Debility and Personhood in African Religions

Across the continent of Africa, many associate the condition of debility and/or physical “abnormality” with spiritual and moral concerns. Such conditions might result from a religious transgression, as in the case of neglected ancestors, or they might result from spiritual “foul play” in the case of witchcraft. Some consider physical difference to be a source of power, which has both positive and negative implications. This panel seeks to explore the intersections of personhood, debility/physical abnormality, and religion.

A wide range of papers will fit on this panel. Sociological, anthropological, and/or historical papers will examine how African religions define and diagnose debility and physical abnormality, and they will also explore how African religions account for the personhood of disabled people. We hope to have a range of papers analyzing both the positive and negative social implications of debility and physical abnormality.

Other papers might explore the resources available for a constructive theology of debility and/or physical abnormality. Such papers would examine the kinds of symbols, proverbs, or rituals that are available to affirm the personhood of disabled or physically abnormal people.

Eschatology and African Religions

Throughout the world, prophets of doom have been characterized and caricatured by their signs proclaiming, “The end is nigh!” They are espousing an eschatological vision—they have a sense that the end of the world as we know it could be just around the corner. Yet many scholars have noted that eschatology is largely absent from African traditional religion. African religions tend to focus on the “here and now,” safeguarding the stability of community life. Even in the case of ancestor veneration, African religionists are not looking backward as much as securing right relations between the living and the dead to ensure the fertility and security of the community. Nevertheless, in the past century, most of Africa has come in contact with Islam or Christianity—both of which are religions with strong eschatological visions. This panel seeks to learn more about the ways that Africans are developing eschatological visions.

Papers on this panel might include an analysis of the ways that African tradition religions are responding to eschatological concerns. Others might investigate the ways that Africans are using Christian or Muslim eschatological visions to meet uniquely African interests. Especially welcome are
papers that explore eschatology and/or the “apocalypse” in contemporary African visual and performing arts.

- Religion, Sexuality and Identity in Africa

In keeping with recent AASR conversations and panels concerning sexuality (broadly conceptualized) and religion in Africa, we invite papers on the following themes:

- Theory and method in the study of religion(s) in Africa with special reference to sexuality.
- Religion, gender, and sexuality in art and popular culture, with particular attention to gospel music and African films
- Teaching African sexualities in Africa
- Incidents and histories of violence against marginalized sexual bodies — including (but not limited to) religious violence, sexualized violence, and/or state-sanctioned violence. This could include social rituals, justice work, art etc. as efforts to respond to violence through religion.
- Religion, migration class and sexuality
- Religious views of humanity through ideas of sexuality

We will consider work on all issues of sexuality that pertain to the shifting landscape of sexuality in Africa in legal, sociopolitical and religious lived lives.

- The Good Life and Social Justice in Africa: Ethical and Religious Responses to Exclusion:

This roundtable, co-sponsored with the African Religions Group will explore various approaches to the Good, as well as tensions among them, that currently prevail on the continent. Against the New Atheists’ assumption that religion is the root of all evil, we pursue ways in which African ethical and religious systems educate pupils, empower persons, enfranchise citizens, enhance health, expand rights, or fulfill other goals even as they question simplistic understandings of what is best in life. We will invite several scholars to address these themes from the point of view of their research. We also welcome proposals for participation from interested colleagues. This roundtable responds to the theme of our 2016 meetings, Revolutionary Love, and to the AAR’s call for plenary sessions over the next three years on the theme of religion and hatred.

Mission Statement:
The African Association for the Study of Religions (AASR) is an academic association that promotes the study of religions in Africa through international collaboration in research, publishing, and teaching. AASR was founded in 1992 in Harare, Zimbabwe at a Regional Conference of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR). The AASR has been an affiliate organization of the IAHR since 1995.

In particular, the AASR aims to stimulate the academic study of religions in Africa in the following ways:

- By providing a forum for multilateral communications between scholars of African religions
- By facilitating the exchange of resources and information
- By encouraging international collaboration in research between scholars and institutions in Africa and those outside the continent
• By developing publishing opportunities particularly for scholars based in Africa
• By establishing a travel fund to enable scholars to attend academic conferences
• By organising conferences in Africa and panels on the religions of Africa
• By establishing a newsletter and website to increase communication between scholars of African religions
• By creating a directory of scholars in the field of African religions

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair – Spencer-Miller, Althea, Drew University, aspencer@drew.edu

Chair – Acolatse, Esther, Duke University, eacolatse@div.duke.edu

African Diaspora Religions Group

Call Text:
Adorning the Spirit: Clothing, Jewelry, and the Sacred Accouterments of African Diaspora Religions
Whether we consider the elaborate ritual vestments of the orishas in Brazilian Candomblé; the crisp white
nurses clothing of Pentecostal church mothers; the ruffled and sashed peasant-style dresses of the serviteurs
of the Haitian loas or any number of other ritual clothing traditions associated with African Diaspora religions,
the matter of adornment is a rich and complicated frame from which to explore historical and contemporary
meanings of Africana religiosity.

This panel seeks papers and presentations on experiences, analyses and interpretation of adornment in
religions of the African diaspora. How do ritual traditions incorporate textiles, lace, metal implements, wood-
carvings and even the material structure of holy scriptures as a way of representing the sacred? How do
practitioners represent themselves, their values and their connection to Spirit, by means of what they choose
to wear (or not) on their bodies? We want to explore adornment of humans as well as decoration of physical
space as each is prepared for encounter with sacred energies. How do clothing, jewelry, headdresses,
footwear, fresh and dried leaves, flags, banners, flowers, rocks and other ritual accouterments help identify
and articulate meanings of status, of relationship, of liminality, and aesthetic values? Who are the people
who create the liturgical vestments and design the sacred spaces?

How do colonial histories and post-colonial realities impact aesthetic choices and social meanings in the
clothes worn by devotees? How are sacred colors, patterns, sounds, shapes and symbols incorporated in the
lived experiences of practitioners? What makes some materials appropriate for use by the gods or the
ancestors, and what makes others unfitting? We encourage papers that explore some combination of
conjunctions – of history, gender, sexuality, beauty, efficacy, creativity, resistance and transgression through
the experience of sacred embellishment and through the witness of the embellishers.

Immigration in its demographic, practical, ritual, and/or theological aspects, examining transnational and
global links, including studies that treat immigrants of various faiths (Pentecostals, Muslims, Jews, and
practitioners of African indigenous or diasporan religions), who often share geographical spaces as members
of broader, migrating communities, in connection and in tension with one another. This call is co-sponsored
by the African Diaspora Religions Group and the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements Group.
Mission Statement:
This Group endorses the study of African diaspora religions beyond its traditional parameters to include broader geographies, histories, and cultures of people of African descent and the way they shaped the religious landscape, not only in the Caribbean and the Americas, but also in Europe and Asia. This study defines “diaspora” as the spread and dispersal of people of African descent — both forced and voluntary — through the slave trade, imperial and colonial displacements, and postcolonial migrations. This Group emphasizes the importance of an interdisciplinary approach which is central to its vision. The aim is to engage a wide range of disciplines and a variety of scholars who work on different aspects of African diaspora religions. It considers the linguistic and cultural complexities of the African diaspora, the importance of African traditional religions, Afro-Christianity, Afro-Islam, and Afro-Judaism, the way they have and continue to inform an understanding of Africa, and also the way they have and continue to shape the religious landscape of the Americas, Europe, and Asia.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS
E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)

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

African Religions Group

Call Text:
Our Group encourages critical inquiry about religions originating in Africa as well as all those practiced there. Proposals should go beyond description; they should analyze the conceptual tools and methods employed in analysis. The steering committee will evaluate the merit of each proposal based on the clarity of its thesis, the strength of the evidence referenced, and the quality of the conclusions drawn from it, in terms of both style and substance.

We invite individual paper proposals that respond to the following five themes relevant to any region of the African continent (North, West, East, Central, Southern, and the Horn):

• A roundtable to discuss Robert Baum’s recently published book, *West Africa’s Women of God: Alinesitoué and the Diola Prophetic Tradition* (Indiana University Press, 2015) (co-sponsored by the Indigenous Religions Group, pending co-sponsorship with the African Association for the Study of Religion). In this book, based on detailed historical and ethnographic fieldwork in the Casamance region of Senegal, Baum documents the life of the revolutionary religious leader, Alinesitoué Diatta, whose revelations from the Diola (JOH-la) Supreme Being, Emitai, left an indelible trace. After Alinesitoué’s emergence, the majority of Diola prophets were henceforth women rather than men. Baum’s study revives memories of a figure of global importance for her resistance to French colonialism, which ended with her imprisonment and near disappearance from history. We will invite specialists in African and indigenous religions as well as proposals for participation from qualified colleagues, to read and engage Baum’s arguments, insights, and methods in assessing his new book.

• Researching Religion in Africa: Methodological Contributions and Challenges to Religious Studies (co-sponsored by the Anthropology of Religion Group): As Africanists we often face different
concerns and anchor our work in different communities than our colleagues working in other parts of the world do, but we may also analyze the same "world" religions that our peers do. How do our methods affirm and contest the assumptions of our discipline in ways that make our contributions unique? And what multi-disciplinary approaches are best suited to our work? We seek papers that critique and vindicate various methodological approaches to the study of African religion and ritual, including apprenticeship, biography, ethical inquiry, ethnomusicology, participant-observation, systematic theology, visual ethnography, etc., in order to understand how the study of African religions expands the scope of religious studies as a whole.

• Africa and Everyday Islam: Sustaining Plural Publics through Mysticism, Ritual, and Theology (co-sponsored by the Mysticism Group): In contrast to the extremism evidenced in the recent attack at the Radisson Bleu Hotel in Mali stand most African Muslims whose daily lives balance diverse forces and endeavors, from ancestors, divination, farming, healing, hunting, local rituals, market success, personal advancement, territorial spirits, and so on, all of which require an adaptive and cosmopolitan engagement with the world. We invite papers that explore such pluralistic forms of Islam in contrast to the reformist movements that oppose them and with which media coverage seems preoccupied. We also invite contributors to ask if religious studies has yet developed the proper lens through which to examine this variety of African Islams.

• African Responses to Violence in the Realms of Gender and Sexuality: Action, Ethics, Policy, and Religion (co-sponsored by the Lesbian and Feminist Issues in Religion Group): This panel seeks documentation and reflection on attempts to counter gendered and sexualized violence in Africa in all their forms, including thoughts about their causes and consequences. Over the past three years, the African Religions Group and Lesbian and Feminist Issues in Religion Group have co- and quad-sponsored panels on LGBTIQ Africans and gendered violence in Africa. This year we seek papers that document responses to such offenses, whether they be attempts to end, heal, prosecute, reduce, or testify to the resulting injuries, injustices, or wounds. We also welcome thoughts on how to encourage and enhance such efforts.

• The Good Life and Social Justice in Africa: Ethical and Religious Responses to Exclusion (pending co-sponsorship with the African Association for the Study of Religion): This plenary roundtable will explore various approaches to the Good, as well as tensions among them, that currently prevail on the continent. Against the New Atheists’ assumption that religion is the root of all evil, we pursue ways in which African ethical and religious systems educate pupils, empower persons, enfranchise citizens, enhance health, expand rights, or fulfill other goals even as they question simplistic understandings of what is best in life. We will invite several scholars to address these themes from the point of view of their research. We also welcome proposals for participation from interested colleagues. This roundtable responds to the theme of our 2016 meetings, Revolutionary Love, and to the AAR’s call for plenary sessions over the next three years on the theme of religion and hatred.

• Film Screening: Timbuktu (2014), by Abderrahmane Cissako: This film by a master filmmaker examines the tragic clash of contrasting interpretations of Islam during Mali’s 2012 insurrection. We invite three or four specialists on Mali, the Sahel, and/or West African Islam or related themes to comment on the film following our screening.

Mission Statement:
This Group provides a forum for the discussion of research on the multiplicity of religious traditions in Africa, methodological issues in the study of the religions of Africa, and African religious responses to ethical and
The Afro-American Religious History Group invites proposals that explore the relationship between religious identity and racial identity in the Americas. For our 2016 call, we are especially interested in proposals that address the following:

- The intersections of African American and Latin religious histories; both in the context of changing U.S. demographics, and the specific history of Texas and the borderlands.
- Black Christianities outside the Afro-Protestant establishment (i.e. Adventism, Church of Christ, COGIC, black Catholicism)
- The history of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (on the occasion of the bi-centennial of the denomination’s incorporation)
- Histories of independent black churches
- The place of religion in independent black institution-building, more broadly (i.e. HBCUs, NAACP, National Urban League, the black press)
- The role of education in African American religious history, and/or the significance of religious education in African American history
- Black (religious and/or political) conservatism
- Black religious responses to/engagements with recent demographic trends and cultural and political developments (#blacklivesmatter, “nones,” black atheism/secularism, etc.)
- Explorations of the co-constitutive nature of race and religion in the making of American history(ies), particularly through an engagement with Karen and Barbara Fields’s 2014 book, *Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life* (for a potential co-sponsored panel with the Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group)
- Black religious traditions in New Spain, and the early American West, more broadly; as well as in
Texas up through the present day (for a potential co-sponsored panel with the North American Religions Section)

Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the Call for Papers, and will speak to its broader implications for African American religious history.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

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

Chair - Sorett, Josef, Columbia University, js3119@columbia.edu

Animals and Religion Group

Call Text:
This Group addresses issues in the study of animals and religion and seeks to engage religion scholars with the emergent field of animal studies. We welcome theoretically informed paper and panel proposals on all topics related to these themes. We particularly value papers that attend to real animals, alongside theoretical constructs, imagery, or representations pertaining to them. We especially seek proposals on the following topics in 2016:

- The use of Holocaust imagery in relation to the treatment of non-human animals (for a possible panel co-sponsored with the Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Group)


- Proposals for 5 minute presentations on the topic of "Anthropomorphism: Pro or Con?" for a rapidfire ideas & discussion-oriented panel. (Please indicate that your proposal is for this session by starting your title with '5 min Anthropomorphism Presentation:...')

