can we say about our neighbors in the presence and hearing of those neighbors?

**RSN:** Is there a normative theology of religious pluralism that your group will commend to faculty seminar participants?

**Thatamanil:** Not at all. I doubt that the members of this religiously and theologically diverse group could come to any such consensus! Our task is to introduce seminar participants to the best current scholarship in these contested fields and to assist seminar participants in formulating their own positions. The only constraint on all who are present — on instructors and learners — is that we must articulate and defend our convictions in the presence of persons from traditions other than our own.

**RSN:** But won't the very fact that the group is religiously diverse tilt the conversation in the direction of a pluralistic theology of religions of the sort advocated by John Hick or Paul Knitter?

**Thatamanil:** Not necessarily. Let's admit that the presence of persons from traditions other than one's own, especially among academic conversation partners, is likely to generate a spirit of hospitality, but that need not mean that we are compelled to agree with each other. Indeed, there is no agreement *within any given tradition* on these issues. Just as there are Christian exclusivists, inclusivists, and pluralists, there are also Buddhist inclusivists and exclusivists. We cannot ignore our neighbors but we need not agree with them. Indeed, our willingness to engage in informed conversation and

(continued on page 15)



# Realignment of the AAR Executive Staff

Jack Fitzmier, American Academy of Religion

ONE RECENT FOCUS of organizational leadership is the alignment of resources — particularly of staff resources. Over the last year I have done a good deal of thinking about how the Executive Staff of the American Academy of Religion is organized. Is it properly aligned? That is, have we accurately identified our needs and do we have the right staff members in place to meet those needs? In most cases, I answered that question in the affirmative. But it was also clear that in other spots, the Executive Staff had gaps and lacuna. After a good deal of thought and discussion with our senior staff and the Executive Committee of the Board, we have done a modest realignment of the Atlanta staff. Fortunately, this has occurred

without the need to let anyone go or to add additional staff. We have fine-tuned job descriptions, put backup personnel in place in critical offices, and added some functions that were missing. Here is a listing of our major areas and the staff that work in each one:

*Executive:* Jack Fitzmier  
*Finance and Administration:* Deborah Minor, Ina Ferrell, Toby Director, Deanna Lord  
*Development:* Margaret Jenkins  
*Publications:* Carey J. Gifford, Stephanie Gray  
*Professional Programs:* Kyle Cole, Jessica Davenport  
*External Relations:* Steve Herrick, Susan Snider

*Membership Development:* Myesha Jenkins  
*Marketing and Meetings:* Aislinn Jones, Robert Puckett  
*Information Technology:* Joe DeRose

While this does not represent a radical restructuring, there are some new features. We have given sharper focus to two areas — Publications, which is headed up by Carey J. Gifford, and Professional Programs, which is headed up by Kyle Cole. We have also added a function that was somewhat nascent, but is increasingly important to the success of the AAR — that of Marketing. Aislinn Jones has added this to her portfolio, and has been able to do so, in part, because we brought Robert Puckett, her assistant, onto the staff in a full time capacity. Third, and most impor-

tant, we have created an altogether new role — that of Membership Development. Myesha Jenkins has agreed to take on this challenge. She will help us think about who our members are, why they belong to the AAR, and what their professional and scholarly needs are. The changes, as well as a series of other more modest staffing shifts, are intended to help our Executive Staff to continue its tradition of excellence in serving you, our members. If you have any questions about the realignment, please contact Jack Fitzmier, AAR Executive Director, at 404-727-3049. RSN

(continued from page 14)

debate with persons from other traditions is itself a sign that we take them seriously enough to disagree.

Moreover, there is a perception among some that the question of religious diversity is a matter of concern for mainline liberals alone, but judging by the scholarship, that is not the case. Some of the best work being done in the field comes from evangelicals. I am thinking in particular about Amos Yong's fine work, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Baker, 2003) in employing his Pentecostal commitments to shift Christian TRP away from an exclusive focus on questions of soteriology to questions of pneumatology. Given his work in particular, it is no longer possible to characterize — perhaps we should say caricature — the evangelical position as narrowly exclusivistic.

**RSN:** What special areas of expertise will this particular group of instructors bring to the first offering of the summer seminar?

**Thatamanil:** Well, first let me say that we will not limit the instructional team to the scholars already mentioned, namely — Clooney, Heim, Hill Fletcher, Ochs, Rambachan, and myself. Our work would be incomplete without Muslim and Buddhist perspectives at the very least. A second caveat is that each of these scholars would do a far better job at characterizing their own work than I am able to do. Finally, I'm certain that in a seminar for faculty learners, the participants themselves will offer an abundance of resources.

Now to your question:

Francis X. Clooney, S.J. ranks as perhaps our most distinguished comparative theologian. His work focuses on how to read Hindu texts with care in their home contexts and then bring those texts into conversation with Christian theology. He has recently completed a Christian commentary on a key work of the Sri Vaisnava theologian Vedanta Desika as well as a second book on loving surrender in Francis De Sales and Vedanta Desika.

Mark Heim has argued that talk about religious traditions as paths to the selfsame end is limited if not mistaken. He argues for a multiplicity of salvations, a diversity of religious ends. Mark also makes a complementary effort to find in the trinity a constructive Christian theological foundation for attention to the distinctive character of other religions. In his teaching work,

Mark reports that he finds it difficult, if not impossible, to form students in their own tradition without helping those students think through what they ought to think about other traditions. He is also increasingly encountering Christian students who have been significantly formed in and by traditions other than their own but now are training to be Christian leaders and seeking to integrate their multiple religious commitments. For such students, questions of TRP and comparative theology are absolutely critical. Unfortunately, Mark observes that many theological institutions have little at the heart of their curricula to help students take up these questions.

Jeannine Hill Fletcher has recently published a ground-breaking book entitled *Monopoly on Salvation? A Feminist Approach to Religious Pluralism* (Continuum, 2005). The virtues of this book are many, not least that it makes a compelling case that our religious traditions have always been in contact with and shaped by each other. That work is part of a larger argument against the reification of religious traditions over against each other. She undercuts claims to radical difference between traditions, claims that undergird notions of utter incommensurability, and she also challenges those who posit an underlying sameness between and across traditions. Here, her critique challenges the work of both John Hick and our own Mark Heim. Her work also sheds new light on important postcolonial themes like hybridity. Her current and future work is also concerned to explore the lived experience of women's interreligious dialogue.

Peter Ochs's work on scriptural reasoning as a way of advancing an Abrahamic dialogue is well known. In a recent essay, Ochs characterizes scriptural reasoning as, "pragmatic, postliberal, scriptural, and inter-Abrahamic." He also notes that scriptural reasoning is especially concerned to correct for modern liberal theology's insufficient attention to questions of everyday practice. He brings a wealth of experience to the work of comparative theology.

Anantanand Rambachan writes as a constructive thinker within the Hindu tradition of Advaita Vedanta. His work is particularly concerned to take up the tension between 19th and 20th century representations of Hinduism as "mystical" and anti-scriptural and his own experience of the Advaita tradition as fundamentally committed to exegesis and commentary. Rambachan has extensive experience in interreligious dialogue at national and international levels.

**RSN:** And what about your own work?

**Thatamanil:** Well, my first book was an exercise in constructive comparative theology. I compared Sankara and Tillich on the human predicament and offered a proposal for what a nondualist Christian theology might look like. My current book project is driven by a critical worry broached in Jeannine's book. So much of TRP has proceeded by taking up the following question: Are the various religions paths up the same mountain or paths up different mountains? Put otherwise, do the religions aspire to the same good or are there multiple religious goods or ends? I am increasingly worried about what these questions take for granted: that there are in the world a variety of "religions," that these traditions are sealed off from each other, and that these are variations of the same generic reality. These assumptions are problematic not least because they take for granted that soteriological differences come into play only when one crosses the boundary between one religion and another. The obvious problem is that the traditions we call "religions" are by no means internally consistent on soteriological matters. The more subtle but equally consequential problem is this: Just where are the boundaries between "religions" to be found? The reality of "multiple religious participation" makes conventional talk about "religions" in the plural rather problematic.

RSN readers also know that there has been an explosion of important scholarship, much of it coming from postcolonial quarters, that renders problematic the very idea of "religion." I am thinking especially about the work of Talal Asad and S. N. Balagangadhara in anthropology but also the impressive work of scholars like Timothy Fitzgerald, Richard King, Russell McCutcheon, and others. A conclusion to be drawn from their work is that critical scholarship cannot take the category "religion" and its contrast term "the secular" for granted. Theology of religious pluralism, has by and large, done just that. My sense is that it is high time for TRP and comparative theology to consider what this scholarship has to say about our enterprise.

**RSN:** How will the summer seminar be structured?

**Thatamanil:** Briefly, our planning group decided that the most promising format for the kind of collaborative work we hope to generate will require that these summer seminars meet over two summers for one full week each sum-

mer. We will also convene the group at the Annual Meeting. Naturally, in the first weeklong meeting, our expert instructors will do the bulk of the work and introduce participants to the key questions, themes, methods, and texts in TRP and comparative theology. We will also talk a good bit about the pedagogical challenges of integrating this work into coursework and teaching. Our meeting at the Annual Meeting will enable us to take stock of how work done in the first summer has been incorporated into the teaching and research lives of seminar participants. That meeting will also enable us to plan carefully for a second weeklong meeting in the following summer. The second summer will include a focus on presentations by seminar participants about their developing perspectives on the central questions of comparative theology and TRP. We very much hope that some of these presentations will find their way to publication. Our Annual Meeting meeting will help us to identify unanswered questions and special problems that seminar participants want us to treat in greater depth in our second week together. The TRPPC is convinced that meeting over two summers and at the Annual Meeting will generate a sense of community and collaboration that a single meeting in one summer alone could not accomplish. If funding is forthcoming, we hope to have the first meeting of our summer seminar in May 2009.

**RSN:** What will you look for when selecting seminar participants? Will there be an application process?

**Thatamanil:** We have not yet developed application forms. But, in short, yes. We envision an application process, and we hope to have funding for faculty participants to attend these summer meetings. We are also hoping to have funding in place for follow up grants that will enable faculty participants to take on some project for their home institution. This might mean funding for a lecture series on TRP and comparative theology, funds that will help in course creation, and the like. We will ask applicants to articulate just why a movement into this work is the next natural phase in their teaching and scholarly lives. For now, we would welcome expressions of interest via E-mail so that we can send out application materials should funding come through. RSN



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### ANALYTICAL-DESCRIPTIVE STUDIES

David Carrasco, Harvard University  
 Amy M. Hollywood, Harvard University  
 Steven P. Hopkins, Swarthmore College

### CONSTRUCTIVE-REFLECTIVE STUDIES

Francis X. Clooney, Harvard University

(continued on next page)



**HISTORICAL STUDIES**

Catherine Brekus, University of Chicago  
David Frankfurter, University of New Hampshire  
Norman J. Girardot, Lehigh University

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

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\* indicates newly appointed or elected. Photo, if available, at right.



Rebecca T. Alpert



Edward Phillip Antonio



Edwin David Aponte



Paula K. R. Arai



Whitney Bauman



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Chase Skorburg



Jeffrey L. Stout



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Deanna A. Thompson



Emilie M. Townes



Nelly Van Doorn-Harder



Jonathan L. Walton

**Call for Committee Nominations**

Each year members of the American Academy of Religion are invited to nominate persons to fill open positions on AAR Standing Committees, Task Forces, and Juries. This year there are openings on the following groups:

- \* Academic Relations Committee
- \* Book Award Juries
- \* Career Services Advisory Committee
- \* History of Religions Jury
- \* International Connections Committee
- \* Nominations Committee
- \* Public Understanding of Religion Committee
- \* Publications Committee
- \* Research Grant Jury
- \* Status of Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession Committee
- \* Status of Women in the Profession Committee
- \* Teaching and Learning Committee
- \* Theological Education Steering Committee

Nominations for positions on these groups must be made in writing, and must include 1) a description of the nominee's academic and professional interests; 2) a summary of the nominee's activity in the AAR; 3) a statement describing the nominee's interest or promise for a particular assignment; and 4) a current copy of the nominee's curriculum vita. Members may nominate themselves. All nominees must be members in good standing of the AAR. Nominations must be received by May 1, 2008, and may be e-mailed, faxed, or posted to:

Jack Fitzmier  
Executive Director  
American Academy of Religion  
Suite 300  
825 Houston Mill Road NE  
Atlanta, GA 30329 USA  
Fax: 404-727-7959  
[nominations@aarweb.org](mailto:nominations@aarweb.org)

Emilie Townes, President of the AAR, will review nominations and make selections during August and September 2008. Nominees will be notified of their status soon thereafter. If you have questions about particular assignments, please feel free to contact the AAR's Executive Staff, Board members, or Committee/Task Force chairs. Committee descriptions and rosters are available on the web at [www.aarweb.org/about\\_AAR/committees](http://www.aarweb.org/about_AAR/committees).



## THE AAR THANKS THE FOLLOWING OUTGOING COMMITTEE, TASK FORCE, AND JURY MEMBERS

Richard Amesbury, Claremont School of Theology (Graduate Student)  
 Ellen T. Armour, Vanderbilt University (Research Grants)  
 Ali S. Asani, Harvard University (Religion in the Schools)  
 John Berthrong, Boston University (Research Grants)  
 Kimberly Bresler, Princeton Theological Seminary (Graduate Student)  
 Karen McCarthy Brown, Drew University (History of Religions)  
 Richard M. Carp, Appalachian State University (Academic Relations)  
 John C. Cavadini, University of Notre Dame (Program)  
 Francis X. Clooney, Harvard University (Executive)  
 Frederick M. Denny, University of Colorado, Boulder (Rocky Mountains—Great Plains Regionally Elected Director)  
 James A. Donahue, Graduate Theological Union (Nominations)  
 Diana L. Eck, Harvard University (Executive, Nominations, and Program)  
 Robert Flanigan, Spelman College (Finance)  
 Nancy Frankenberry, Dartmouth College (Nominations)  
 Jin Hee Han, New York Theological Seminary (International Connections)  
 Bradley L. Herling, Marymount Manhattan College (Graduate Student)  
 Richard Heyduck, Northeast Texas Community College (Religion in the Schools)  
 Thomas P. Kasulis, Ohio State University (History of Religions)  
 Melissa Johnston-Barrett, Emory University (Graduate Student)  
 Julia A. Lamm, Georgetown University (Book Awards Jury)  
 Jane Marie Law, Cornell University (Regions and Eastern International Regionally Elected Director)  
 Bruce B. Lawrence, Duke University (History of Religions)  
 Maurice Lee, Harvard University (Graduate Student)  
 Davina C. Lopez, Eckerd College (Graduate Student)  
 Daisy L. Machado, Union Theological Seminary (Theological Education)  
 Heather A. McKay, Edge Hill University (International Connections)  
 Stephanie Y. Mitchem, University of South Carolina (Status of Women in the Profession)  
 Gustav Niebuhr, Syracuse University (Public Understanding of Religion)  
 Stacy L. Patty, Lubbock Christian University (Executive and Southwest Regionally Elected Director)  
 Michelene Pesantubbee, University of Iowa (Executive)  
 Timothy M. Renick, Georgia State University (Teaching and Learning)  
 Sarah McFarland Taylor, Northwestern University (Regions)  
 Nelly Van Doorn-Harder, Valparaiso University (Program)  
 Lynne Westfield, Drew University (Religion in the Schools)  
 Chun-Fang Yu, Columbia University (Academic Relations)



## Update on Government Relations Program

**T**HE AAR CONTINUED to support and expand its government relations program in 2007. During the year, the AAR advocated for increased federal funding for the humanities and coordinated almost a dozen meetings for FBI and prison chaplaincy program officials to meet with scholars on a variety of issues related to religious beliefs and practices.

In March 2007, the AAR and 36 other scholarly associations co-sponsored Humanities Advocacy Day, an annual event in Washington, D.C., organized by the National Humanities Alliance. AAR board members Frederick Denny and Stacy Patty, member Scott Collins-Jones, and staffers Steve Herrick and Shelly Roberts met with congressional staff from Colorado, Georgia, Pennsylvania, and Texas to advocate for increased funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities. NEH is the largest funder of humanities programs in the United States. At the time of the *RSN* copy deadline, the AAR is supporting funding of the \$160 million approved by the House Appropriations Committee for fiscal year 2008, which is an increase of \$19 million above the fiscal year 2007 NEH appropriation.

In November, the AAR arranged four meetings between scholars and three FBI officials. Each meeting covered a different topic: Islam and charity; religion and political violence; Islam and the West; and, as the

30th anniversary approaches, looking back on Jonestown. This is the 10th consecutive year the AAR has facilitated such meetings. Scholars volunteering time to participate in the sessions were Amir Hussain, John Kelsay, Ruth Mas, Rebecca Moore, David Rapoport, Tamara Sonn, John Voll, and Catherine Wessinger.

Also in November, for the fourth straight year, the AAR arranged meetings between directors of prison chaplaincy programs and religion scholars. Patrick McCollum, an AAR member and prison chaplain from California, helped plan the agenda and co-chaired the meetings. Topics discussed in the seven meetings were Wicca and Neopaganism; legislation affecting religion in prison; Kabbalah; Native-American Traditions; Scientology; Afro-Caribbean traditions; and Islam. States represented by the prison chaplaincy directors included Colorado, Connecticut, Indiana, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Texas. Two officials from the Federal Bureau of Prisons and one from the American Correctional Chaplains Association were also in attendance. The following scholars volunteered their time to participate in these informative sessions: Mary Ann Clark, Noel Erskine, Eugene Gallagher, Pinchas Giller, Wendy Griffin, Marcia Hermansen, Aminah Beverly McCloud, Barbara McGraw, Michael McNally, Sarah Pike, Ines Talamantez, and Michael York.