- Art, animals, and religion (including both visual and performing arts)

- Animals and Gender

- Love, sex, and animality, to engage with the presidential theme of Revolutionary Love

- Animals and/or animality in non-Western religions
Animals in War

The Religious/Ethical Significance of Animal Fables

Mission Statement:
The purpose of this Group is to advance scholarship by providing a forum for scholars whose work addresses relevant issues in the study of animals and religion, and to engage religious studies scholars with the emergent field of animal studies. The Group emphasizes the theoretical implications of attention to animals for the study of religion and a diversity of approaches, including, but not limited to:
-- Cultural and comparative history of religions
-- Critical theory
-- Ethnography and anthropology of religion
-- Descriptions of the role(s) religious/theological traditions have played in mediating images of nonhuman animals
-- Assessments of relationships between religious constructions of animals and those animals

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Clough, David, University of Chester, d.clough@chester.ac.uk
Chair - Ambros, Barbara, University of North Carolina, bambros@email.unc.edu

Anthropology of Religion Group

Call Text:
We invite proposals from the full range of anthropological theories and methods exploring diverse traditions, regions, and periods.

We welcome alternative and creative format sessions that involve presentations other than read manuscripts (including film, multimedia, roundtable and performance) and those that offer more opportunity for dialogue and collaboration among presenters, respondents, and audiences.

We especially encourage individual and panel submissions that address:

• The spirit of this year’s theme, Revolutionary Love, such as:
  Anthropologies of caregiving and self-care (e.g. medical, family, education, community, pastoral/spiritual/chaplaincy, social justice activism)
  Transgressive methods, experimental ethnography; what happens when we ‘get weird’ in the field?

• Ethnographies of religion and incarceration (broadly conceived, including issues such as profiling, surveillance, structural violence, and responding social movements)
• Economics, political economy, class
• Religious studies across the four-fields of Anthropology
• Beyond Asad: new directions in the anthropology of Islam
• Phenomenology and a Hard Place: ethnographic interventions
• Researching Religion in Africa: Methodological Contributions and Challenges to Religious Studies

For a possible co-sponsorship with the African Religions Group. As Africanists we often face different concerns and anchor our work in different communities than our colleagues working in other parts of the world do, but we may also analyze the same “world” religions that our peers do. How do our methods affirm and contest the assumptions of our discipline in ways that make our contributions unique? And what multi-disciplinary approaches are best suited to our work? We seek papers that critique and vindicate various methodological approaches to the study of African religion and ritual, including apprenticeship, biography, ethical inquiry, ethnomusicology, participant-observation, systematic theology, visual ethnography, etc., in order to understand how the study of African religions expands the scope of religious studies as a whole.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Chair - Zwissler, Laurel, Central Michigan University, lzwissle@chass.utoronto.ca
Chair - Mote, Donna S., Sewanee: The University of the South, dsmote@mac.com

Arts, Literature, and Religion Section

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

• The literary, visual and performing arts of the desert and the desert/wilderness as a site for religious and theological reflection.
• Literary, visual, performative representations of memorial and pilgrimage sites, both civic and religious, including the Alamo.

• Sites of memory and the power in memory in particular geographical locations, not limited to, but including sites of lynching, sites of healing, and sites that are “haunted.”

• The US Southwest as a borderland; la frontera; reflections on the work of Gloria E. Anzaldúa; the Southwest and missions including the engagement of religious culture at the border of the United States and Mexico.

• Representations in literature and visual and performing arts of cowboy religious culture or cowboy churches.

• Visual, literary, performative representations of la Virgen de Guadalupe, but also more broadly the function of icons, saints, milagros, and sacred objects.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Pierce, Yolanda, Princeton Theological Seminary, yolanda.pierce@ptsem.edu
Chair - Carvalhaes, Cláudio, McCormick Theological Seminary, carvalhaes1@gmail.com

Arts Series

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

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

Method of submission: PAPERS

Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Group

Call text:
We welcome individual papers and panel proposals that address:

- Asian North American religious communities and market dynamics. How are Asian American religious thought systems, practices, and communal formations responding to the impact of financialization and the global economy in their respective contexts?

- Asian North American secularities. From the “silent exodus” of second+ generation immigrants, to the “nones” in APA communities, how do Asian American identities and concerns reflect, challenge, and reconfigure conversations around secularization, secularity, and the (post-) secular? Consideration for possible co-sponsorship with the Secularism and Secularity Group.

- The construction of Asian and Asian-American Sexuality: Psychological and religious perspectives on issues of gender, sexuality, and sexual identity in Asian and Asian-American contexts. Possible traditions and themes to consider include Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Christianity, feminism, multi-cultural contexts, and pedagogy. For possible co-sponsorship with the Psychology, Culture and Religion Group.


- APA community concerns in the South/Gulf States, including: Vietnamese immigrant communities in Texas; Katrina survivors and affected communities; the Black-White racial binary and blindness to APA communities and concerns, etc.

- APA representation and growing visibility in popular culture on one hand, or continued invisibility of the Asian American self in literature/art, on the other. Papers might address, e.g., increasing APA presence on TV shows/series; or address the continued erasure of APA identity in the media and art/film/literature.

- We also welcome proposals creatively addressing this year’s presidential theme of Revolutionary Love from the perspective of Asian North American communities and their concerns

- Any other critical aspects of Asian North American religions, culture, and society.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Bundang, Rachel A. R., Stuart Hall and Convent of the Sacred Heart, rbundang@alumni.princeton.edu
Chair - Singh, Devin, Dartmouth College, devin.singh@dartmouth.edu

Augustine and Augustinianisms Group

Call Text:
Augustine on the Modalities and Realities of Power
Augustine is known for a political realism that evades neither the necessities of this-worldly political responsibility nor the task of gaining critical purchase upon the use and misuse of power. Although scholars have thoroughly examined Augustine’s role in the coercion of the Donatists and in the formation of the just war tradition, the understanding of power in other areas of his life and thought remains relatively unexplored. These include, among others, whatever forces are entailed in education, hermeneutics, law, philosophy, rhetoric, social groups, and theology. What modalities of power are exercised in these areas? What realities, for better or worse, are created by the use of power in these areas? Papers are invited from all disciplines employing a wide range of methodologies examining all aspects of the analytical resources and tools furnished by Augustine both for the exercise of power and the experience of being brought under its influence (rather than mere descriptions of his own use or misuse of it). Attention to ambivalence, complexity, faith, and tragedy is most welcome.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS
Leadership:
Chair - Kolbet, Paul R., Yale University, kolbet@aya.yale.edu

Baha’i Studies Group

Call Text:
The Most Challenging Issue: Religion and Race in the Baha’i Community

In 1938, Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Baha’i Faith, wrote that racial prejudice had eaten its way into the fabric of United States society and that Baha’is should consider racism the most challenging issue it faced. Submissions are welcome that analyze the Baha’i community’s approaches to resolving racism. Comparative analyses between the Baha’i Faith and other religions are welcome. Topics and approaches may include, but are not limited to: historical, sociological, theological, and political approaches, institutional contexts, the role of the arts, profiles of individuals, and gender issues.

Each presentation should be 20 minutes in length; a 10-minute Q & A will be allowed per presenter.

Please submit an abstract of no more than 250 words with your presentation’s title. Also attach a 1-page CV that includes your contact information (name, institutional affiliation, and email address). Send these to rstockman@usbnc.org. The deadline for submission is 5 p.m. on March 1, 2016.

Mission Statement:

Anonymity:

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair: Dr. Robert Stockman, co-chair; rstockman@usbnc.org
Chair: Dr. Susan Maneck, co-chair; smaneck@gmail.com

Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities Group

Call text:
Proposals are invited for two sessions.

- People in Motion and The Bible — This session will explore the impact that the Bible and religion have had and continue to exercise in shaping conceptions of immigrant and refugee communities, particularly in a North American / United States context.

- An "open session" on the general theme — Engagement of the Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities.
A third "invited session" on, The Use, Misuse and Abuse of Biblical Texts and Themes in Electoral Politics in the United States, is also planned.

Co-sponsorship with selected Society of Biblical Literature and American Academy of Religion program units is being sought for at least two of these sessions.

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

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

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

Leadership:
Chair - Bridgeman, Valerie, Methodist Theological School in Ohio, vbridgeman@mtso.edu
Chair - Page, Hugh Rowland, University of Notre Dame, hpage@nd.edu

Bioethics and Religion Group

Call Text:
The Bioethics and Religion Group invites submissions that pertain to the conference theme of Revolutionary Love. Proposals may take various approaches, including but not limited to: theory and method, historical studies, and revolutionary health interventions (purportedly) in the name of love. Interesting proposals in other areas of religion and bioethics will also be considered.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Randels, George D., University of the Pacific, grandels@pacific.edu
Call Text:

- **Black Theology and Revolutionary Love**
  We invite proposals that help black theology think about the meaning of love in its manifold expressions as self-love, love of blackness, love of God, neighborly love, interpersonal intimacy and love of creation. Black Theology began as a critique of the prevailing Civil Rights consensus that defined Christianity through themes of love, forgiveness and reconciliation. Love as the moral requirement for Christian life concealed asymmetrical power relations and priority was granted to liberation, just and power. The discourse on love as a theological virtue was undertheorized. How then does love function within the fabric of our cultural, socio-political, economic and ecological relations as a revolutionary drive for transformation? What does love tear down, exclude or reject? How do we undomesticate love? What are its aims, imperatives, forms and priorities? What thinkers, historical moments or movements ought black theology be in dialogue with to deepen or reconceive its reflections on love as praxis?

- **What is the “Black” in Black Theology?**
  We invite proposals that address questions about the meaning of “blackness” in black theology. This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of when Stokely Carmichael and other black radical activist used the term “black power.” Despite denunciations, the legacy of the black power movement gave black theology its “blackness.” What new, modified or revised constructions of blackness should drive black theology and what are their theological significance? How may we rethink the social purpose of black theology in the contemporary context? What are the new black sources that can be harnessed by black theological interpreters for emancipatory projects, sources such as post-Ferguson movements, black popular cultural sources, black body as theological source, black aesthetics, African religious and cultural sources, black denominational sources, readings of blackness from postcolonial, postmodern, queer, womanist/feminist, disability studies, and critical race theoretical perspective.

- **History of the Black Social Gospel**

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS
Proposals have a much greater chance of acceptance if they make very clear the central thesis and main line(s) of argument of the proposed paper. Papers selected for the co-sponsored session with the Nineteenth-Century Theology Group will be predistributed through the AAR Full Paper Submission system.

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

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

**Body and Religion Group**

**Call Text:**
This Group aims to provide a forum for multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary conversations on issues of body and religion. We are especially interested in the overall question of “what is body?” We invite proposals presenting diverse methodologies and understandings of body, as well as traditional and alternative presentation styles. When reviewing your paper proposals, we particularly appreciate proposals that make their methodological and theoretical frameworks explicit.

This year we are particularly interested in several topics:

- Psychoactive substances, self-cultivation, hallucination as a way of performance enhancement during rituals, body senses, memory, and cognition (potential co-sponsorship with the Cognitive Science of Religion Group)

- Religious Bodies, Religious Sexualities- papers that focus on problematizing the intricate relationships between bodies/sexualities and religiosity by employing creative empirical/literary/poetic approaches (potential co-sponsorship with the Religion and Sexuality Group)

- Immigrant Bodies, Spaces, and Identities

- Commodification of Bodies

- Epistemology of the Subtle/Astral/Spirit Body

- Ethological Ritualization and the Body

- Bodies as Abstract Data

- Tasting bodies - human and divine

- Methodologies and Pedagogical Strategies for Incorporating Treatments of Men and Masculinities into Gender and Religion Courses

  The Men, Masculinities and Religions Group, the Transformative Scholarship & Pedagogy Group, and the Body and Religion Group invite proposals for a co-sponsored session on methodologies of studying men, masculinities and male/masculinized/female/feminised bodies in relation to religion; and on pedagogical strategies for incorporating treatments of men/masculinities and male embodiment into gender and religion courses. Of particular interest are proposals featuring novel methodological or theoretical approaches to the study of men, masculinity, and religion and of religion and male embodiment; analyses of methodologies used to study men/masculinity within a specific religious tradition or comparatively; teaching practices that are particularly innovative or
demonstrably effective in integrating men/masculinities and the male/masculinized bodies into religion courses; as well as proposals for presentations designed to build the capacity of audience members to develop their own pedagogical practices for integrating the study of men/masculinities and male/masculinized bodies into religion and gender courses (e.g., through interactive exercises, sample syllabi, etc.). Proposals for both individual presentations and panel presentations are welcome.

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

The Body and Religion Group maintains a listserv for announcements about conferences, new publications and other items relevant to the field. To subscribe (or for other listserv information) go to http://aarlists.org/listinfo/bodyreligion and fill out the online form. Once subscribed you will be able to receive messages, control your subscription options, and access the archives.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Bado, Nikki, Iowa State University, nikkibf@iastate.edu
Chair - Pati, George, Valparaiso University, george.pati@valpo.edu

Bonhoeffer: Theology and Social Analysis Group

Call Text:
In anticipation of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, we invite papers exploring the distinctively "Protestant" aspects of Bonhoeffer's theology generally (e.g., his relationship to the axioms of sola scriptura, sola gratia, sola fides, sola Christus), as well as his relationship to Luther and the Lutheran tradition in particular. Moreover, in light of the AAR invitation to examine the theme of Revolutionary Love, where love is used "in the broadest possible sense, including love as a social and political force, a structural reality, a collective endeavor, a shared social practice," we invite papers grappling with Bonhoeffer and the complex relationship between love, violence, and the dynamics of power in the Christian tradition and in contemporary public life. Papers examining other themes are also invited.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Hale, Lori Brandt, Augsburg College, hale@augsburg.edu

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

Buddhism in the West Group

Call Text:
The Buddhism in the West group invites papers or session proposals on the following (but is open to other possibilities):

- Buddhist meditation retreats, retreat centers and/or programs
- An important recent book addressing Buddhism in the West
- Pilgrimage
- Buddhism and social justice activism
- Buddhist youth programs
- Buddhist entrepreneurship
- Monasticism in the West
- Buddhist-feminist/womanist dialogue
- Buddhism and food
- Buddhism and the occult
- Buddhism, race, ethnicity, and privilege
- Buddhism and transnationalism
- Buddhism and secularism
• Meditation retreats across Asian traditions in North America for a possible joint sessions with the North American Hinduism group

Mission Statement:
This Group seeks to provide a venue for new studies on Buddhism in non-Asian locales, facilitate communication and exchange between scholars working on Buddhism outside of Asia, and offer a forum within which to collectively clarify the intellectual and methodological underpinnings of research on Buddhism in the West, and consider new possibilities in methods and approaches.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - McMahan, David, Franklin and Marshall College, dmcmahan@fandm.edu

Buddhism Section

Call Text:
The Buddhism Section welcomes proposals for papers sessions, individual papers, and roundtables in all areas of Buddhist studies. To facilitate greater exchange among the various subfields within Buddhist studies, we are particularly interested in sessions that confront enduring problems in the study of Buddhism, raise important methodological issues, or bring fresh materials or perspectives to bear on themes of broad interest. We are especially interested in proposals for 90-minute or 120-minute sessions, for roundtables, and for sessions featuring pre-distributed papers or utilizing other innovative formats.

The Section participates in the AAR’s Full Paper Submission Pilot Program and would like to host at least one session in this format next year. For such sessions, the full text of the papers will be made available to members (only) on the AAR Website in advance of the Annual Meeting. At the session, presenters will only briefly summarize their arguments, with the bulk of the time given over to discussion. Panel submissions that intend to follow this format should note this clearly in the proposal.

Individual paper proposals are also encouraged. Each year, the Section hosts a session composed of the best individual paper submissions. All proposals are welcome and given careful consideration.

Some topics for possible paper and roundtable sessions proposed by our members this year include:

• missionizing strategies of international Buddhist organizations (Brooke Schedneck, brooke@iseaa.org)

• Buddhist responses to the climate crisis (Christopher Ives, cives@stonehill.edu)

• sacred spaces and material culture in East Asian Buddhism (Gregory Scott, gscott23@exseed.ed.ac.uk)

• Janet Gyatso’s Being Human in a Buddhist World (Jake Dalton, jakedalton@berkeley.edu)
If you are interested in contributing to any of these efforts, please contact the individuals listed above. We welcome proposals on other topics as well.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Meeks, Lori, University of Southern California, meeks@usc.edu

Chair - Wedemeyer, Christian K., University of Chicago, wedemeyer@uchicago.edu

Buddhist Critical—Constructive Reflection Group

Call Text:
We invite paper or panel proposals on the following topics (or other topics) as they pertain to our mission to engage in Buddhist critical and constructive reflection:

- Is there justice in Buddhism?
- Buddhist responses to the climate crisis
- Buddhism, hatred, and “terrorism”
- Buddhism and racism
• secularizing Buddhism
• Buddhism, blasphemy, and hate speech

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Hu, Hsiao-Lan, University of Detroit Mercy, hhu@udmercy.edu
Chair - Ives, Christopher, Stonehill College, cives@stonehill.edu

Buddhist Philosophy Group

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

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

• Intention and action
• Narrative and philosophy (contact C.W. Huntington at huntingtonc@hartwick.edu)
• Paradox (contact Rafal Stepien at rstepien@hampshire.edu)
• Philosophy and contemplative practice (contact Karin Meyers at karin.meyers@ryi.org)
• Philosophical aspects of Aśvaghoṣa’s works
• Reading the Awakening of Faith (contact Tao Jin at tjin@iwu.edu)
• Text as discursive event: accounts of text-creation
• Time
• Visuality and philosophy
• Discussion of seminal new works

If a contact person is not listed beside a topic above, persons interested in pursuing a session devoted to that topic should contact one or both of the BPG co-chairs: Sara McClintock (slmccli@emory.edu) or Richard Nance (rfnance@indiana.edu).

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - McClintock, Sara L., Emory University, slmccli@emory.edu
Chair - Nance, Richard, Indiana University, richard.nance@gmail.com

Childhood Studies and Religion Group

Call Text:
• Social science research on religion, children, and youth for a possible joint session with the Religion and Social Science Research Section
• For a possible joint session with the Mormon Studies Group, we invite proposals on Mormon children and families
• Religion and the gendering of children: The changing ways that traditions mark children as male, female, transgendered, etc.
• Religious literature, frontier societies, and childhood
• New Approaches in Histories of Childhood and Religion
• Fears, Phobias, and religion in Childhood
• Teaching religion, children, and childhood: pre-planned panel on the forthcoming Bloomsbury Reader in Religion and Childhood
Mission Statement:
This Group’s overall aim is to investigate the complex and multifaceted relation between religion and childhood. The specific goals of the Group are as follows:

Provide a forum for focused interdisciplinary and interreligious dialogue about the diverse relations of children and religion

Heighten academic interest in this topic in all fields represented in the AAR

Prepare scholars in religious studies to contribute to wider academic discussions about children and childhoods

Lend the voice of the academy to current questions of public policy and child advocacy

The focus of the Group is both timely and significant given the present concern for children across the globe and the rising interdisciplinary academic interest in childhood studies. The Group functions as a forum at the AAR for advancing childhood studies as a new line of scholarly inquiry. Go to http://childhoodreligion.com/ for more details.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Ridgely, Susan, University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh, ridgelys@uwosh.edu

Chinese Christianities Seminar

Call Text:
Developing the overarching theme of “Chinese Christianities” and building on the first year theme of regional boundaries, this second year of the seminar will focus on various social boundaries. We welcome papers in the following or related areas:

- Theological and practical issues arising across sociocultural understandings of Chinese understandings of the family (e.g., filial duty, gender roles, interfaith/interracial marriage, blended families, adoption, etc.)

- Social or ethical concerns of Chinese Christians to sexuality and LGBTIQ matters

- Discussions on the role of written and spoken Chinese languages (e.g., Mandarin, Cantonese, Hakka, Shanghainese, Toishanese, English, etc.) on aspects of Christian worship, thought, and practice (e.g., interactions, negotiations, and conflicts)

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

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

Chinese Religions Group

Call Text:
All proposals for both panels and papers are welcome and given careful consideration. If you wish to contribute to the following themes, please contact the co-chairs of the Chinese Religions Group, who will put you in touch with the people proposing the panels:

- Chinese vinaya commentary
- Religion and science in China
- Chinese religion and politics
- Prayer and meditation in China
- Law and religion in China
- Religion in Dunhuang
- Possible Themes for a Joint Session with the Korean Religions Group:
  - Religions of China and Korea
  - Religion, Politics, and Law
Religion and Science

Prayer and Meditation

Ethics and Thought

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

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

Chair - Bryson, Megan, University of Tennessee, megancbryson@gmail.com

Christian Spirituality Group

Call Text:
The Christian Spirituality Group welcomes proposals in the following areas:

- Spirituality of profane spaces
- Spirituality and the natural world
- Spirituality and issues of immigration and refugees
- Biblical spirituality and hermeneutics engaging Sandra Schneiders's *The Revelatory Text*, in recognition of the twenty-fifth anniversary of its publication
- Spirituality of mercy, in recognition of the Catholic Church's Jubilee Year of Mercy
- Borderline Christian spiritualities: hybrid pieties in the borderlands (ethnographic approaches especially encouraged, for a possible co-sponsored session with the Latina/o Critical and Comparative Studies Group and World Christianity groups)

We welcome proposals for both individual papers and panels in these areas.

Mission Statement:
This Group serves as a forum for scholars working in the interdisciplinary field of Christian spirituality. It is committed to the following:
Developing, refining, and demonstrating appropriate methodologies for the academic study of spirituality

Exploring models for describing and facilitating interdisciplinary conversation on the nature of spirituality among religion scholars of all perspectives and religions

Initiating discussion in the field of global spirituality, both religious and secular

Articulating the connections between scholarship and spiritual practice

Ensuring diversity in denominational affiliation, gender, race, and ethnic backgrounds

Focusing on the retrieval and contemporary assimilation of issues of central interest to the field

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Young, Glenn, Rockhurst University, glenn.young@rockhurst.edu
Chair - Benefiel, Margaret, Andover Newton Theological School, mbenefiel@ants.edu

Christian Systematic Theology Section

Call Text:
The Christian Systematic Theology Section invites proposals for individual papers or complete panels related to all aspects of Pneumatology (theology of the Spirit). We invite proposals to consider what can be said about the Holy Spirit’s person, both immanently (trinitarian procession and appropriations, dynamics of the divine life) and economically (role in revelation, Incarnation, salvation, sanctification, etc.). We especially invite proposals related to the following subthemes:

- Trinity
- Grace
- Inspiration and Illumination
- Gifts of the Spirit, especially healing
- Spirits more broadly considered: angels, demons, and discernment of spirits
• Pentecostalism as a major form of Christian expression
• The Holy Spirit and the construction/reconstruction of personhood
• The work of the Spirit as part of a theology of religions
• Politics of the Spirit
• The Spirit of Revolution and/or Love
• Pneumatological resources in the theology of Jonathan Edwards
• Spiritual Senses

We are interested in papers proposals that could lead to a cosponsored session with the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements Group. Theologies or theories of the Holy Spirit pertaining to a politics of the Spirit; the Spirit of revolution; the Spirit within theologies of religions; theologies of grace; differing views of inspiration and illumination; angels, and demons, holy or not; discerning the Spirit or spirits; gifts of the Spirit (esp. healing); and/or pentecostal expressions or manifestations generally.

We will also host, along with the Reformed Theology and History Group, a panel of invited speakers to critically engage the contribution of Katherine Sonderegger. Significant consideration will be given to her recent publication, *The Doctrine of God, vol. 1* (Fortress Press, 2015).

Mission Statement:
This Section promotes new constructive work in Christian systematic theology that is in dialogue with the historical Christian theological traditions on the one hand and with all aspects of the contemporary context on the other — intellectual movements, methodologies, multiple theological and religious perspectives, and ethical/social/political contexts.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

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

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

Class, Religion, and Theology Group

Call Text:
While discussions of class are notoriously difficult in the United States in both popular and academic discourse, the topic of class struggle is even more challenging. Nevertheless, the reality is hard to deny and even Warren Buffett has gone on record that class struggle exists (adding that his class is winning it). We would like to invite papers that address how religious discourses are dealing with the tensions that emerge in
class relationships.

- How are these tensions analyzed in religious discourse (denial, frustration, celebrating diversity, challenge, etc.)?
- What responses are emerging (accommodation, mediation, organizing, resistance, etc.)?
- What can the academic study of religion and theology learn from these developments in terms of resources as well as critical and constructive methods?

In addition to this topic, we are open to any papers that analyze religious phenomena from the standpoint of class structures and relations or class phenomena from the standpoint of religion.

Prearranged panel on intersectionality, co-sponsored by the Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Group and the Class, Religion, and Theology Group: This prearranged panel will examine how the notion of class is currently theorized or undertheorized in the context of intersectionality, and what new insights might be gained from fresh reflections on class in religious studies in relation to the concerns of race, gender, class, and other forms of oppression. Vice versa, what might the study of race, gender, class, and other forms of oppression learn from fresh studies of class in religious studies?

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

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

Chair - Rieger, Joerg, Southern Methodist University, jrieger@smu.edu

Cognitive Science of Religion Group

Call Text:
The Cognitive Science of Religion Group welcomes all Paper Proposals, Papers Session Proposals, and Round Table Proposals related to the Cognitive Science of Religion. Below are topics in which some members have expressed interest. Preference is typically given to fully formed panels that are submitted as a Papers Session or Round Table Proposal, but individual Paper Proposals are also welcomed. The AAR theme of 2016 is Revolutionary Love.
- Theories, methods, and purposes of cognitive historiography
- Contingency, essentialism, and CSR
- Cognitive constraints on religious cultural evolution
- Hilbert Problems* in the naturalistic study of religion
- New studies and analyses of "supernatural agents"
- "Problems and promises of CSR" - a general review of where we are and empirical papers
- Conversion and cognitive science (possible co-sponsorship with Religious Conversions Group)
- Psychoactive substances, self-cultivation, hallucination as a way of performance enhancement during rituals, body senses, memory, and cognition (potential co-sponsorship with the Body and Religion Group)

*For more information on the Hilbert Problems in the study of religion, see: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/2153599X.2015.1084470

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Chilcott, Travis, Iowa State University, chilcott@iastate.edu
Chair - White, Claire, California State University, Northridge, clairejwhite81@gmail.com

Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Group

Call Text:
The Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Group is affiliated with the Journal of Religion and Violence. Please note that conference papers presented through this AAR program unit will be considered for publication in the journal. For the 2016 AAR national conference, we seek papers that examine the intersections of religion and violence, with attention to the conditions under which religion lends itself to the
justification and/or promotion of violence. Papers should demonstrate comparative or theoretical approaches. Below are our recommended themes within this framework:

- **Evangelism and Violence.** Possible co-sponsorship with the Society for Hindu-Christian Studies. For people interested in submitting on this theme, please contact Chad Bauman (cbauman@butler.edu).