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## In the Public Interest

### Going Public on Religion: Paradise or Pitfall?

Colleen McDannell, University of Utah



Colleen McDannell is professor of History and Sterling M. McMurrin Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. In 1984 she received her doctorate from Temple University in Philadelphia. Her most recent book is an edited volume, *Catholics in the Movies* (Oxford 2007). *Picturing Faith: Photography and the Great Depression* (Yale University Press 2004) spun-off a 45-photograph exhibition that travels throughout the country. Professor McDannell is also the author of *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America* (Yale University Press 1995); *Heaven: A History*, co-authored with Bernhard Lang (Yale University Press, second edition 2001), and *The Christian Home in Victorian America: 1840–1900* (Indiana University Press 1986). She has also edited a two-volume documents reader, *The Religions of the United States in Practice* (Princeton 2001).

WHEN THE *San Diego Union-Tribune* reported on the November AAR meeting, writer Sandi Dolbee couldn't pass up the chance to mention the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster. Did her November 17th article promote or ridicule the academic study of religion? Noted religion scholars Robert A. Orsi (Northwestern University), Stephen Prothero (Boston University), and Diane Winston (University of Southern California) — all featured at a Special Topics Forum sponsored by the Public Understanding of Religion Committee — had some answers. Each laid out distinct ways that we should understand our roles as public intellectuals.

While Robert Orsi voiced great respect for his colleagues who talk to the media, he does not. For Orsi, the "true public" for scholars of religion is our students and our colleagues. By doing what we do best — teaching and researching — we reach in a sophisticated and nuanced manner a surprisingly wide public. Students talk to their families and friends (what we might think of as an extended field of others who will be affected by what we teach: "the ghosts in the classrooms") and in this way spread our insights wider than we think. When students go home for Thanksgiving break, for instance, they might bring the latest fact they learned about radical Islam or Vatican II to the dinner table. In similar ways, our colleagues extend far beyond the walls of our departments because professional contacts have become increasingly international and multidisciplinary. By focusing our attentions on what we have been trained to do, we avoid the temptation to engage in a celebrity culture that rarely asks

demanding questions and prefers its religion to be trivial, entertaining, and irrelevant.

A critic of media, Orsi reminded the audience that news reporters failed to challenge the government's assertions about Iraq's "weapons of mass destruction." Unfortunately, this is because reporters merely restate what they already "know" about a subject. When scholars of religion try to convey the complexity of an event, reporters simplify their ideas into sound bites and select quotes that affirm what they already have decided to say about a particular story. In this sense, the news media does not come to us to be educated about our areas of expertise. The hard, disciplined language of scholarship is needed to say complicated and significant things about religion in contexts in which we have more control.

Orsi concluded by raising a larger question: Why are we all so hungry to get into the news?

Stephen Prothero provided one possible answer: To feed the masses. Although Americans are the most religious people in the Western world, we are also the most ignorant on the basic facts of religion. This ignorance has serious civic and international repercussions. All of us should find a way to teach not just our students and colleagues, but the general public. This public ranges from our neighbors who go to the local church to the international readers of the *New York Times*. As public intellectuals, our moderate voices work to drown out the extreme ones who often command attention by sheer force of will. As scholars, we need to model a different way of talking about religion.

For Prothero, "writing is a passion" and so he enjoys communicating to a general audience. To follow Prothero's model, writing in clear and accessible prose should be promoted by doctoral programs and encouraged among our colleagues. While his first university press book perhaps had a stunning 500 readers, his more commercial books were reviewed in all the major newspapers, resulted in talk show appearances, and thus reached larger audiences.

"Going public," however, has its challenges. Neither reporters nor the public are comfortable "worshiping the God of bracketing." They want to know who you are and where you stand. For this reason, personal questions about religious affiliation cannot and should not be avoided when speaking to a broader public. For Prothero, revealing rather than concealing allowed him to come alive and to speak in a voice more fully his own.

At the same time, he quickly learned that "going public" means giving up control. A news show asked him to give his "religion literacy quiz" to some high school students to see how they would fare. The student's teacher, however, found the test and prepared the students in advance. When the students responded with uncharacteristically insightful answers, the astonished news reporter kept filming until more typical "dumb" answers were given. These were the responses that were subsequently broadcast.irate parents then e-mailed Prothero, blaming the whole affair on him.

Unlike Orsi, Prothero believes it is worth the risk to have our knowledge "produced" in ways that may be blatantly false or pitifully simplistic. "Going public" means gaining new audiences and learning new ways of talking about ideas that matter. It means learning how to speak with compassion about religion to ordinary people in language they can understand.

Diane Winston, a self-confessed "recovering journalist," admitted to committing all of the sins that Orsi and Prothero attributed to the media. For her, the overarching question was "So what?" So what if reporters only discuss the paper on the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster? For Winston, the stakes are too high to get frustrated about the current state of journalism. Like Prothero, Winston believes that as scholars we need to improve the level of education about religion in whatever ways we can.

Winston reminded the audience that journalists, of whatever media, have limitations that they cannot control. They often practice self-censorship, knowing what stories or ideas will or will not get by their own editors. Current journalism standards push reporters to produce stories that are "balanced" rather than true. They understand all stories as having two sides and they look to find speakers to support one side or the other. This conflict narrative form has taken over as the model for reporting and so scholars need to work hard at breaking down this binary orientation. One way of doing this is to cultivate your local reporter. Reporters can be students too. It is their very curiosity about how the world works that motivated them to join the profession in the first place. As scholars, we need to patiently educate not every reporter who calls up on the phone, but one or two we trust to take seriously our scholarly approach to the study of religion.

Winston also suggested "doing it yourself," especially in the area of new media (Internet sites, blogging, podcasts) that are replacing the mainstream media of newspapers and magazines. The democratic nature of the new media allows for scholars to become reporters. Blogging opens the flow of information by encouraging individuals to shape public discourse as they see fit. Looking for stories of religion constructed with more sensitivity and nuance? Check out the Internet. One example Winston provided is the newly launched *newsinitiative.org*. Journalism programs from Columbia, Berkeley, University of Southern California, and Northwestern University also post in-depth stories about religion.

While expressing generally positive feelings toward "going public on religion," the audience raised several important issues. University administrators might be excited to find their faculty members on television or reviewed in the *New York Times*, but tenure committees are less impressed. Departments rarely have standards in place for evaluating new forms of public scholarship. Where does blogging fit into standard professional evaluation criteria? Does giving a talk at a local mosque fall under the category of service or teaching? If scholarship is our craft, how do we make our prolonged conversation with students and colleagues more significant? [EN]

# AAR

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Collaborator: Sam Shemie, University of Ottawa

#### INDIVIDUAL

Julius Bailey, University of Redlands  
*Making a Homeland: Race, Religion, and the Meaning of Africa in the Nineteenth-Century African Methodist Episcopal Church*

Jennifer Eichman, Seton Hall University  
*Buddhist-Inspired Contemporary Art: Zhu Ming and His Network*

William P. Harman, University of Tennessee, Chattanooga  
*Suicide Bombers Become Goddesses: Women, Apotheosis, and Sacrificial Violence in South Asia*

Steven Heine, Florida International University  
*Sacred High City, Sacred Low City: A Tale of Religious Sites in Two Tokyo Neighborhoods*

Jennifer G. Jesse, Truman State University  
*There's a Methodism to His Madness: William Blake as a Religious Moderate*

Greg Johnson, University of Colorado at Boulder  
*Religion in the Moment: Contemporary Lives of Indigenous Traditions*

Frank J. Korom, Boston University  
*From Guru to Shaykh: Bawa Muhaiyyaddeen and the Making of Transnational Sufi "Family"*

Leela Prasad, Duke University  
*Annotating Pastimes: Oral Narrative and Religion in Colonial India*

Miranda Eberle Shaw, University of Richmond  
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Manuel A. Vasquez, University of Florida  
*Performing Identities and Spaces among Brazilian and Congolese Immigrants in London and Atlanta: The Case of Two Transnational Religious Networks*

*American Academy of Religion  
Student Liaison Group  
Spring 2008*

The Student Liaison Group (SLG) is composed of AAR graduate student members who are appointed or elected by their department to serve. Currently, the Student Liaison Group is open to students enrolled in a PhD program. Student liaisons are a resource for students who need information about AAR's programs and services. They also report on the needs and activities of students to the student director and participate in efforts to expand student involvement in the Academy. If you would like more information about how your PhD program can be represented, contact Myesha D. Jenkins at [mjenkins@aarweb.org](mailto:mjenkins@aarweb.org). The next appointment period is August 2008.

1. Baylor University, Cameron Jorgenson
2. Boston College, Bede Bidlack
3. Catholic University of America, Jay Carney
4. Chicago Theological Seminary, Adam Kotsko
5. Columbia University, Daniel Vaca
6. Concordia University, Laurie Lamoureux Scholes
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16. Iliff School of Theology, Stephanie Yuhas
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22. Pacifica Graduate Institute, Joe Good
23. Princeton University, Jimmy Yu
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26. Union Theological Seminary & Presbyterian School of Christian Education, Tammie Marie Grimm
27. University of Toronto, Rebekka King
28. University of Virginia, Timothy P. McConnell
29. University of Waterloo, Mandy Furney
30. Wheaton College, Michael D. White 

In the Next Issue of  
*Spotlight on Teaching:*  
Signifying (on) Scriptures:  
Reorienting Teaching and Research  
Guest Editor: Vincent L. Wimbush

## From the Student Desk

### *Getting Stuck Overseas? Reflections on Graduate Studies Abroad*

*J. Patrick Hornbeck II, Fordham University*



*J. Patrick Hornbeck is a doctoral candidate in theology at the University of Oxford and senior scholar of Christ Church. In the fall of 2007, he will become assistant professor of theology at Fordham University in New York.*

THE NEWS THAT I had been accepted into Oxford University's graduate program in theology was greeted by my professors at Georgetown with a blend of delight and skepticism. "It looks like a compelling offer," I was told on several occasions, "but don't take it: you'll only end up getting stuck permanently in Britain." It seemed that everyone had a story of another American who had pursued doctoral studies abroad and then found it impossible to secure a position back home.