- **Women’s Agency, Religion, and Violence:** women who engage with religiously justified violence; media representations, gendered stereotypes, and political rhetoric about women, religion and violence, and/or rhetoric around gender and terrorism; gun violence, classroom safety, and concealed carry in classrooms, with particular reference to campus carry laws and the AAR’s recent statement. Possible co-sponsorship with Women and Religion section. For people interested in submitting on this theme, please contact Iselin Frydenlund (iselinfrydenlund@gmail.com).

- **The Relationship between Textuality and Acts of Violence:** an examination of into the intertextuality of violence within religious traditions, such as ISIS’ use of scripture to justify violence, or various enactments in order to play out cosmic narratives.

- **Religion, Technologies, and Violence:** examinations into technologies that facilitate religiously fueled violence, such as cyber-religious communities’ recruitment to commit violence or technologies that have been used in the experimentation on prisoners (e.g., Nazi experiments, the Tuskegee experiments). Possible co-sponsorship with the Science, Technology and Religion Group.

- **The Role of Religion in Forced Conversion and Migration.** Possible co-sponsorship with Religions Conversion Group. For people interested in submitting papers on this theme please contact John Sheveland (sheveland@gonzaga.edu).

- **Sovereignty, the Secular and Violence.** We encourage those submitting proposals to think within and outside of Euro-America and to consider case studies, historical and contemporary, that can help us reflect on recent events. Possible co-sponsorship with the Secularism and Secularity Group.

- **U.S. Religious/Social/Political Imaginaries:** Fueling Violence, Minimizing Peacebuilding: How do citizens and leaders in the United States become predisposed toward violence and simultaneously exhibit a reduction in awareness to peacebuilding strategies? We invite papers that explore the intertwining roles of religious, social and political imaginaries concealing and/or misrepresenting violence in the United States, with regard to practices of war and militarism, policing, incarceration, surveillance, border control, homeland security, response to refugees, etc. For people interested in submitting on this theme, please contact Kelly Denton-Borhaug (denton-borhaugk@moravian.edu).

- **Violence and Purity:** do notions of purity encourage/motivate violence? Is violence justified through reference to concepts of purity? How is violence thought to have a purifying function? For people interested in submitting on this theme, please contact John Soboslai (jsoboslai@gmail.com) and Matthew Recla (matthewrecla@boisestate.edu).

- **Violent Spectacles and Religion.** Papers might address spectacles ranging from Assyrian battle murals to Christian martyr narratives and their depictions in art, to war and atrocity memorials to contemporary ISIS beheading videos. Analyses should reflect religious and historical imagination and conceivably awareness of relevant theories in art history, sociology, or psychology. Possible co-sponsorship with the SBL program unit on Violence and Representations of Violence in Antiquity.
Mission Statement:
Since the end of the Cold War, acts of religiously motivated violence have become prominent worldwide. Scholars from various disciplines have attempted to account for these incidents, noting a resurgence of anti-colonialism, poverty and economic injustice, the failures of secular nationalism, uprootedness and the loss of a homeland, and the pervasive features of globalization in its economic, political, social, and cultural forms. Yet the religious narratives that motivate these violent actors are too conspicuous to be ignored. Today, critics no longer debate whether people’s use of religion has a role in violence; rather, the discussion has turned to what kind of role it plays, and how this role affects the nature and scale of the conflict. This Group contends that the theories, methodologies, and scales for studying the expanding field of religion and violence remain under-explored and require interdisciplinary work and collaboration to provide greater insights into the thorny issues involved. The sociology, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, evolutionary psychology, cognitive science, economics, and political science of religion all have provided great insights into the nature of religion and violence over the last few decades and all are arguably interdisciplinary by nature. This Group provides a venue devoted specifically to interdisciplinary discussions of the subject. We hope to channel and enhance contributions from the historically delineated (albeit constructed) humanities, social sciences, and physical sciences. In that vein, we hope to hear papers presenting cross-disciplinary dialogue and research on the topic of religion and violence.

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

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

Leadership:
Chair - Jerryson, Michael, Youngstown State University, mjerryson@gmail.com
Chair - Velji, Jamel, Haverford College, jvelji@gmail.com

Comparative Religious Ethics Group

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

- border ethics, migration/movement, space/place
- cross-cultural notions of patriotism and how different moral traditions articulate loyalties to the state versus competing loyalties (in light of the presidential elections)
- non-human persons or animals as ethical agents
- economics and capitalism
- technology and bioethics
• anthropology and ethics

• Issues of sovereignty and the secular, especially as they relate to violence, both threatened and enacted. These submissions will be considered for a possible co-sponsorship with the Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence, Indigenous Religious Traditions, and Secularism and Secularity groups. We encourage those submitting proposals to think within and outside of Euro-America and to consider case studies, historical and contemporary, that can help us reflect on recent events.

• Moral Mobility: Class, Labor, and Religious Ethics (co-sponsorship with Religion and Economy Group)

Mission Statement:
While comparative assessment of the ethics of different religious groups is an ancient and widespread pursuit, the modern field of comparative religious ethics arguably dates from the founding of the Journal of Religious Ethics in 1973. [For the purposes of this statement, “ethics” as a subject will refer to reflection about how best to live as human beings; an “ethic” is one more or less determinate position on the best mode(s) of life.] While there have been a variety of motivations for the attempt to study “religious ethics” rather than or in addition to “Christian ethics,” one animating idea has been the growing recognition that people from numerous religions propound sophisticated and powerful moral visions, which possess intriguing similarities and differences and are not easily reducible to a common denominator. In addition, the variety and particular characteristics of such visions are historically and politically significant in the modern era of increasingly pervasive globalization. Indeed, comparative ethics may be desperately needed in our contemporary context of global interdependence, misunderstanding, and mutual mistrust. There are thus ample grounds, both social and purely intellectual, to suggest that this ethical variety needs to be engaged directly via rigorous comparison. Comparative ethics makes such diversity central to its analysis, which includes three main aspects:

Describes and interprets particular ethics on the basis of historical, anthropological, or other data

Compares such ethics (in the plural) and requires searching reflection on the methods and tools of inquiry

Engages in normative argument on the basis of such studies, and may thereby speak to contemporary concerns about overlapping identities, cultural complexity and plurality, universalism and relativism, and political problems regarding the coexistence of divergent social groups, as well as particular moral controversies

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Comparative Studies in Religion Section

Call Text:
The Comparative Studies in Religion Section encourages thoughtful comparative research across different religious traditions and communities that yields insights into individual religious traditions, distinct individual and community experiences of religion, and the art and craft of religious studies itself. We solicit panel session proposals (not individual papers) that discuss comparison explicitly, rather than loose collections of discrete papers from different traditions. In order to support this, we encourage paper session organizers to be in touch with the unit co-chairs to help formulate the strongest paper session proposals possible.

In 2016, the unit invites paper sessions on any topic that will lead to a richer understanding and appreciation of comparison. In particular, we are looking for paper session proposals focused on the following:

- asceticism and religious identity
- reclaiming "magic"
- the logics of fortune/telling and auguries
- monsters and othering
- consuming flesh

However, we welcome full panel session proposals on any topic that involves the comparative study of religion.

We specifically invite session proposals for a co-sponsored "author meets critic" session on Louis Komjathy's *Contemplative Literature: A Comparative Sourcebook on Meditation and Contemplative Prayer* (SUNY 2015), to be offered in conjunction with the Contemplative Studies Group. For further information on this session, contact Andrew Fort, the session organizer (*a.fort@tcu.edu*).

Mission Statement:
This Section provides the opportunity for significant cross-traditional and cross-cultural inquiry. We traditionally solicit paper sessions that provide occasions for comparative inquiry seriously engaging two or more religious traditions around a common topic and we ensure that critical reflection is given to the conceptual tools therein employed.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Call Text:
The Comparative Theology Group invites panel proposals on theological topics concerning two or more religious traditions. The Group strongly prefers panel proposals over individual paper proposals, as the latter are difficult to incorporate into panels and are therefore less likely to be accepted. Be in touch with steering committee members if you are seeking potential partners for your panel proposal. The Group especially welcomes proposals relating to one of the following topics:

- Comparative perspectives on the theme of divine presence
- Contemplative reading; specifically the question as to how the academic discipline of Comparative theology benefits from the practice of contemplative reading
- The importance of sincerity in theologies of tradition and ritual
- Religions and ecology; specifically focusing on how ecology and the environment might function as a site for comparative theological reflection. In particular, we welcome comparative theological responses to Pope Francis’ encyclical, “Laudato Si.”
- The perils of exploring or breaching religious boundaries
- Comparative perspectives on the concept of refuge (the religious obligation to protect the vulnerable, etc.)
- Panel on Michelle Voss Roberts, ed., *Comparative Theology: Insights for Systematic Theological Reflection*. Or, alternatively, how to do comparative theology in the classroom, possibly in conjunction with Mara Brecht and Reid Locklin eds., *Comparative Theology in the Millennial Classroom*.

Mission Statement:
Comparative (interreligious) theology tries to be seriously theological, interreligious, and consciously comparative — all at the same time. It is, like other forms of theology as familiarly understood, primarily a matter of “faith seeking understanding” (or, more broadly, perhaps “the practice of reflective meditative perception” or “insight”) and reflection on this faith as it has been enacted in doctrine, argument, meditation, ritual, and ethical behavior. Like other forms of theology, it is an academic discipline, but may also be about and for the sake of knowledge of God or, more broadly, the ultimate mystery toward which life points. In comparative theology, faith and practice are explored and transformed by attention to parallel theological dimensions of one or more religious or theological traditions, examined historically or in the contemporary context. As a discipline within the academy, this communal and intercommunal faith and practice are open to the analyses, comments, and questions of insiders to the involved traditions, and to scholars not necessarily defined by any such commitments who are nonetheless able and willing to explore the full range of dynamics of faith seeking understanding in a comparative perspective. Please contact any Steering Committee Member for further information on the Group, including the most recent self-study and statement of purpose, or to be added to the Group.
Anonymity:
Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Moyaert, Marianne, VU University Amsterdam, m.moyaert@vu.nl
Chair - Valkenberg, Wilhelmus, The Catholic University of America, valkenberg@cua.edu

Confucian Traditions Group

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

• Writing Women in the Confucian Tradition, including writings within the "Confucian" tradition from antiquity to contemporary times by women, for women (i.e., The Four Books for Women), or on women (i.e., Li Zhi, Kang Youwei, Biographies of Eminent Women); contacting person: Mathew A. Foust, foust@ccsu.edu.

• When Did a Ru Become a Confucian? This panel intends to investigate when Ru, which pre-dated Confucius, later became to mean a Confucian; contact person: Keith Knapp, knappk@citadel.edu.

• Democracy, Meritocracy, and Confucianism. This panel focuses on the contemporary debate on whether Confucianism endorses democracy or meritocracy; the panel may adopt the format of author meets critics. Contact person: Yong Huang, yonghuang@cuhk.edu.hk

• Love in Unlovable in Confucianism. This is a response to AAR Presidential theme for 2016 AAR annual meeting Revolutionary Love. The panel will focus on the Confucian view of love for non-virtuous and even positively vicious people. Contact person: Pauline Lee, paulinechenlee@gmail.com

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

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS
Leadership:
Chair - Lee, Pauline, Saint Louis University, leepc@slu.edu
Chair - Huang, Yong, Chinese University of Hong Kong, yonghuang@cuhk.edu.hk

Contemplative Studies Group

Call Text:
We welcome individual paper, papers session and roundtable proposals on the following topics:

• Comparative study of contemplative practice, especially the contextual nuances of religiously-committed forms of meditation and contemplative prayer

• Contemplative reading in both historical and contemporary perspective

• Emotions in contemplative practice

• First-person discourse and critical subjectivity in Contemplative Studies

• Theoretical and methodological issues in Contemplative Studies, including critical categories (e.g., contemplation, secularity)

• Author Meets Critics: Louis Komjathy’s (ed.) Contemplative Literature: A Comparative Sourcebook on Meditation and Contemplative Prayer (for a possible cosponsored session with the Comparative Study of Religion Section; Andrew Fort, organizer; a.fort@tcu.edu)

• Contemplative dimensions of Yoga, including critical reflections on popular forms (for a possible cosponsored session with the Yoga in Theory and Practice Group)

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

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

The investigation of contemplative practice and experience, considered inclusively and comprehensively

Critical discussions on the field itself, including theoretical and interpretive issues

The application of contemplative practice to academic life and university culture, including the possible contribution of “contemplative pedagogy” to teaching and learning

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

Call Text:
For the 2016 meeting, we welcome proposals are any aspect of Islam in the contemporary world. We are especially interested in presenting research on the following themes:

- **Terror and the War on Terror:** We are looking for proposals that address the discourse, effects, and politics of extremist violence in relation to Muslim communities around the globe. This includes efforts to challenge and respond to terror, both on the part of the state (programs such as Countering Violent Extremism in the U.S.) and by Muslim communities themselves.

- **The Struggle for Justice:** In Muslim communities across the globe, movements to address inequality and oppression situate new reflections on Islamic traditions and social ethics. We are seeking papers that investigate social justice movements and intersecting issues of race, gender, sexuality, economics, and law.

- **Islamophobia:** The proliferation of Islamophobia through public media contributes to the current climate of fear and a wide-ranging politics of hate. We invite proposals that analyze Islamophobic discourse and politics in both local and global contexts.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Widmann Abraham, Danielle, James Madison University, daniellea@gmail.com
Chair - Esack, Farid, University of Johannesburg, fesack@uj.ac.za

Contemporary Pagan Studies Group

Call Text:
• Contemporary Paganisms are experiencing an internal conversation and debate about routinization, or the need to establish institutions and a degree of legitimate cultural and social integration beyond the structure of small groups and umbrella organizations. While many Pagans believe that these structures will provide the conditions for sustainability, others believe that institutionalization is contrary to the nature of Pagan practice. We seek papers which explore various facets of routinization in contemporary Paganisms. Topics can include the changing nature of Pagan leadership, support for or resistance to institution building, perceptions of standardization of Pagan religious culture through publishing, recording etc., and professionalization of leadership. Comparative perspectives are always encouraged.

• It could be argued that contemporary Paganisms are characterized by ideologies, theologies and aesthetics that critique the narrative of progress and modernity. As a result, Pagan religiosity frequently focuses on cultural reconstruction, metaphors of tribalism, a return to "nature", and the use of imagined and idealized pasts to create alternatively modern futures. We are seeking papers that explore the ways in which tropes of antifeminism and primitivism inform the development of modern Paganisms. Topics can include ritual, aesthetics, rhetoric, politics and activism. We also welcome comparative approaches.

To encourage conversation during this session, we will be participating in the AAR Full Paper Submission system. Full drafts of all accepted papers must be posted online several weeks prior to the Annual Meeting, and will be accessible to AAR members only. Participants will then have the opportunity to read all selected papers prior to the session. Presenters will have ten minutes to summarize their argument, and the remainder of the session will be devoted to discussion and comments regarding the submitted papers.

• For potential co-sponsorship by Contemporary Paganism Group and Religion and Sexuality Group: We welcome papers that critically engage the various ways in which transgender subjectivities, identities and practices challenge and destabilize perceptions of human and divine genders (especially in anthropomorphic traditions, but also including the Contemporary Pagan veneration of Goddess and God). Themes can include, but are not restricted to: transgender and the ontological turn; transgender and new materialism; transgender and posthumanism. Papers can be focused around methodological, and/or empirical issues/approaches.

• There are a number of instances where the influence and exchange of belief and practice between Contemporary Paganisms and other religious groups has occurred. Examples include modern Celtic Christianity, ChristoPaganism, and the impact of Starhawk’s writings on Catholic theologian Rosemary Ruether. We invite papers that examine the complementarity and impact of modern Paganisms on other religions and that of other religions on Paganisms today. Topics might include hybridized ritual practice, environmentalism, theological exchanges and critiques, and the realities of living multiple religious identities.

Mission Statement:
This Group provides a place for scholars interested in pursuing studies in this newly developing and interdisciplinary field and puts them in direct communication with one another in the context of a professional meeting. New scholars are welcomed and supported, while existing scholars are challenged to improve their work and deepen the level of conversation. By liaising with other AAR Program Units, the Group creates opportunities to examine the place of Pagan religions both historically and within contemporary society and to examine how other religions may intersect with these dynamic and mutable religious communities.
Anonymity:
Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Clifton, Chas, Colorado State University, Pueblo, chas.clifton@mac.com
Chair - Salomonsen, Jone, University of Oslo, jone.salomonsen@teologi.uio.no

Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop and Religion Group

Call Text:
Main Session - T.H.U.G. Luv: After 400 Years of Death, What’s ‘Love’ Got to Do with It?

The Critical Approaches to Hip Hop and Religion Group solicits paper and panel proposals that critically interrogate the category of love, and its place in the academic study of religion and ethical intervention, alike. 2016 marks the twentieth anniversary of the death of prophet and poet Tupac Shakur, dead at 26 and representative of the paucity of life options (and early death) faced by African Americans. Shakur left a legacy framed in terms of T.H.U.G. L.I.F.E.—The Hate You Gave Little Infants F@*s Everybody. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=128ao5Xl_VY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=128ao5Xl_VY) For Shakur, T.H.U.G. L.I.F.E. was an identity, a cosmology, a theology, an orientation, way of life, “new form of black power,” and an ideological manifest for those disenfranchised. What then, would a “T.H.U.G. Luv” look like when considering theologian James Cone’s claim that blacks “have had too much of white love” (1972). In light of the ongoing assault on black bodies in the U.S. and globally, and the caustic truth telling embodied by Shakur and hip hop more generally, what rhetorical, social, theological, or critical use does “love,” even revolutionary love, hold for T.H.U.G.s still trapped “in god’s prison” (Shakur, 1997). Told by white masses that love is the “answer” and chided by black leaders fearful of nihilism, hip hoppers tends to be skeptical of any talk of love—especially a utopian type love which seems to “forgive all” and forget oppression; but perhaps there is still something to be said of T.H.U.G. Luv.

Possible proposal topics include, but are not limited to:

- The legacy of Tupac Shakur as social critic, philosopher, and/or theologian
- Hip hop as postcolonial critique of love
- Interpersonal relationships within the confines of ongoing anti-black racism
- The social and rhetorical function of “love” as academic and/or ethical intervention
- Love in a time of (ongoing) black & brown death
- Nihilism as critical theoretical posture
- Hip hop and revolutionary praxis
• Love as transgression/border crossing and/or boundary maintenance
• A systematic doctrine of T.H.U.G. Luv
• Loving black bodies

Co-Sponsored Session: The Courage to Be . . . Alright

This papers session, co-sponsored by Critical Approaches to Hip Hop and Religion & the Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture Group is an open call for papers that will foster a cross-generational, cross-cultural conversation provoked by the unexpected coincidence of Paul Tillich and Kendrick Lamar as generational voices illumining the dogged determination to be in the face of the annihilating forces of modernity. In 1952, Paul Tillich published The Courage to Be, as a critique of western theology’s uncritical reliance on ontological argumentation as an “objective” discourse which occluded the existential moorings of faith, which was on his account the very thing which gives human life its contours. Sixty years after the release of Courage, and uncannily coinciding with the anniversary of Tillich’s death—October 22, 2012—hip hop artist Kendrick Lamar released Good Kid, M.A.A.D City, his first major studio album. GKMC, like 2015’s To Pimp a Butterfly, and earlier mixtapes and independent releases, demonstrates Kendrick Lamar’s deeply existential ruminations and a dogged determination to be, in face of contemporary and ongoing assault on black life and on black being the contemporary forces of modernity. Songs like “Alright” and “I” celebrate a courage to be and privilege self-affirmation in ways that are embodied, aural, and theologically-weighty, giving shape, form, and (much needed) color to The Courage to Be.

Possible proposal topics include, but are not limited to:

• Life in the midst of urban annihilation
• Contemporary expressions of existential theologies
• Hip hop and millennial appraisals of The Courage to Be
• Embodied theologies and the Poetics of Hip-Hop
• Dogged determination to be as a site of theological beginnings
• Inter- and Intra-ecclesial and racial comparative theologies
• Social and rhetorical techniques of authorizing religious/theological authority

Mission Statement:
This Group’s purpose is to provide a space for interdisciplinary, sustained, scholarly reflection and intellectual advancements at the intersections of religion and hip-hop culture. We believe the Group will assist religious and theological studies to take more seriously hip-hop culture — while expanding the conversation of hip-hop culture beyond a thin analysis of rap music. To these ends, this Group is marked by an effort to offer critical reflection on the multiplicity of the cultural practices of hip-hop culture. We also see something of value in advancing the field of religious studies through attention to how hip-hop might inform these various disciplines and methods. Understood in this way, scholarly attention to hip-hop will not transform it into a passive object of the scholar’s gaze — rather, through our attention to hip-hop, it also speaks back to the work of the AAR, offering tools by which to advance theory and method in the field.
Anonymity:
Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Driscoll, Christopher, Rice University, cmd413@lehigh.edu
Chair - White Hodge, Daniel, North Park University, dan@whitehodge.com

Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group

Call Text:
CTDR invites proposals on the following topics:

• The death of Michel de Certeau: Thirty years later, what is de Certeau’s impact on the study of ‘lived religion,’ history, and death? How does de Certeau’s work inform our analysis of religious ‘strategies,’ ‘tactics,’ and rituals? (Please note: We expect papers that use de Certeau’s work and critically explore the boundaries of its utility and applicability.)

• Revolutionary Love and Foucault: We welcome papers that draw on the works of Michel Foucault (especially the History of Sexuality series and the relevant parts of Foucault’s College de France lectures) so as to engage critically the notion of Revolutionary Love. (When is love transformative or liberatory? What are the powers of the erotic? How is power/love bodily negotiated?) Papers can be focused around theoretical, methodological, and/or empirical issues/approaches. For potential co-sponsorship with the Religion and Sexuality Group.

• E-Racing Durkheim in American Religious History: We are looking for papers that explore the co-constitutive nature of race and religion in the making of American history(ies), particularly through an engagement with Karen and Barbara Fields’ recent book, Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life (2014), and through discussion of how Emile Durkheim’s work has – or has not – been used to query formations of race in religion. For a potential co-sponsored panel with the Afro-American Religious History Group.

• Social Hierarchy and Power. With an eye to a formation of a seminar on this topic, we invite proposals with strong foundations in historical, ethnographical, social scientific, and/or textual research on a clearly demarcated aspect of the intertwinnings of social hierarchies, class, power, and religion. Proposals should rigorously contextualize all deployments of the terms social hierarchy, class, power, and religion as components of research design.

• Discursive formation of categories in the study of religion. CTDR invites proposals on research in progress wherein experiments with theory, as applied to data of various kinds, compel us to rethink categorization and concepts deployed in the analysis of religion.

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

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

Critical investigation of the categories generated and employed by the discourses on religion, such as experience, the sacred, ritual, and the various ‘isms’ that can be found in classic and contemporary studies of religion

Analysis of new and neglected theorists and works central to the critical study of religion, including those produced in cognate fields such as anthropology, political science, or literary theory

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Walker, David, University of California, Santa Barbara, dwalker@religion.ucsb.edu
Chair - Arnal, William E., University of Regina, warnal@hotmail.com

Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group

Call Text:
The Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group seeks papers that examine the formation and transformation of “religion” (and related categories) in social, cultural, and political practice in various historical periods and in relation to the scholarly study of religion as that study has evolved over time. We seek to explore diverse geographical areas and historical moments. For the 2016 Annual Meeting, we particularly welcome proposals exploring:

- We need the cultural history of THAT! (or: “Got genealogy?”). This session is designed to develop a new model for conference conversation. We invite proposals for short position papers (5-10 minutes) outlining a topic, concept, practice, or method in the study of religion that has not yet been sufficiently explored by scholars. Proposals should make a clear case for the significance of the outlined topic for the broader cultural history of the study of religion. The idea is NOT to write a paper that does that cultural history, but rather to work toward a “genealogy wish-list” of areas for future research that can be discussed during our session.
• Papers exploring the study of religion in different historical, geographic, and cultural contexts, particular in relation to the history of the racialization of religion.

• Papers re-visioning the traditional Theories and Methods class in the Study of Religion for the 21st century. This session is designed to develop a new model for conference conversation. Despite the ongoing shifts in contemporary uses of the category “religion” in relation to neoliberalism, digital media, etc., the core required course in “theory and method” or the history of the study of religion remains remarkably unchanged. How might this pillar of the religious studies curriculum be reimagined? Short papers should detail one proposal for rethinking the course.

• Papers responding to issues raised in Peter Harrison’s *The Territories of Science and Religion* (University of Chicago, 2015).

This group regularly uses its sessions to develop new models for conference conversation. Toward that end, we often ask that participants be prepared to write shorter papers, which we may circulate mid-October in order to focus our discussions at the Annual Meeting in a more collaborative and interactive way. We also welcome further suggestions for new conversational models (please e-mail the co-chairs with your ideas).

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Burlein, Ann M., Hofstra University, ann.burlein@hofstra.edu
Chair - Scott, J. Barton, University of Toronto, barton.scott@utoronto.ca

Daoist Studies Group

Call Text:
This Group welcomes proposals concerning all aspects of Daoism from any period or geographical area. We request group proposals in the form of papers sessions (3-4 papers, presider, respondent) and panel sessions (4-6 panelists) that cohere thematically, methodologically, chronologically, or by some other means. No individual papers as final submissions, please. However, if you have an individual paper and need help connecting with other scholars to form a panel, please contact the co-chairs. We also encourage applicants to propose innovative formats, such as roundtables, that might enable a group study or extensive discussion, and might take advantage of 90-minute sessions. Questions about various formats and innovative possibilities, as well as help in building traditional paper or panel sessions, may be directed to the co-chairs.