In the end, I took the plunge and headed across the pond. What I discovered was an academic system whose methods and priorities diverged sharply from those I had been accustomed to in the United States. It is only now, with four years of hindsight, that I have been able to see how the many peculiarities of life and study in Oxford have shaped my habits as a thinker and teacher. Those peculiarities are clearly not suited to everyone. But for those who embark upon the experience with a sense of what is in store for them and a willingness to invest time in sustaining relationships with colleagues and institutions on both sides of the Atlantic, graduate studies abroad can be highly rewarding.


The most obvious difference between an Oxford (indeed, a British) graduate program and an American one has to do with independence. Broadly speaking, British doctorates are research-based; there is no mandatory coursework, there are no comprehensive exams, and the degree is awarded exclusively on the merits of the dissertation. Even so-called "taught" graduate courses may involve no more than two or three hours of contact time per week. The result is that graduate students have an unparalleled degree of freedom: they can read widely, attend lectures and seminars in fields outside their own, and develop their ideas at their own pace. But this freedom also entails responsibilities: without comprehensive exams, students must themselves

ensure that they have sufficient breadth as well as depth of knowledge; without constant deadlines, they must quickly master self-discipline.

Crucial to this process is the relationship between a student and his or her supervisor. If having a supportive adviser and committee is important to American doctoral students, it is the sine qua non of graduate studies in Oxford. Since the supervisor is the individual with whom a student will have almost exclusive contact, the importance of choosing him or her cannot be underestimated. I have benefited immensely from a supervisor who has consistently shown interest in my development as a historian of late medieval Christianity and as a scholar more generally, who has gone out of his way to argue on my behalf, and who has made it clear that the flourishing of his graduate students ranks high among his priorities. My time in Britain would have been significantly poorer without this support, and I would encourage students thinking about applying for a British graduate degree to identify a potential supervisor and to get a sense of what a working relationship with him or her might be like before signing on the dotted line.

The intellectual independence I have enjoyed and the close relationship I have developed with my advisor have been at the heart of my Oxford experience. I have also gained from being in close proximity to archives of primary sources and to a community of scholars of late medieval and early modern England likely unequalled outside the United Kingdom. These and other circumstances have made my decision to come to Oxford the right one for me, but it is not necessarily right for everyone. Some will prefer a broader program of study; others will benefit from the more structured approach of North American universities.

But for those who do choose to pursue their graduate work overseas, and who wish ultimately to return to the United States, a word of warning. I have often found myself tempted to lose touch with North American academe, and I am grateful that a number of mentors reminded me to forge connections and attend conferences on both sides of the Atlantic, to stay involved with the AAR and other professional organizations, and to seek out teaching opportunities, where possible, in both systems. Indeed, there are more than pragmatic gains to be realized, not least because the opportunity to learn and to teach in both the highly individualized British tradition and its broader-based American counterpart can lead to the cross-pollination of ideas and practices within academic specialties and with regard to pedagogy.

So should American applicants to graduate school be worried about "getting stuck" overseas? Some may well decide to remain abroad of their own volition. But with some careful choices during the application process and some careful planning afterward, no one need be permanently disadvantaged by the presence of a long-term student visa in a passport. 



## Research Briefing

### *A Pivotal Decade in the Life and Work of I. B. Horner*

Grace G. Burford, Prescott College



Grace G. Burford is (the only) Professor of Religious Studies at Prescott College in Prescott, Arizona, where she teaches in the Cultural and Regional Studies Program about the connections among religions, modernization and globalization, social change, gender and sexuality issues, peace studies, science, and environmentalism. She also offers courses on Buddhism and on the varieties of religious experience. Her research for her first book, *Desire, Death, and Goodness: The Conflict of Ultimate Values in Theravāda Buddhism*, utilized a lot of the work on Pāli texts done by I. B. Horner and the Pali Text Society. She is currently researching the life and work of Horner, a twentieth-century British scholar of Buddhism.

FOR MOST OF THE twentieth century, British scholar Isaline B. Horner (1896–1981) devoted her considerable intelligence, time, energy, leadership, and finances to establishing an understanding of Buddhism in the West based on careful study of the texts that constitute the scriptures, written in the Pāli language, of Theravāda Buddhism. Her work on Pāli texts — both directly, as an editor, translator, and interpreter of these texts, and indirectly, as a significant contributor to and long-term leader of the Pāli Text Society (PTS) — still influences the scholarly and popular understanding of Theravāda Buddhism in Western and Asian countries today. In addition to her contributions to study of Theravāda texts in the West, Horner's groundbreaking first book, *Women under Primitive Buddhism* (1930), stood for over 40 years as the only book-length work on the subject of women and Buddhism. It remains influential both in scholarly circles and for female practitioners of Buddhism.

A few years ago, impressed by Horner's accomplishments and intrigued by some information I happened upon about her personal life, I began an in-depth study of her life and work, with the aim of writing a biography of her. I began my research by making several trips to Cambridge, England, to visit the archive of Horner's papers at the Faculty of Oriental Studies of Cambridge University. I continued this research during the summer of 2006, with the help of an AAR research grant. Earlier in the year the Lesbian and Feminist Issues in Religion Group had accepted my proposal to present a paper at the 2006 AAR Annual Meeting on the topic of how

Horner came to write *Women under Primitive Buddhism*. So during that research trip I gathered together the information I had already obtained about Horner's early life, and then focused my attention on discovering as much as I could about what Horner did during the decade of the 1920s.

Horner's upbringing and education prepared her for a life of international travel, language study, and a focus on women. Raised in a moneyed middle-class family at a time when women were beginning to break into higher education, Horner attended (1914–17) one of the two newly established women's colleges at Cambridge University, Newnham College.

What would, indeed, become a life of travel, study, and focus on women began to blossom for Horner in the 1920s. In 1920, the principal of Newnham suggested that Horner accompany the principal's sister, D. J. Stephen, to India to establish a Christian college for women. Stephen needed a traveling companion and Horner leapt at the opportunity, although she firmly rejected Christianity herself. During her two years (1921–23) in India, Horner exhibited a keen intellectual interest in religion and included in her letters home detailed descriptions of the exotic Hindu activities she witnessed. But she reserved her personal enthusiasm and approval for the Buddhism she had

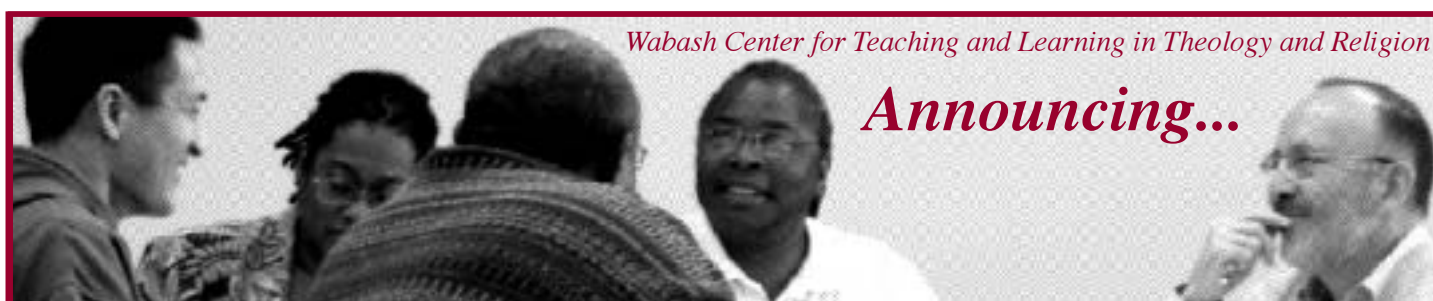
encountered briefly in Ceylon on the way to India. Upon her return to Cambridge, Horner continued her discussions of religion in her correspondence with D. J. Stephen. In 1923 Horner became the Librarian at Newnham College, a position she would hold until she left Cambridge in 1936. In 1925 Horner contacted then-PTS president Caroline Rhys Davids and expressed an interest in learning more about Buddhism. It was Rhys Davids — herself a dedicated feminist — who suggested the topic of women and Buddhism to Horner. For the latter half of the 1920s Horner immersed herself in the study that would result in the publication of *Women under Primitive Buddhism*. In the summer of 1926 Horner began her most significant personal relationship, with fellow Newnham scholar Elsie Butler.