At the 2015 DSG business meeting in Atlanta, interest was expressed in forming some kind of session on depictions of Buddhist figures in the Daoist Canon, and/or on interactions between Daoism and sectarian movements. (If interested, contact Stephen Eskildsen, University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, stephen-
Interest was also expressed in forming a 90-minute workshop on digital methods useful for Daoist studies. (If interested, contact Michael Stanley-Baker, Max Planck Institute, msbaker@mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de)

Mission Statement:
This Group has been formed as an independent gathering place for the field of Daoist studies and for investigating the religious tradition which is Daoism and related topics. As we understand it, Daoism is a Chinese religious tradition that has been continually modified and transformed for some two thousand years and is currently in the process of globalization. As here conceived, the field of Daoist studies, historically associated with Sinology, textual study, and Chinese area studies, is now expanding to include other theoretical and methodological approaches — anthropology, archaeology, comparative religious studies, cultural studies, intellectual history, material culture studies, philosophy, sociology, and women’s and gender studies.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Valussi, Elena, Loyola University Chicago, evalussi@luc.edu
Chair - Mozina, David, Boston College, david.mozina@bc.edu

Death, Dying, and Beyond Group

Call Text:
We encourage proposals on the following themes: death and marginalized bodies, and speaking with the dead at the borders.

For death and marginalized bodies, we are seeking anything that investigates death as it relates to marginalized or displaced bodies. This could be homelessness and death, death and refugees, etc.

For speaking with the dead at the borders, we are soliciting papers and/or panel presentations. We also hope that this session will address the region of San Antonio and the subject of borders and crossing borders, spaces between life and death and perhaps physical borders. Topics such as mediumship and other forms of “speaking with the dead,” are encouraged.

We also welcome any other proposals on the subject of death, dying, and beyond.

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

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

- **Lived Orthodoxy**
We welcome proposals that examine aspects of lived Orthodoxy—rituals and devotional practices, material objects, sacred spaces and places—as they enable lay men and women to express and experience their faith, sustain their Orthodox identities, and often challenge and resist conventional or prescribed understandings of “orthodoxy.” Topics of interest include but are not limited to: icons and saints; commemorative practices; pilgrimage; prayer and liturgy; visions, miracles and the stories they generate; holy sites and objects; clothing. Papers focusing on contemporary case studies grounded in field work are particularly welcome, although historical studies based on the voices and lived religious experiences of lay men and women will also be considered.

- **The Legacy of Kallistos Ware: Panel Discussion**
Metropolitan Kallistos (Timothy) Ware (b. 1934), sometime Spalding Lecturer of Eastern Orthodox Studies at the University of Oxford (1965-2001), is the best known Eastern Orthodox spokesperson in the world. His volume, *The Orthodox Church* (1963; 2nd Ed. 1993), along with its companion, *The Orthodox Way* (1979), are perhaps the most widely read books on Eastern Orthodoxy. Yet his legacy is far more extensive and complex than these important publications, including work as a Patristic scholar, theologian, teacher, monastic, ecumenist, bishop, translator and spiritual father. The panel examines this intellectual and spiritual legacy in a critical overview of his central role in the construction of the multiple identities of contemporary Eastern Orthodoxy in the West. Panelists include: Brian Daley, Mark McIntosh, Ivana Noble, and Marcus Plested.

- **Eastern Orthodox and Wesleyan Communities: Resonances, Parallels, and Connections (co-sponsored with the Wesleyan Studies Group)**
We call for papers exploring resonances, parallels, and actual connections between Eastern Christian and Wesleyan Christian traditions. As examples, papers might explore resonances between specific Wesleyan and Eastern Christian theological traditions and spiritual practice, uses of early Eastern Christian sources on the part of the Wesleys and other Wesleyan Christians, parallels in hymnic traditions, and actual instances of collaboration between Wesleyan and Eastern Christian communities.

- **Christian Approaches to Deification (Theosis): Panel Discussion**
(Quad-sponsorship by the Eastern Orthodox Studies, Roman Catholic Studies, Mormon Studies and Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Groups)
In a pre-arranged session on Christian approaches to deification, invited panelists will speak from within their own traditions—Lutheran, Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Mormon—on what it means to “become like God” and the practices that have emerged in light of the belief in divine-human communion.
Mission Statement:
This Group focuses on the critical study of the theology, culture, history, and practices of the Eastern Christian churches, including their mutual interaction and engagement with Western Christian and non-Christian groups.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Shevzov, Vera, Smith College, vshevzov@smith.edu
Chair - Papanikolaou, Aristotle, Fordham University, papanikolaou@fordham.edu

Ecclesial Practices Group

Call Text:
At a time of great social and ecclesial change globally, Action Research (AR) is increasingly being used as a participative approach in transformative ecclesiological and theological research. In this co-sponsored session with the Practical Theology Group we welcome papers presenting both empirical work from AR projects and papers reflecting on theory and method. In both cases the papers should relate to practical theology, ecclesiology or Christian practices.

Mission Statement:
Ecclesial Practices provides a collaborative space at the intersection of ethnographic and other qualitative approaches and theological approaches to the study of ecclesial practices. This might include churches, other (new, emerging, para-church, and virtual) communities, and lived faith in daily life. International in scope, the group encourages research contributing to a deeper understanding of 'church in practice' in a global context, including decolonization and postcolonial theologies.
The group encourages ongoing research in the following areas:
• Empirical and theological approaches to the study of ecclesial communities (churches, congregations, and emerging communities), especially as interdisciplinary efforts to understand lived faith and practice extending from them;
• Studies of specific ecclesial activities, e.g. music, liturgy, arts, social justice, youth work, preaching, pastoral care, rites of passage, community organizing;
• Studies of global contexts of lived faith in relation to ecclesial communities, for example, decolonizing and postcolonial theory and theology;
• Discussions of congregational growth and decline, new church movements, and ecclesial experiments connected to shared practices in a worldly church;
• Explorations of Christian doctrine in relation to the potential implications of empirical and qualitative research on ecclesial communities and lived faith for discerning, defining, and challenging standard theological genres such as systematics and doctrine, as well as inviting new ways to understand normative logics;
• Discussions of methodological issues with regard to qualitative research on theological topics, especially related to ecclesial communities and lived faith;
• Discussions (both substantive and methodological) of the implications of new technologies and digital cultures for ecclesial communities and lived faith.
Anonymity:
Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Fulkerson, Mary McClintock, Duke University, mfulkerson@div.duke.edu
Chair - Wigg-Stevenson, Natalie, Emmanuel College, natalie.wigg@utoronto.ca

Ecclesiological Investigations Group

Call Text:
- **Church Perspectives on Sexuality.** We are seeking papers that address the question of why it is that so many of the mainline denominations are increasingly divided over issues in human sexuality. There have been particular conflicts over the ordination of gay clergy as well as the blessing of same-sex relationships. Social and political changes in North America and Europe have meant that churches have been forced to respond theologically and practically. In some parts of the church new forms of ecclesial identity have emerged out of approaches to sexual ethics. We invite papers from across the range of denominations and from across the world which discuss the theological, anthropological and ecclesiological aspects of changing understandings of human sexuality.

- **Swords into Ploughshares.** In a world dominated by intractable conflict and warfare where acts of terror affect every continent, we are inviting papers discussing the role of the churches in the promotion of peace and in the resolution of conflict. We are interested in the work both of theologians analysing warfare and terrorism, as well as practitioners engaged in peacebuilding. We are also keen to address some of the side-effects of war such as the waves of refugees, responses to terrorism, suppression of freedom of speech, and various forms of human rights violations. We invite contributions relating to the role of the churches and religious groups in peacemaking and conflict resolution in response to current conflicts from across the world, as well as those that analyse historical conflicts and their resolution (such as in Northern Ireland, South Africa or Nigeria).

- In addition to the Ecclesiological Investigations Program Unit’s individual Group proposals we also invite proposals for a joint session with the Vatican II Studies Group. We welcome papers that study part of the reception process of the Second Vatican Council in other Christian churches. In what sense was the Council an occasion of reform and self-renewal for other churches, for example by repeating the pleas for more synodality in our churches, by setting up structures for dialogue with other churches, by paying attention to liturgical reform...? What role, if any, did the Vatican II observers from other churches play in their own reforms or self-renewal?

Mission Statement:
This Group is a part of the Ecclesiological Investigations International Research Network, which seeks to serve as a hub for national and international collaboration in ecclesiology, drawing together other groups and networks, initiating research ventures, providing administrative support, as well as acting as a facilitator to support conversations, research, and education in this field. Hence the network exists to promote collaborative ecclesiology. The Network’s five fundamental aims are as follows:
- The establishment of partnerships between scholars, research projects, and research centers across the world
- The development of virtual, textual, and actual conversation between the many persons and groups involved in research and debate about ecclesiology
- Organizing and sharing in colloquia, symposia, and conferences
- Encouraging joint teaching and exchanges of postgraduate students and faculty
- The Group seeks to publish the best fruits of all such collaboration in our new Palgrave Series, Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue, as well as in the journal Ecclesiology (Brill), published in association with the Network. The Network is a “network of networks” serving a “church of churches.” See http://www.ei-research.net/ for more information.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Hinze, Bradford E., Fordham University, bhinze@fordham.edu
Chair - Chapman, Mark, Ripon College Cuddesdon, mark.chapman@rcc.ac.uk

Economics and Capitalism in the Study of Buddhism Seminar

Call Text:
Authenticity and Authority: Tradition and Novelty—the topic for the 2016 meeting of the seminar focuses on the rise of lay practice, and how this has led to the creation of new training contexts (e.g., commodified as weekend or weeklong meditation retreats). Such training and certification programs have in turn led to new forms of conferral of authority, which seems to constitute a progressive transition from monastic to secular forms of training and certification.
This seminar examines the ongoing interactions between Buddhism and capitalism. These interactions take a variety of forms, influencing institutional organizations, doctrinal systems, styles and types of practices, and systems of authority. Capitalism has also affected the ways in which Buddhism is conceptualized as an object of scholarly inquiry. The seminar is devoted to examining this range of changes in contemporary Buddhism, while avoiding the presumption that capitalism is the active agent, while Buddhism is passive—being molded, or distorted, by capitalist forces. The socio-economic landscape on which these changes have been taking place is itself undergoing significant transformation as well. This moving background includes the collapse of older systems of direct political colonialism in the middle of the twentieth century, the collapse of the Soviet Union at the century’s end, and the rise of information technologies and new forms of globalization.

Mission Statement:
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place is itself undergoing significant transformation as well. This moving background includes the collapse of older systems of direct political colonialism in the middle of the twentieth century, the collapse of the Soviet Union at the century’s end, and the rise of information technologies and new forms of globalization.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Rambelli, Fabio, University of California, Santa Barbara, rambelli@eastasian.ucsb.edu
Chair - Payne, Richard K., Graduate Theological Union, rkpayne1@mac.com

Emerging Church, Millennials, and Religion Seminar

Call Text:
We seek papers on the following two topics for AAR 2016:

- Postmodern Religion: Millennials, Nones, and Alternative Belief Structures. The rise of Millennials and the religiously non-affiliated (“Nones”) is a significant catalyst for the religious landscapes of Europe and North America. We seek papers that attempt to address the growth of these groups and others that might be considered as cultivating “alternative” belief structures. These papers may include an investigation of why Millennials are leaving religious institutions and an examination of what types of social or political engagement and existential or philosophical structures are replacing traditional religious beliefs and practices? What roles is the Emerging Church playing in this transition, if any?

- Race, Gender, and the Emerging Church. The Emerging Church has been seen as extremely innovative and progressive in terms of theology, liturgy, and politics. It’s been noted, however, that many of the leaders are white and male. What is the history of the Emerging Church and underrepresented minorities? What are the particular challenges, if any, for the Emerging Church in creating or maintaining racial and gender equality. If so, what is it about the Emerging Church that fails to attract women and people of color? Is there a difference between leadership and laity in terms of involvement of women and people of color? What potential does the Emerging Church show to correct this problem? Do “emerging” practices foster more involvement of women and people of color or less involvement? Are there theological and liturgical practices in the Emerging Church that have promise or are particularly problematic? Are there sociological, theological or philosophical implications for larger Christian Church movements and traditions that may be indicated by the Emerging Church’s struggle or progress with this issue?

All papers will be due by October 1. The papers will be read by participants in advance. We seek substantive research projects that will result in publishable papers of 5000-6000 words.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

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

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

Employment Services Workshop Series

Call Text:
In an effort to offer additional programming and networking opportunities for our members, the Employment Center will host a Workshop Series during the 2016 Annual Meeting.

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

Successful proposals from previous years included the following sessions:

- Alt-Ac Employment in Religious Studies and Creative Careers in Church and Faith-Based Non-Profits
- Developing a Public Voice and Making a Living From It
- Envisioning Academic Alternatives
- Job Transitions over 40 with a Ph.D.
- Marketing Matters for Academics: It’s Not Just a Corporate Thing!
- Online Pedagogies and Leveraging Online Experience in the Job Market
- Religious Studies and Nonprofit Management
If you are interested in submitting a workshop or roundtable proposal, please submit a proposal through the AAR’s PAPERS system at the following address: https://papers.aarweb.org/content/employment-workshops

For an example of a successful proposal, please consult the 2015 Annual Meetings Program Book (pp. 14-15), or consider the language in any of the three workshops featured on this website advertising a set of regional workshops: http://www.phdlifetransitions.com/

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

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

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

Method of Submission:
PAPERS

Ethics Section

Call Text:
The Ethics Section invites proposals providing theoretical analysis and diverse ethical methodologies in response to the following themes:

- 40th Anniversary of Alex Haley’s Roots, a Journey of Counter-memory and the Moral Culture of US Slavocracy
- Empire (the TV series): Race, Sex, Gender and Power in Popular Culture
- The Christian Realism of Reinhold Niebuhr: 21st Century Revisititation
- The Ethics of Immigration and Globalization
- Ethical Reflections on the Obama Presidency
- Bodies and Borders: Violence against Women of Color in the Process of Migration (co-sponsored with Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Group)

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

Call Text:

- **Representations of Evangelicalism: Insiders and Outsiders**
  Evangelicalism remains of high interest to the academic study of religion, as well as to those who self-identify with the name. Insider/outsider representations of evangelicalism highlight the contestability of the movement, and how various groups understand or represent the term evangelical. Proposals should address some aspects of representations of evangelicalism among various groups who identify as evangelical insiders or outsiders and might address the topic from popular culture inside/outside the US, the political sphere and media representations, as well as the seemingly endless flurry of academic discussions of this modifier.

- **Projects for Understanding Global Evangelicalism**
  With a number of recent publications and book series by traditional evangelical publishing houses claiming to be either representing or else cultivating relations and features with global evangelical Christianity in its various shapes, we seek papers either representing or critically engaging these projects. We especially seek representatives from a global perspective, representing particular forms of evangelicalism, as well as those who are leading these efforts from North America or the UK. Proposals might include movements and denominations, history, practices and traditions that informs and identifies as evangelical.

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

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

Method of submission:
E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)
Other
Additional session prearranged panel discussing Sara Moslener’s Virgin Nation: Sexual Purity and American Adolescence (OUP, 2015).

Leadership:
Chair - Sexton, Jason, California State University, Fullerton, jason.s.sexton@gmail.com
Chair - Moore, Joy J., Fuller Theological Seminary, joymoore@fuller.edu

Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Group

Call Text:
Theme: Transforming Relationships to Embrace Our Humanity amid Violating Forces and Anti-Bodily Rhetoric and Practices

In an era where increasing forms of violence (racial, sexual, gender, economic, sexual) and anti-bodily forces are affecting our ability to live, love, and commune with each other with integrity, how might theorists and researchers begin to reconstruct our humanity or imagine ways of living humanely? How can religious and philosophic ideas or ethnographic research illuminate how to resist both dangerous expressions of anti-materiality and pernicious material forces that violate the natural wholeness of being human in bodily, racialized, gendered, and sexualized ways? How can we transform love our relationships to reclaim our humanity from violating acts, gestures, and measures?

In response to these concerns and questions, we seek papers that address three general themes.

- Our first theme is on Rape Culture, Religious Texts, and Pedagogy. In collaboration with the Gender, Sexuality, and the Bible Group, we invite papers that explore the intersection of rape culture and religious texts, and the ways in which innovative pedagogies can promote deep, effective, and powerful examination of the texts themselves and the ways in which those texts play a role in and/or are reflected in cultural constructs.

- Our second theme is on Feminism, Economics, and Religion. We also seek papers that analyze, from gender-critical standpoints, connections between or intersections of religious and economic practices (both understood in broad terms), promoting humane ways of existing with materiality and enabling vital ways of relating, being, and loving.

- In our third panel, we have selected two recent and exciting theorizations of the human that integrate the materiality, sociality, movement, and creative meanings of contemporary bodies, while tracing the archaeology of these bodies within their respective cultural heritages of experience. For this “New Books” panel we invite respondents to reflect on becoming human in conversation with Kimerer LaMothe’s philosophy of bodily becoming and Carol Wayne White’s model of African American religious naturalism.

Kimerer L. LaMothe, Why We Dance: A Philosophy of Bodily Becoming (Columbia University Press, 2015)
Carol Wayne White, Black Lives and Sacred Humanity: Toward an African American Religious Naturalism (Fordham University Press, 2016)

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Keller, Mary, University of Wyoming, mkeller@uwyo.edu
Chair - White, Carol, Bucknell University, cwhite@bucknell.edu

Film Series

Call Text:
Every year the AAR screens 8-12 films at the Annual Meeting, ranging from documentaries made by members as part of their research to blockbuster Hollywood films which impact the public understanding of religion. If you wish to screen a film at the Annual Meeting, please submit your proposal as a Roundtable Session and include a short description of the film, runtime, name of the director, and year it was released. Please include yourself as the presider of the session and as a panelist (as the system requires both for a roundtable session). If you wish to have a panel discussion after the film, submit the names of those panelists as well.

Preference will be given to films that tie into AAR Program Unit sessions, relate to the Presidential theme, or the Annual Meeting locale. For any questions, please contact annualmeeting@aarweb.org.

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

Method of Submission:
PAPERS

Folklore and Religion Seminar

Call Text:
Folklore Studies and Catholicism

Roman Catholic religious identity, in the spirit of Michel Foucault’s notion, remains a “marked category.” It frequently exists at the intersection of public expectations, idealized official doctrine, and the realities of individual interpretation, practice, and expression. Modes of inquiry which reify a “two-tiered” model relying on a rigid distinction between categories of “official” and “unofficial” often prove dissatisfying and ineffective in unpacking the complex negotiations that occur in the everyday, vernacular expression of Catholic faith and
identity. Folkloristics presents theoretical tools and methodological perspectives that offer critical insight into these intersections, and which help illuminate the myriad beliefs and behaviors through which vernacular Catholicism is enacted – including manifestations of material culture, personal and collective narrative, everyday ritual, foodways, etc.

The Folklore and Religion Seminar welcomes paper proposals that apply Folkloristic methods and perspectives to the study of Vernacular Catholicism in historical and ethnographic perspective – and/or which focus on traditional folklore genres as manifested at the centers and peripheries of Catholic belief and practice. Because of the rich ethnic and regional traditions of vernacular Catholic practice associated with the South Texas/Mexican Border – papers which engage with the powerful visual, material, oral, and belief culture specific to the region in which the 2016 annual meeting is being held – are especially welcomed and encouraged.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Primiano, Leonard Norman, Cabrini College, primiano@cabrini.edu

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

Gay Men and Religion Group

Call Text:
The Gay Men and Religion Group is pleased to present our 2016 Call for Papers, organized around the following themes:

- First, in light of the presidential theme of Revolutionary Love, we are contemplating the role of “unruly bodies” at AAR and beyond. How does unruly desire (or, unruly and revolutionary love) contribute to the study of religion and to human flourishing more generally? How is religion/theology unruly? do we need more unruly religion and study of religion?
- As a sub-theme, we also invite papers that explore Gay men and/as Divas: who is a Diva and who decides? How are Divas objects of religious devotion and how do gay male practices in relation to Divas relate to more traditional devotional practices? How do Divas, as unruly bodies, embody revolutionary love?
• Likewise, we remain interested in papers that explore the ethics of viewing bareback pornography and engaging in bareback sex. With TruVada and PreP now widely available, how is the culture of pride and shame regarding bareback sex (d-)evolving? how might bare-backing be read “religiously” and/or how does it relate to various religious and ethical values?

• Patrick Cheng makes “dissolving boundaries” central to queer theology in his Radical Love. Both theologically and relationally, what boundaries need dissolving? What boundaries need to be held? Might permeability be more apt than dissolution; and, if so, why? We hope to secure Cheng as a respondent should we receive a sufficient number of proposals of quality.

• Second, and acknowledging the global context in which this rests, in 26 June 2015, the US Supreme Court issued its opinion in Obergefell v. Hodges and “marriage equality” for gay and lesbian couples became the law of the land in the United States. For a possible co-sponsored session with the Lesbian-Feminist Issues and Religion group, we seek papers that respond to the question: “did we win?” In other words, while marriage equality represents a significant civil rights victory for many, it needs critical appraisal by scholars of religion, among others. Who won? what did we win and what did we lose? what does Obergefell mean for the present and future of queer politics, theory, theology and other discourses as well as LGBTQI activist movements? and, how should this victory in the US be understood in relation to other global contexts—nations where equality has been or soon will be achieved and in places where LGBTQI lives remain very much under threat because of (among other things) the so-called colonial and missionary importation of western homosexuality (or, ... was it western homophobia)?

• Third, in light of the role of LGBTQI issues in the US Presidential campaign that will conclude just before the 2016 annual meeting, we are interested in appraisals of so-called “Big Gay, Inc.” (i.e., the mainstream LG (B?) (T?) (Q?) (I?) lobbying and business organizations) which currently attracts criticism not only from the right but also from the left. Are there viable alternatives to such neo-liberal and homo-normative projects? How might these be grounded in (or otherwise related to) queer religion and spirituality?

• Finally, we are also interested in investigations of “gay friendship.” How does friendship (or, ethical ways of relating) look today among gay men and between gay men and other communities—including both human and non-human animals? How has social media re-mapped ideas of friendship, relationality and sexuality? What is the role of sex in friendship—and friendship in sex? Do relations between cis-gender and trans-men (and trans-women, too) present new challenges and opportunities to practice new gay identities and ways of relating? Is it time to re-appraise theologies of friendship from, say, Augustine to Elizabeth Stuart?

Successful proposals will balance assurance to us the author possesses both an adequate knowledge base in the field and methodological competence for the particular project with a clear and coherent thesis that breaks new ground in relation to the topic. Please follow this link to AAR’s general guidance about strong proposals: https://www.aarweb.org/node/204 as appropriate.

Thank you for your interest in GMaR and our conversations in 2016.

Mission Statement:
The Gay Men and Religion group:
• provides scholarly reflection and writing on the intersections of gay male experience, including sexual experiences, with religious traditions and spiritual practices;
• fosters ongoing contributions by gay men to religious scholarship in all its forms;
• critically challenges homophobic scholarship and religious teaching, on the one hand, and aspects of the LGBTQI equality movement that promote assimilation and normalization, on the other;
• engages a variety of theoretical and political discourses, which critique essentialist notions of gay male identity; and,
• promotes recognition of the diversity of men-who-have-sex-with-men across time and throughout the world and investigates both the common and the particular among such persons—including their discourses around sexuality and around religion.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

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

Chair - Haldeman, W. Scott, Chicago Theological Seminary, shaldeman@ctschicago.edu

Global Perspectives on Religion and HIV/AIDS Seminar

Call Text:
Much of the work of our multi-year seminar focuses on creating an internally cohesive project that incorporates our diverse methodological and regional perspectives but shares a set of common themes and questions concerning the convergence of religion and HIV/AIDS over the past three decades. 2016 is the fifth and final year of the seminar and we are especially interested in considering proposals on religion and HIV/AIDS in Asia, Latin America and Europe and proposals on HIV/AIDS and non-Christian traditions. Scholars interested in joining this conversation are encouraged to contact the chairs, Lynne Gerber, lgerber@hds.harvard.edu, or Anthony Petro, apetro@bu.edu, for more information and/or details about submitting a proposal.

Mission Statement:
This Seminar brings together an interdisciplinary group of scholars to develop an analysis of the various roles religion has played historically and continues to occupy in shaping the global AIDS pandemic. We are particularly interested in examining how religion and HIV cuts across, generates, and challenges social, economic, geographic, and cultural differences. In addition to building theoretical and conceptual tools for understanding religion and AIDS, we aim to create an anthology appropriate for a wide academic audience interested in the religious and moral dimensions of the AIDS epidemic, including their effects on the lived experience of disease and the formation of religious and public health efforts to fight HIV/AIDS and prevent infection. Much of the work of our multiyear Seminar focuses on creating an internally cohesive project that incorporates our diverse methodological and regional perspectives, but shares a set of common themes and questions concerning the convergence of religion and HIV/AIDS over the past three decades. We seek to advance existing research and to foster new studies of this important, emerging field.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS
Leadership:
Chair - Gerber, Lynne, Harvard University, lgerber@hds.harvard.edu
Chair - Petro, Anthony, Boston University, apetro@bu.edu

Global-Critical Philosophy of Religion Seminar

Call Text:
We are encouraging visions for an undergraduate textbook in globally inclusive and critically informed philosophy of religion. Successful proposals for our Fall 2016 seminar meeting should address the following questions:

- What are the goals and learning objectives of an upper-level undergraduate course in globally inclusive and critically informed philosophy of religion?
- How do these goals and objectives inform decisions regarding the content, structure, and voice of such a textbook?
- And how would such a textbook effectively integrate non-theistic religious philosophies and critically engage the methodological and theoretical issues of religious studies?

Proposals may also detail a proposed table of contents and explain the rationale behind it.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Knepper, Timothy D., Drake University, tim.knepper@drake.edu
Chair - Kopf, Gereon, Luther College, kopfg@luther.edu

Graduate Student Committee

Call Text:
Re-imagining the Intellectual as a Revolutionary Social Force

The AAR’s Graduate Student Committee is hosting its 2016 Special Topics Forum on the question, “How can Religious Studies re-imagine the intellectual as a revolutionary social force?” The framework of this question is the tendency to respond to the dearth of tenure-track positions by focusing on alternative (read: non-academic) career paths for academics. The importance of this conversation is somewhat overshadowed by the pessimism that it can create among graduate students and early-career academics about their role as scholars. This panel would seek to combat that pessimism by demonstrating how the role of “scholar” remains a live option with revolutionary potential in both its traditional (i.e. tenure track) and non-traditional manifestations. Although it is true that many young scholars will seek careers outside of academia, this panel will re-imagine how these opportunities may be explored while still keeping the identity of “scholar” primary.

In order to ignite a fundamentally hopeful conversation about the revolutionary identities, potentialities, and obligations – intellectual and moral – of new religion scholars in all areas of today’s society, this panel will explore the following questions:

• How post-graduate training in religious studies helps individuals develop the intellectual skills necessary to support sustainable, ethical, and revolutionary developments within and across their myriad intersecting cultures.

• How early career academics can come to see themselves as “real scholars” – with capacity to contribute to revolutionary change – even if they operate outside the confines of a traditional academic position.

• How the preservation of past discoveries and the nurturing of new ideas may be understood as acts of revolutionary moral courage.