“*Her work on Pāli texts . . . still influences the scholarly and popular understanding of Theravāda Buddhism in Western and Asian countries today.*”

Thus, in this one decade, Horner made her first trip to Asia, developed an interest in Theravāda Buddhism, established a friendship with D. J. Stephen (with whom she engaged in extensive correspondence on matters related to religion), undertook the study of Pāli language and Theravāda Buddhism, began her working relationship with Caroline Rhys Davids (who would serve as Horner's most significant mentor in the study of Pāli language and texts until Rhys Davids's death in 1941), and fell in love with Elsie Butler (Horner and Butler remained together until Butler's death in 1959). All of these developments fed into Horner's lifelong interest in women in Buddhism, and established patterns that would play out for the rest of her life.

I am grateful to the American Academy of Religion both for the research grant that contributed to my work on this project during the summer of 2006 and for the ongoing professional community it provides. Both are particularly helpful to those of us who work in primarily undergraduate teaching positions at small colleges. I extend my thanks to include the members of the Lesbian and Feminist Issues in Religion Group of the AAR, whose interest in the life and work of I. B. Horner inspires me to continue this research.

RSN



Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion

Announcing...

### Pedagogy of Difficult Conversations Grant Recipients

**Aquinas Institute of Theology** (Ann Garrido & Gregory Heille, project directors) \$19,975

*Pursuing a Culture of Engaged Conversation for School and Church*

**Drury University** (Teresa Hornsby, project director) \$17,435

*The Most Difficult Religious Conversation? Pedagogical Strategies for Teaching the Complexities of Abortion*

**Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia** (Stephen G. Ray, Jr., project director) \$20,000

*Knowing Too Much, Understanding Too Little: Overcoming Alienation and Presumed Epistemic Privilege as Learning Barriers in Courses about the Black Christian Tradition*

**New Brunswick Theological Seminary** (Virginia Wiles, project director) \$19,976

*How Can You Say That? Choosing Challenging Conversations*

**Texas Christian University** (Melanie Harris, project director) \$20,000

*Teaching into the Difficult: Racial Ethnic Woman Professor--White University*

**United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities** (Sharon Tan, project director) \$10,967

*The Pedagogy of Difficult Conversations: Seeking Theological and Cultural Diversity in a Liberal Seminary*

**Western Theological Seminary** (Cynthia Holder Rich, project director) \$20,000

*Engaging the Pedagogy of Difficult Conversations*

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# 2007 AM Registration and Satisfaction Survey

**O**VER 10,000 PEOPLE gathered in San Diego, California, last November for the 2007 AAR Annual Meeting. Total registration for the meeting was 10,193. This number reflects a 7.5 percent decrease from the record set at the 2006 Annual Meeting (Washington, D.C.: 11,011). San Diego's location, warm weather, and attraction as a tourist and vacation destination made it a big draw for AAR members, but the distance from the East Coast contributed to the decrease in overall attendance.

The 2007 Annual Meeting was the largest in terms of programming. Over 1,100 AAR, SBL, and Additional Meetings sessions occurred during the five-day time period from Thursday, November 15 to Tuesday, November 20. AAR continued to expand its program and hosted 428 sessions, making it the largest ever.

Responses to the post-Annual Meeting survey reflect positive experiences by the members in attendance. Survey results are posted online at [www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual\\_Meeting/Current\\_Meeting/Surveys/Annual\\_Meeting/results](http://www.aarweb.org/Meetings/Annual_Meeting/Current_Meeting/Surveys/Annual_Meeting/results).

An overwhelming 94.5 percent of survey respondents thought the 2007 Annual Meeting was a satisfactory or very satisfactory experience. Satisfaction with this year's sessions was high; 93 percent of survey respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality. The opportunity to network with other colleagues also received high marks; 95 percent reported satisfaction. Respondents rated the San Diego Annual Meeting location very favorably, giving positive feedback about its exhibit facilities (92 percent), hotel facilities (74 percent), and meeting room space (92 percent).

The Annual Meeting attracted attendees from around the world; 56 nationalities were represented. Canadians made up the largest international group with 390 attendees, followed by the United Kingdom (283), Germany (87), the Netherlands (67), Australia (53), and Israel (45). California was the best-represented state in 2007 with 1,696 attendees, followed by Illinois (519), New York (492), Texas (424), Massachusetts (411), and Pennsylvania (380). AAR's 2007 international focus was on China, and the Annual Meeting hosted 36 attendees from China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, including 11 AAR travel subsidy

recipients. Consequently, the 2008 international focus on South Asia and South Asian scholarship should encourage participants from that region.

Once again, Annual Meeting registration and housing was handled by Experient. Satisfaction with the registration and housing process was very high; 96 percent of respondents rated the process positively. The peak hotel night was Saturday, November 17, with over 4,900 hotel rooms in use. Overall more than 19,800 room nights were occupied during the meeting.

The comments from survey respondents were generally positive. The most frequent complaint was about the long walks between the Convention Center, the Marriott Marina, and the Grand Hyatt. Because the American Association of Pharmaceutical Sciences meeting overlapped with the AAR and SBL's move-in day on Thursday, November 15, we were unable to secure the exhibit halls on the west wing of the Convention Center, closer to the headquarters hotels. This left us with Halls F and G on the east wing of the building. Because the meeting rooms were larger and more plentiful in the east wing (above the exhibit hall), we decided to utilize them

instead of the west wing meeting space. The AAR will address this issue in Chicago by holding the vast majority of its sessions in the Chicago Hilton Towers Hotel, with additional meetings and some overflow in the Palmer House Hilton Hotel. The shuttle loop will run between the two hotels on a regular basis.

The Annual Meeting Satisfaction Survey is sent via e-mail to all AAR members (over 12,400) at the conclusion of each meeting and is offered online at the AAR website. The number of responses this year was 1,157, which represents about 9.5 percent of the membership. Respondents did not answer each question, so the values were measured from the number of respondents who did. The survey is voluntary and open to all members. The executive office staff would like to thank everyone who participated in the post-Annual Meeting survey. It continues to be valuable to the Annual Meeting process, for it provides the AAR's Program Committee, Board of Directors, and executive office staff with an important measure of member satisfaction. We value this opportunity to hear your comments and suggestions on how we can continue to meet your needs and to offer an excellent meeting. RSN

## American Academy of Religion 2007 Annual Business Meeting Minutes

MARRIOTT MARINA HOTEL, MANCHESTER 1 • SAN DIEGO, CA • MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2007

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

President Jeffrey Stout called the meeting to order at 11:45 AM.

### 2. APPROVAL OF 2006 MINUTES

The minutes were approved unanimously.

### 3. MEMORIAL LIST

President Stout read the memorial list (distributed at the meeting) of those members who had passed away since November 1, 2006. Those remembered are: Donald E. Arther, Scott Becker, Heyward Canney, Robert Drinan, Stephen J. Duffy, Robert S. Eccles, James A. Martin, Sanford E. Rosen, Lee Rouner, Letty M. Russell, and Nathan A. Scott. A moment of silence followed the reading.

### 4. PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Jeffrey Stout

President Stout spoke about the new challenges facing the organization in light of the independent meeting decision, including when and how the meetings should be run, costs, and possible simultaneous meetings. He gave a brief explanation of how and why the survey regarding the future of AAR was developed. He also briefly went over some of the findings of the survey. He expressed the Board's commitment to assessing the concerns of members in the future. He emphasized that the survey was a forum designed to find out what members care about and that it was not a referendum. He announced the formation of three new task forces to address some of the issues: Governance Task Force chaired by Jeffrey Stout and Emilie Townes, Sustainability Task Force chaired by Sarah McFarland Taylor, and the Job Task Force chaired by Deanna Thompson.

President Stout thanked all the people who attend to the work of the AAR and to the members who make the organization work. He also offered special thanks to Jack Fitzmier, Executive Director, for his excellent help during this pivotal moment for AAR.

### 5. THE STATE OF THE ACADEMY

Fitzmier reported that the AAR is in excellent condition by whatever measure one uses. Membership is larger than it has ever been and this year's Annual Meeting has been a success. He noted that attendance was down a little, which the executive office had anticipated, as lower attendance seems to be a trend whenever AAR meets on the West Coast. He announced that Teagle funded the undergraduate major and liberal education program and that the Henry Luce Foundation funded a planning grant for the theological education study. Fitzmier introduced Margaret Jenkins as the new director of development.

### 6. 2007 ELECTION RESULTS

Stout announced that Emilie Townes is the new president, Mark Juergensmeyer is president-elect, Ann Taves is vice president, Michel Desjardins is secretary, and Nichole Phillips is the student director. Stout thanked Micheline Pesantubbee for her work as secretary.

Stout turned the gavel over to the new president, Emilie Townes.

### 7. REMARKS FROM THE NEW PRESIDENT: Emilie Townes

President Townes expressed thanks to all those who are supportive of the president. She noted that no president can do his or her job without the Board, staff, home institutions, and goodwill of the membership.

She pointed out that she is aware that she is the first black woman to hold the office and she hopes to do it well.

### 8. NEW BUSINESS

#### 8a. CHANGES TO THE AAR BYLAWS

Fitzmier explained the proposed change in the bylaws (distributed during the meeting). The executive director and treasurer position has always been held by one person. Best practices today separate the executive director from the treasurer. He explained our bylaws stipulate that a change has to be submitted to the membership 30 days in advance of the Annual Meeting. He also noted that the proposed changes were sent to the entire membership in the October E-bulletin. He stated that he is fully in support of the separation of the positions.

The motion to separate the executive director position from the treasurer position was unanimously approved.

#### 8b. REPORT ON THE INDEPENDENT ANNUAL MEETING SURVEY

President Townes explained that the results of the survey are too complex and the high number of comments nuanced the results to the extent that the Board will need time to deliberate on the results before making any decisions. She stated that the survey was not a referendum to reverse the decision to have independent meetings, but rather it was a means of asking the membership how to address issues concerning how to move forward with the independent meeting.

Fitzmier explained how the survey was put together, distributed, and advertised. He noted that multiple announcements and reminders about the survey were sent out over a 30-day period. He reported a 17.6 percent response rate. He identified some of the items that received the most comments from the membership and pointed out that the high number of comments makes the interpretation of the results more complex. He stated that the membership will receive an E-blast with a link to the results of the survey. He added that 80 percent of the respondents were concerned about the high cost of attending the meeting and overwhelmingly members come to the meetings to participate in the programs.

#### 8c. OTHER NEW BUSINESS

Fitzmier reported that the SBL invited AAR members to participate in their international meeting in New Zealand and four AAR programs will have sessions at that meeting. He reported on the Board's and the Program Committee's discussion regarding the international focus of the AAR and how to do this well without bordering too much on colonialism or neocolonialism. He explained that the AAR has three initiatives that they are working on before addressing the international question.

### 9. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:50 PM.


Respectfully submitted,  
Micheline Pesantubbee RSN



## Media Attend the 2007 Annual Meeting

**M**ORE THAN 40 journalists attended the 2007 Annual Meeting in San Diego. Media outlets represented included the BBC, Beliefnet, *Christian Century*, *Christianity Today*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Harper's*, KFMB-TV (CBS), Minnesota Public Radio's *Speaking of Faith*, *Ottawa Citizen*, *Publishers Weekly*, *San Diego Union-Tribune*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Wired*.

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Associated Press published a story about one AAR panel in particular, the Religion and Popular Culture Group's "Evolutionary Controversy and a Side of Pasta: The Flying Spaghetti Monster and the Subversive Function of Religious Parody." The story was picked up by CNN and more than 125 other national and international news outlets. Several panelists were featured in the article.

The AAR hosted its fourth annual reception for journalists prior to Saturday evening's awards ceremony. At the reception, two winners of the 2007 AAR Awards for Best In-Depth Reporting were honored for their outstanding contributions to religion newswriting. 

## With Gratitude!

**T**HE AAR WOULD like to thank the following co-sponsors of these Chinese scholars at the 2007 Annual Meeting. To co-sponsor a South Asian scholar this year, contact Kyle Cole, Director of Professional Programs, at [kcole@aarweb.org](mailto:kcole@aarweb.org).

- Princeton University and Harvard University – Chunwen Hao, Capital Normal University
- Lafayette College – Yen-zen Tsai, National Chengchi University
- College of New Jersey – Zhihua Yao, Chinese University of Hong Kong
- Columbia University and the University of Chicago – Xin Yu, Fudan University
- Humboldt State University and Indiana University, Bloomington – Weichi Zhou, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences 



Tavis Smiley before his plenary address at the Annual Meeting. From left to right: Cornel West, Emilie Townes, Tavis Smiley, Eddie Glaude, and Jeffrey Stout.



2007 Martin Marty Award Winner, Robert N. Bellah, speaks to the audience.

## *AAR would like to thank the following outgoing Program Unit Chairs whose terms ended in 2007.*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Donald L. Boisvert, Concordia University (Gay Men's Issues in Religion Group)   | Richard C. Martin, Emory University (Contemporary Islam Consultation)  |
| Rosemary Carbine, College of the Holy Cross (Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Group)  | Jane Dammen McAuliffe, Georgetown University (Qur'an Group)  |
| Thomas A. Carlson, University of California, Santa Barbara (Philosophy of Religion Section)   | K. Steve McCormick, Nazarene Theological Seminary (Wesleyan Studies Group)   |
| Kip Elolia, Emmanuel School of Religion (African Religions Group)   | Michael McNally, Carleton College (Native Traditions in the Americas Group)  |
| Steven Engler, Mount Royal College & Pontificia Universidade Católica de São Paulo (Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group)     | Bonnie Miller-McLemore, Vanderbilt University (Practical Theology Group)   |
| Jennifer L. Geddes, University of Virginia (Arts, Literature, and Religion Section)   | Moses N. Moore, Arizona State University (Afro-American Religious History Group)   |
| John Goulde, Sweet Briar College (Korean Religions Group)   | Thomas W. Ogletree, Yale University (Biblical/Contextual Ethics Consultation)  |
| Garrett Green, Connecticut College (Nineteenth-Century Theology Group)  | Su Yon Pak, Union Theological Seminary (Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Group)   |
| Rosalind Gwynne, University of Tennessee, Knoxville (Contemporary Islam Consultation)   | Parimal Patil, Harvard University (Religion in South Asia Section)   |
| Amir Hussain, Loyola Marymount University (Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group)  | Greg Peterson, South Dakota State University (Science, Technology, and Religion Group)   |
| Richard Jaffe, Duke University (Cultural History and the Study of Religion Group)   | Barbara Pitkin, Stanford University (Childhood Studies and Religion Consultation)  |
| Rob James, University of Richmond and Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond (Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture Group) | S. Brent Plate, Texas Christian University (Arts, Literature, and Religion Section)  |
| Anne Joh, Phillips Theological Seminary (Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Group)                                       | Selva Raj, Albion College (Comparative Studies in Religion Section)  |
| Jay E. Johnson, Pacific School of Religion (Gay Men's Issues in Religion Group)   | Jeanette Reedy Solano, California State University, Fullerton (Religion in Latin America and the Caribbean Group)  |
| Mark J. Justad, Vanderbilt University (Men's Studies in Religion Group)   | Cynthia Rigby, Austin Theological Seminary (Christian Systematic Theology Section)   |
| Tazim Kassam, Syracuse University (Religion in South Asia Section)  | Donna Seamone, Acadia University (Ritual Studies Group)  |
| Catherine Keller, Drew University (Bible, Theology, and Postmodernity Group)  | Teresa M. Shaw, Claremont Graduate University (History of Christianity Section)  |
| Jung Ha Kim, Georgia State University (Women and Religion Section)  | Robert J. Sherman, Bangor Theological Seminary (Reformed Theology and History Group)   |
| David Lamberth, Harvard University (Pragmatism and Empiricism in American Religious Thought Group)  | Glen Stassen, Fuller Theological Seminary (Biblical/Contextual Ethics Consultation)  |
| David James Livingston, Mercyhurst College (Men's Studies in Religion Group)  | Oren Stier, Florida International University (Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Group)   |
| Nelson Maldonado-Torres, University of California, Berkeley (Religion in Latin America and the Caribbean Group)                           | Ines M. Talamantez, University of California, Santa Barbara (Indigenous Religious Traditions Group)  |
|   | Tracy Tiemeier, Loyola Marymount University (Comparative Theology Group)  |

## Candidate Registration Trend Continues at EIS Center

THE 2007 Employment Information Services Center (EIS) saw a total of 669 candidates and 152 employers, continuing a trend from the previous year. In 2006 EIS saw a dramatic 46 percent rise in candidate registrations, and 2007 registrations were only slightly less (which is expected at a West Coast meeting). These figures indicate that the number of job seekers has increased greatly while the number of available jobs is increasing only moderately. The ratio of registered jobs to registered candidates in 2007 was 1:4.4.

The EIS Center was jointly hosted by the AAR and the SBL at the San Diego Annual Meeting. The center is designed to ease the communication process between candidates for academic positions and employers seeking to fill available positions. EIS features job postings, candidate credentials for review, a message center, and an interview facility.

Each year, EIS gathers data about job positions and candidates registered for the center. Each position and candidate is required to choose a primary classification from among a provided list. They may also select additional classifications (candidates are limited to a total of three). The "primary" columns at right indicate the number of times each classification was chosen as a primary choice (see chart on page 25).

When drawing conclusions from this data, it is important to think of the motivations

that guide employers' and candidates' choices. Employers tend to choose more broad classifications that correspond to the classes needing to be taught. They are likely willing to consider candidates from an array of specializations, as long as each person can teach the general courses. In contrast, a candidate's primary choice is usually his or her area of research; they can teach more broadly. Take Introduction to Religion as an example. One need not specialize in this area to teach such a course. So despite the fact that the classification had a 1:1 primary ratio in 2007, candidates who chose this classification did not have a 100 percent chance of getting a job.

Another example is Asian Religions. From looking at the number of times this classification was chosen as primary in 2007, it might seem that each candidate in that field had a 75 percent chance of getting a job. However, many candidates who chose Hinduism or Buddhism as their specialty have the ability to teach Asian religions. So employers needing an Asian religions teacher are not limited only to those candidates who consider it to be their specialty.

This is where the "all" columns come into play. These columns indicate the total number of times a classification was chosen as either primary or "additional." These columns often give better indication of the ratio of positions to candidates within a particular subfield. Take the example from

above. Many of the candidates who chose Hinduism or Buddhism as their primary classification likely chose Asian Religions as an additional choice. Therefore, the position-to-candidate ratio of 19:37 (or 1:2) is a better indicator of how many candidates might have sought a particular position.

Still, because of the different motivations guiding choices, and because many of the classifications are interrelated, the candidate

to job ratios shown at right cannot give a clear indication of a candidate's chances of getting a job. Rather, they serve mainly to identify trends in position openings and candidate specializations.

The AAR has been compiling EIS registration data since 1990. Such data is available upon request from Jessica Davenport at [jdavenport@aarweb.org](mailto:jdavenport@aarweb.org).

RSN

### EIS Center Registration 2005–2007

Employers	2007	2006	2005
Positions Registered	152	175	148
Total Institutions Registered	132	140	126
Preregistered	141	156	133
Registered Onsite	11	19	15
Ratio of Positions to Candidates	1:4.4	1:4.27	1:3.47

Candidates	2007	2006	2005
Total Registered	669	747	513
Preregistered	583	722	419
Registered Onsite	86	25	94
Female Participants	195	224	142
Male Participants	406	461	217
Did Not Report Gender	68	62	154
Ratio of Female to Male	1:2.1	1:2.1	1:1.5

See additional 2005–2007 registration data in the chart at right.

# AAR Career Services

Visit the AAR's new Career Services webpage at [www.aarweb.org/jump/careers](http://www.aarweb.org/jump/careers) for these services:

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



Also see the article on page 7 for information about the 2008 Job Center.



Job Classifications	2007			
	Employers		Candidates	
	Primary	All	Primary	All
Administration (e.g., President, Dean, Director, Program Director, Coordinator)	4	4	3	7
Ancient Near Eastern Languages	0	6	2	24
Archaeology — Ancient Near East	0	1	3	12
Archaeology — Greco-Roman	0	0	0	6
Arts, Literature & Religion	0	4	11	41
Asian Religions (general or not listed separately)	6	19	9	37
Biblical Languages	2	9	4	50
Buddhism	2	17	22	35
Catholic Studies	3	11	0	18
Catholic Theology (all areas)	7	21	18	41
Central and South American and Caribbean Religions	0	7	0	1
Christian Ethics	9	18	39	74
Christian Studies	2	12	4	21
Christian Theology (general or not listed separately)	5	11	22	79
Christian Theology: Practical/Praxis	1	7	16	37
Christian Theology: Systematic/Constructive	6	14	58	102
Classics	0	2	1	16
Comparative Religions	4	32	6	43
Critical Studies/Theory/Methods in Religion	2	16	5	44
Early Christianity/Church History	2	17	33	81
Early Judaism	1	9	3	22
East Asian Religions (general or not listed separately)	6	18	6	19
Editorial	0	0	0	6
Epigraphy	0	1	0	1
Gay/Lesbian Studies in Religion	1	5	1	7
Hebrew Bible/Old Testament	9	27	81	134
Hinduism	2	13	7	18
History of Christianity/Church History	5	20	42	91
History of Religion (general)	3	19	5	25
Indigenous/Native/Traditional Religions	0	10	3	8
Introduction to Religion	1	16	1	16
Islam	17	32	23	37
Judaism	8	17	12	22
Library	0	0	0	1
Missiology	0	0	0	7
New Religious Movements	0	6	1	9
New Testament	16	30	83	127
North American Religions	4	14	28	51
Pastoral Care	1	3	3	4
Philosophy of Religion	1	10	22	62
Preaching/Ministry	1	3	3	16
Rabbinic Judaism	1	8	5	8
Racial/Ethnic Minority Studies in Religion	0	16	4	23
Religion and Science	0	6	4	20
Religion/Theology: Two or More Subfields	2	8	16	48
Religions of Africa/Oceania	0	10	1	6
Religious Ethics	1	14	10	41
Second Temple Judaism	0	7	8	51
Septuagint	0	0	2	4
Social Sciences and Religion (e.g., Religion & Society, Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology)	0	11	11	48
South Asian Religions (general or not listed separately)	3	10	11	26
Women's Studies in Religion	0	20	6	47
World Religions	4	26	2	37
Other	10	10	9	92
Not Reporting	0	N/A	0	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>1903</b>

Job Classifications	2006			
	Employers		Candidates	
	Primary	All	Primary	All
Administration (e.g., President, Dean, Director, Program Director, Coordinator)	2	6	1	11
Ancient Near Eastern Languages	0	4	1	21
Archaeology — Ancient Near East	0	3	1	9
Archaeology — Greco-Roman	0	2	1	3
Arts, Literature & Religion	0	9	13	47
Asian Religions (general or not listed separately)	9	20	8	34
Biblical Languages	1	13	5	78
Buddhism	6	16	21	33
Catholic Studies	2	6	2	30
Catholic Theology (all areas)	9	14	18	46
Central and South American and Caribbean Religions	0	3	0	3
Christian Ethics	11	18	38	80
Christian Studies	3	7	1	31
Christian Theology (general or not listed separately)	7	15	35	106
Christian Theology: Practical/Praxis	1	9	12	27
Christian Theology: Systematic/Constructive	2	9	65	113
Classics	0	0	0	16
Comparative Religions	2	18	6	49
Critical Studies/Theory/Methods in Religion	0	11	7	37
Early Christianity/Church History	1	10	38	94
Early Judaism	0	4	1	24
East Asian Religions (general or not listed separately)	14	22	13	26
Editorial	0	2	1	4
Epigraphy	0	0	0	0
Gay/Lesbian Studies in Religion	0	0	0	8
Hebrew Bible/Old Testament	11	28	91	133
Hinduism	1	9	7	19
History of Christianity/Church History	5	15	39	94
History of Religion (general)	4	16	4	34
Indigenous/Native/Traditional Religions	1	2	4	7
Introduction to Religion	0	12	0	14
Islam	14	29	26	42
Judaism	9	16	7	20
Library	0	1	0	2
Missiology	0	1	3	10
New Religious Movements	0	2	2	10
New Testament	24	39	96	148
North American Religions	2	12	29	43
Pastoral Care	2	5	5	12
Philosophy of Religion	2	10	22	72
Preaching/Ministry	0	2	0	12
Rabbinic Judaism	2	7	3	9
Racial/Ethnic Minority Studies in Religion	1	11	3	21
Religion and Science	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Religion/Theology: Two or More Subfields	3	8	18	49
Religions of Africa/Oceania	1	6	0	7
Religious Ethics	3	13	9	34
Second Temple Judaism	0	5	7	39
Septuagint	0	1	1	2
Social Sciences and Religion (e.g., Religion & Society, Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology)	1	14	16	58
South Asian Religions (general or not listed separately)	3	15	11	23
Women's Studies in Religion	1	11	7	46
World Religions	4	22	4	57
Other	10	10	13	78
Not Reporting	0	N/A	32	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>747</b>	<b>2057</b>

Job Classifications	2005			
	Employers		Candidates	
	Primary	All	Primary	All
Administration (e.g., President, Dean, Director, Program Director, Coordinator)	1	2	0	1
Ancient Near Eastern Languages	0	3	2	14
Archaeology — Ancient Near East	0	4	1	8
Archaeology — Greco-Roman	0	1	0	0
Arts, Literature & Religion	0	5	7	28
Asian Religions (general or not listed separately)	4	12	5	27
Biblical Languages	0	12	1	56
Buddhism	0	7	15	20
Catholic Studies	4	6	2	15
Catholic Theology (all areas)	7	16	19	34
Central and South American and Caribbean Religions	0	2	0	0
Christian Ethics	6	12	26	44
Christian Studies	3	6	0	15
Christian Theology (general or not listed separately)	3	12	17	51
Christian Theology: Practical/Praxis	0	2	5	16
Christian Theology: Systematic/Constructive	5	7	44	69
Classics	0	2	1	13
Comparative Religions	4	14	8	45
Critical Studies/Theory/Methods in Religion	0	5	4	29
Early Christianity/Church History	3	11	25	58
Early Judaism	0	6	0	12
East Asian Religions (general or not listed separately)	7	11	4	10
Editorial	1	0	0	0
Epigraphy	0	0	0	1
Gay/Lesbian Studies in Religion	0	0	0	6
Hebrew Bible/Old Testament	12	28	69	106
Hinduism	0	4	4	10
History of Christianity/Church History	7	18	21	67
History of Religion (general)	3	15	4	29
Indigenous/Native/Traditional Religions	0	2	3	5
Introduction to Religion	1	17	0	9
Islam	13	24	25	32
Judaism	9	15	4	13
Library	0	0	0	0
Missiology	0	0	0	6
New Religious Movements	0	1	0	12
New Testament	13	29	71	107
North American Religions	7	10	23	33
Pastoral Care	0	0	5	8
Philosophy of Religion	1	6	10	38
Preaching/Ministry	0	0	1	9
Rabbinic Judaism	1	8	0	1
Racial/Ethnic Minority Studies in Religion	0	6	2	10
Religion and Science	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Religion/Theology: Two or More Subfields	4	7	11	40
Religions of Africa/Oceania	1	1	0	4
Religious Ethics	3	15	8	26
Second Temple Judaism	0	8	5	30
Septuagint	0	1	1	2
Social Sciences and Religion (e.g., Religion & Society, Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology)	0	7	8	36
South Asian Religions (general or not listed separately)	4	6	8	22
Women's Studies in Religion	1	11	6	51
World Religions	5	29	3	38
Other	15	15	7	54
Not Reporting	0	N/A	28	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>1370</b>

# 2006-2007 Employment Survey Highlights

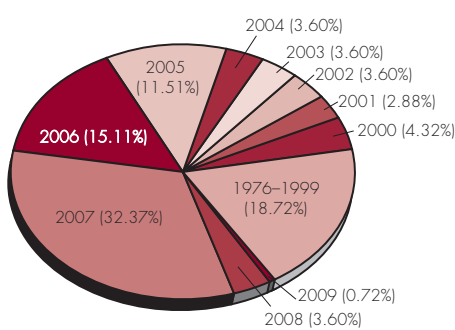
**T**O GET A MORE accurate picture of employment trends in the field, the AAR and the SBL have expanded our data collection efforts. Employment Information Services (EIS) created a web-based, anonymous survey to track hirings by specialization and to collect demographic information on job candidates.

In spring 2007, surveys were sent to all candidates who had registered for the 2006 EIS Center and to all employers who had advertised a position in *Openings* in 2006. Presented here are highlights of the data received. Complete results, including new data on the PhD-granting institutions of candidates who received a position offer, can be found at [www.aarweb.org/jump/eis](http://www.aarweb.org/jump/eis). This ongoing project will provide longitudinal data.

## Employer Survey Data

Out of 567 employer solicitations, 201 responses were received (35 percent response rate). Eighty-six percent of those who responded filled the position which they had advertised in *Openings*. Of the 172 positions filled, 80 percent of the employers report interviewing the appointee at the EIS Center. The majority of the positions filled were at the assistant professor level (61 percent), followed by associate professor (13 percent), full professor (9 percent), lecturer (6 percent), instructor (5 percent) and visiting (3 percent), with 3 percent of the positions ranked as "other." Sixty-three percent of the positions were tenure-track, 18 percent were tenured, 17 percent were nontenure-track, and less than 2 percent were either limited or adjunct. None were reported as a joint appointment. Sixty-five percent of the appointees were male; 35 percent were female. The racial/ethnic distribution of the appointees was as follows: 75 percent Caucasian or Euro-American, 6 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 4 percent Latino/a or Hispanic, 1 percent African-American or black, 2 percent multiracial, and 12 percent reported "other."

**Figure 1:**  
*Year of appointee's degree*



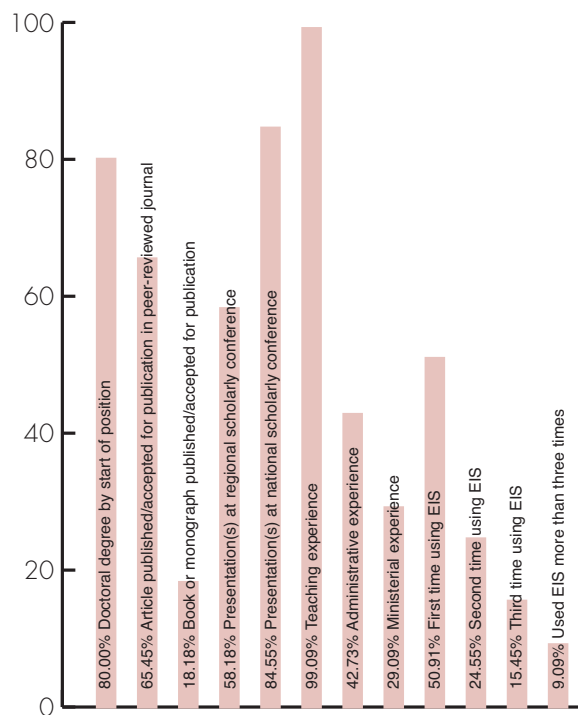
## Candidate Survey Data

Out of 746 candidate solicitations, 263 responses were received (45.25 percent response rate). When asked to indicate employment status during the search, 46 percent reported being a graduate student, 35 percent reported part-time/adjunct faculty, and 21 percent reported full-time/nontenure-track faculty (Candidates could select more than one response). Seventy-two percent held a PhD or planned to have completed theirs by August 2007, while 15 percent would be ABD going into fall 2007.

### Job Offers

Of the 263 candidates who responded, 42 percent received one or more job offers. Of those, 77 percent received one offer, 16 percent received two offers, 4 percent received three offers, and 3 percent received more than three offers.

**Figure 2:**  
*Data on candidates who received one or more job offers*



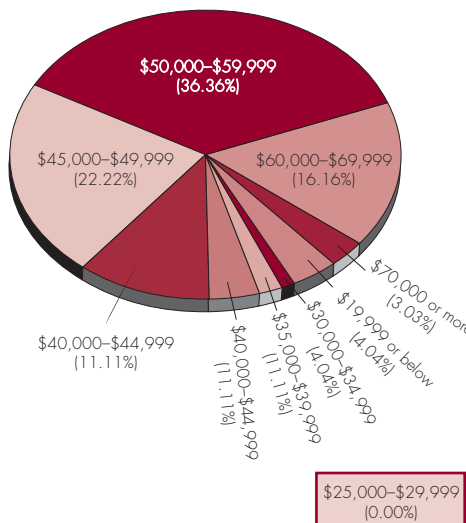
Of those candidates who did not receive or accept a new position, 57 percent planned to continue in the same employment status, the top four of which were: graduate student (40 percent), part-time/adjunct faculty (40 percent), full-time/nontenure-track faculty (21 percent), and teaching assistant (4 percent) (Candidates could select more than one response). Eighteen percent did not know at the time of the survey what they would do the following academic year.

### Position Data

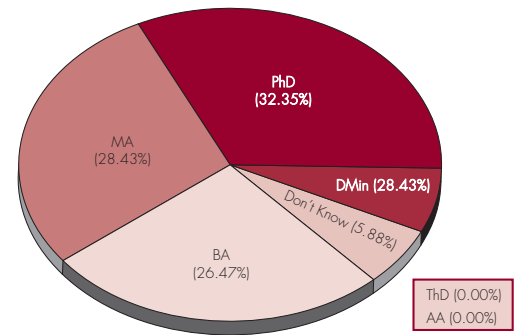
Of the 102 candidates who accepted an offer, 42 percent will work in a private college/university, 23 percent will work in a church-related college, 22 percent will work in a public college/university, 9 percent will work in a free-standing seminary, and 4 percent will work in a university-related divinity school. Seventy-one percent will work as full-time/tenure-track faculty, 20 percent as full-time/non-tenure-track faculty, 3 percent as full-time/tenured, 2 percent as part-time/adjunct faculty, 1 percent in administration (e.g., dean, chair). Three percent reported "other."

Of the 102 candidates who accepted positions, 72 percent report being thrilled with the new position, 25 percent report feeling satisfied with the position, and 3 percent report feeling unsatisfied. None reported feeling deeply unhappy about the position.

**Figure 3:**  
*Salary of appointment*



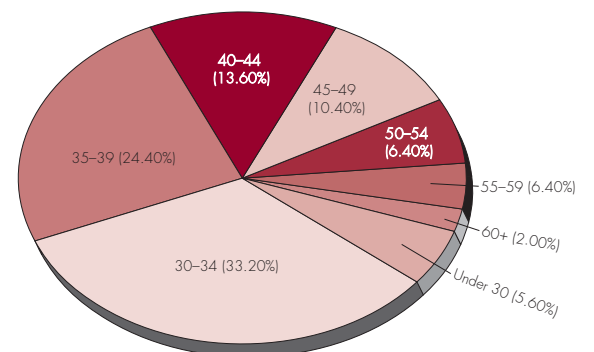
**Figure 4:**  
*Highest degree offered at new institution*



### Candidate Demographics

Sixty-two percent of the candidates who registered for the 2006 EIS Center were male; 38 percent were female. Regarding race/ethnicity, 86 percent of the registrants reported their race/ethnicity as Caucasian or Euro-American, 4.5 percent African-American or black, 4 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 2 percent multiracial, 2 percent Latino/a or Hispanic, 0.5 percent American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 1 percent chose "other." In terms of citizenship, 85 percent were United States citizens, 6 percent were noncitizen residents of the United States, 5 percent were citizens of Canada, and 4 percent reported their citizenship as "other."

**Figure 5:**  
*Age distribution of registered candidates*



### Job Search Experience

Most responding candidates (90 percent) reported that interviewers did not exhibit unprofessional or inappropriate behavior. Those that did encounter such behavior reported offensive remarks, offensive actions, and use of a hotel bedroom for interviews.

The majority of candidates (86 percent) report that interviewers did not ask questions or broach topics of an inappropriate nature. Of those who did encounter such questions/topics, the three most common were in regards to marital status, partner's career, partner's willingness to relocate, and religious beliefs. Sixty-nine percent reported that the interviewer directly asked an inappropriate question. Forty-three percent stated the interviewer indirectly broached an inappropriate topic. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents answered the question truthfully, while 22 percent changed the topic in order to avoid the question. Forty-seven percent are not sure whether their response was to their advantage or disadvantage. Thirty-seven percent believe their answer was to their disadvantage and 16 percent believe it was to their advantage.



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