• How scholars deal with intellectual “pushback” to their new and/or revolutionized ideas from “authorities” and “gatekeepers.”

• How scholars seek to engage with difficult or uncomfortable ideas, and in turn perform the potentially revolutionary act of “speaking truth to power.”

The GSC is open to exploring these, and related, questions in both theoretical and practical terms. It is particularly interested in proposals that contextualize a re-imagining of the revolutionary scholar within the broader themes of the 2016 AAR conference, Revolutionary Love and “religion and hatred.”
Please email brief proposals (~150 words) to Chase Laurelle Way (chase.laurelle.way@gmail.com) and Dan Randazzo (empiezo@gmail.com). This does not count towards the two-proposal submission limit within the PAPERS system.

Mission Statement:
The Graduate Student Committee addresses the needs and concerns of graduate students and promotes their professional development and participation in the American Academy of Religion and the academy as a whole.

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

Method of submission:
E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)
E-mail with Attachment (proposal is in attachment, not in body of e-mail)

Leadership:
Chair - Way, Chase Laurelle, Claremont Graduate University, chase.laurelle.way@gmail.com
Chair - Mamtora, Bhakti, University of Florida, bhaktim@ufl.edu

Hinduism Group

Call Text:
Panel Suggestions:

- Religion and Film (Perundevi Srinivasan: psrinivasan.siena.edu)
- Neoliberalism and Women’s Rituals (Perundevi Srinivasan: psrinivasan@siena.edu)
- Theorizing Caste: Response to Rupa Vishvanath's *The Pariah Problem* (Tim Dobe: DOBETIMO@Grinnell.EDU)
- Doctors, Saints and Dalits: Ambhedkar & Gandhi after Arundhati Roy (Tim Dobe: DOBETIMO@Grinnell.EDU)
- Hindu Sectarian Satires (Shubha Pathak: pathak@american.edu)
- Reception Studies of Hindu Texts (Shubha Pathak: pathak@american.edu)
- Hinduism and Food Politics (Patton Burchett: peburchett@wm.edu)
- Writing the Performative/ Transcribing Oral Tradition (Patton Burchett: peburchett@wm.edu / Eric Steinschneider:eric.steinschneider@utoronto.ca)
- Hinduism and Materiality (Amanda Lucia: amanda.lucia@ucr.edu)
- African-Indian Subaltern Solidarities (globally): (Amanda Lucia: amanda.lucia@ucr.edu)
Mission Statement:
This Group was established in 1997 with the mission of providing a forum within the AAR for the academic study of Hinduism as a distinctive world religious tradition including, but not limited to the geographical region of South Asia. The Group seeks to foster research on all periods and registers of Hindu texts and practices through the presentation of new data, critical analysis, and interpretative strategies, based on textual, sociohistorical, ethnographic, philosophical, theological, and theoretical studies. We are particularly interested in forging connections between the study of Hinduism and other areas of religious studies, and we welcome proposals from scholars in the field that can provide such connections.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Lucia, Amanda, University of California, Riverside, amanda.lucia@ucr.edu

Chair - Dobe, Timothy, Grinnell College, dobetimo@grinnell.edu

History of Christianity Section

Call Text:
The History of Christianity section continues to encourage chronological depth and geographic breadth in the study of Christian histories.

• We invite papers and/or panels on healing, medicine, and disability in late antiquity.

• The announced convocation of a Great and Holy Council (Istanbul, 2016) of Orthodoxy's fourteen autocephalous churches (the first since 787 A.D.) portends a historic engagement with, among other things, ecumenism, modernity, governance, and diasporic nationalisms. Accordingly, we invite papers and/or panels on patristic retrieval in late modernity.

• On the occasion of the 800th anniversary of the approval of the Dominican order, we invite papers and/or panels that explore Dominican history, particularly in relation to the Dominicans' "other", including antagonists or objects of mission (e.g., Albigensians, Muslims, Jews, Protestants, Mesoamericans, etc.), in comparative and transatlantic perspective (co-sponsored with the Religion in Europe group).
• In light of the 1516 publication of the Greek New Testament by Desiderius Erasmus, the History of Christianity section invites papers and/or panels on Humanism’s long shadow, including its transatlantic reach and complicities with colonialism.

• In recognition of the 2016 bicentennial of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the section invites papers and/or panels on Wesleyan crosscurrents—sanctification, respectability, institutionalization, social holiness, pneumatic influences—in African American and Afro-transatlantic religion.

• As a site of contestation over memorials and meaning, San Antonio will be propitious for papers and/or panels that explore the processes and politics of commemoration of sacred places and figures (e.g., Junípero Serra, missions, pilgrimage sites, etc.).

• The section also welcomes papers and/or panels on the following topics in Christian history: philanthropy, contraception, spirit possession and perennial heterodoxies.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Ramirez, Daniel, University of Michigan, dramire@umich.edu

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

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

Call Text:
We invite papers on any aspect of Welch’s work on early modern Chinese Buddhism, but are especially interested in papers that complement those presented at previous meetings of the seminar. Topics we would especially like to see this year include lay Buddhism, women and gender in Chinese Buddhism, regional differences in Chinese Buddhism, transnational Chinese Buddhist networks in SE Asia, and the impact of Welch’s writings on scholarship in China or Japan. Papers will ideally combine an analysis of Welch’s research work and approach to the study of Chinese religions with new research that points to new directions in the field.

Seminar participants will complete their full papers in advance of the annual meeting and upload them to the AAR website, where registered members will be able to read them in advance of the seminar. The meeting will be devoted to a brief summary of participant papers followed by an open discussion of their contents.
Mission Statement:
This seminar will celebrate the significant scholarly contributions made by Holmes Welch (1924-1981) to the study of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, and also explore how we might advance the field beyond the boundaries and scope of his original ideas through the use of new sources and methodologies. Revisiting and expanding Welch’s scholarship is urgently needed, since his work continues to function as both a standard resource for specialists and as an authoritative summary of Chinese Buddhism during this era for non-specialists. The final goal of this seminar is to produce a critical collected volume covering the major aspects of Welch’s work, in which contributors will update his findings and approaches with their own cutting-edge scholarship. The publication of this volume will roughly coincide with the upcoming fiftieth anniversaries of the publications of Welch’s volumes *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism* and *The Buddhist Revival*.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Hammerstrom, Erik, Pacific Lutheran University, hammerej@plu.edu
Chair - Scott, Gregory Adam, University of Edinburgh, gregory.scott@ed.ac.uk

Human Enhancement and Transhumanism Group

Call Text:
This Group welcomes papers on any aspect of the relationship between religion and human enhancement through technology or on transhumanism. We seek perspectives from a variety of religious traditions and encourage feminist, queer, postmodern, and postcolonial analyses and more overtly philosophical critiques of posthuman discourse. Original research is a priority. Papers may identify and critically evaluate any implicit religious beliefs, practices, and values that might underlie the development and use of human enhancement technologies or of the key claims, goals, values, and assumptions of transhumanism. For example, papers might explore the relationship between enhancement and core doctrines or practices of religious traditions, asking how religion might challenge a culture of enhancement or how the growing use of enhancement technology might challenge or reshape the religions of the future. Papers may provide critical and constructive assessments of an envisioned future that places greater confidence in nanotechnology, cognitive science, genetics, robotics, and information technology to achieve and enhance human capacities or extend the human lifespan. In view of the 2016 AAR theme Revolutionary Love, we are particularly interested in papers on “Enhancing Love” through technologies such as the administration of oxytocin.

We are also calling for proposals for a co-sponsored session:
The Religion and Disability Studies Group and the Human Enhancement and Transhumanism Group invite proposals for papers for a possible joint session that explores the complex relationships between disabilities studies and the use of various technologies to “fix” or even to enhance human bodies or capacities. Original work that probes the social, political, moral, and religious dimensions of the disabilities/enhancement interface is especially encouraged.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Trothen, Tracy J., Queens University, trothent@queensu.ca
Chair - Cole-Turner, Ronald S., Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, coleturn@pts.edu

Indigenous Religious Traditions Group

Call Text:
We welcome paper and panel proposals on methodological and theoretical debates and approaches in the study of indigenous religions, particularly relating to any of these themes:

• An exploration of the concept of ‘personhood’ in the study of indigenous traditions and its critique.

• For a possible co-sponsorship between the Indigenous Religious Traditions Group and the Religion, Holocaust and Genocide Group, we invite proposals on the global legacy of colonialism and genocide of native and indigenous peoples, including how indigenous peoples themselves are calling for religious rights or practicing performative spiritual resistance, in light of The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s (2015) call to “all religious denominations and faith groups who have not already done so to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius.”

• For a possible co-sponsorship between Indigenous Religious Traditions, Religion, Film and Visual Culture, and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism, we invite paper or panel proposals that that engage film or visual culture (including new social media) in postcolonial and/or post-revolutionary contexts, including the representation of indigenous traditions in film and other forms of visual culture. Some possible sites for exploration include, but are not limited to, religion and visual culture in Africa, East Asia, and South Asia or current issues dealing with indigenous religiosity in colonial settings such as Australasia and the Americas. Such analyses might consider such topics as visual sovereignty, gender and sexuality, self-representations, and settler colonialism.

• For a possible co-sponsorship with the African Religions Group, a roundtable to discuss Robert Baum’s recently published book, West Africa’s Women of God: Alinesitoué and the Diola Prophetic Tradition (Indiana University Press, 2015). In this book, based on detailed historical and ethnographic fieldwork in the Casamance region of Senegal, Baum documents the life of the revolutionary religious leader, Alinesitoué Diatta, whose revelations from the Diola (pronounced JOH-uh) Supreme
Being, Emitai, left an indelible trace. After Alinesitoué’s emergence, the majority of Diola prophets were henceforth women, rather than men. Baum’s study revives memories of a figure of global importance for her resistance to French colonialism, which ended with her imprisonment and near disappearance from world history. We will invite specialists in African and indigenous religions—and also invite proposals for participation from qualified colleagues—to read and engage Baum’s arguments, insights, and methods in our roundtable format.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Estrada, Gabriel, California State University, Long Beach, gabriel.estrada@csulb.edu
Chair - Alles, Gregory D., McDaniel College, galles@mcdaniel.edu

International Development and Religion Group

Call Text:
AAR President Serene Jones has chosen Revolutionary Love as the theme for the 2016 Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas. By juxtaposing the term revolutionary next to love, Jones is encouraging a turn “to love that seeks to transform the world, which includes love that both tears down and builds up.” Quoting James Baldwin, Jones understands love “…not merely in the personal sense but as a state of being, or a state of grace – not in the infantile American sense of being made happy but in the tough and universal sense of quest and daring and growth.” Martha Nussbaum’s 2013 book, Political Emotion: Why Love Matters for Justice takes up this theme arguing that “Amid the fears, resentments, and competitive concerns that are endemic even to good societies, public emotions rooted in love—in intense attachments to things outside our control—can foster commitment to shared goals and keep at bay the forces of disgust and envy.”

The International Development and Religion Group invites proposals for individual papers and panels that respond to Nussbaum’s religious and secular understandings of the socio-political emotion of love through the lens of International Development Studies. Suggested topics might include:

- Tension &/or cooperation between flourishing and progress as defined in different religious traditions.
• Tensions &/or cooperation between utilitarian/normative concepts of economic development and the religious and spiritual virtue of caritas (charity/love).

• Tension &/or cooperation between the reason and rationality of results based metrics/management of development and the passion and compassion to help those in need.

In addition, the International Development and Religion Group and the Religions, Social Conflict and Peace Group seek papers that explore the challenges and/or opportunities presented by the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals through the intersection of peace-building, development studies and religious studies.

Procedure for Submitting Proposals:
Proposals submitted through PAPERS, must include an abstract of 150 words, and a more detailed précis with a minimum word count of 500 to a maximum of 1000 words.
Proposals will be blindly evaluated by the steering committee and ranked based on:
1. the overall quality and rigor of scholarship and the scope and clarity of the proposal
2. evidence of a clear thesis
3. logical structure of the proposed argument/analysis
4. relevance of the proposal to the presidential theme, the suggested topics in the CFP and the general purpose of the International Development and Religion Group
Individual paper proposals will be selected on the ranked recommendation of the steering committee’s evaluation, with due consideration given to developing **scholarly, coherent, diverse and intellectually stimulating panels**.
Proposals for full, pre-arranged panels will be considered but they must cover the spirit of the suggested theme and topics in the CFP.
Panel proposals must include an abstract for the online program book (maximum 150 words), and a more detailed précis (500-1000 wds) indicating the coherency of the proposed panel as it relates to the CFP. Each individual paper in the panel proposal must likewise include an abstract (150 wds) and précis (500-1000 wds).

*The steering committee and co-chairs reserve the right to adjust the composition of pre-arranged panels by adding and/or replacing papers to better reflect the purpose of the programming unit and the themes and topics of the CFP.*

Proposals from the Global South and International Development Community:
• Scholars from the global south and/or scholarly proposals from practitioners, volunteers and domestic and oversea personnel associated with faith-based and secular NGO’s, and government agencies and organizations are particularly encouraged.

• International scholars working or residing outside those countries designated as high income by the World Bank may take advantage of a discounted AAR membership rate of $15 per calendar year for membership, plus international postage.

• Proposal from International presenters who are unable to travel due to political and/or fiscal constraints may be accommodated via video-conferencing technology (e.g., Skype).

Mission Statement:
The cross-section of religious studies and development studies is this Group’s focus. We wish to support research that is applied and field-based. This may include the colonial, theological, and missionary
background of the global confluence of international development with indigenous and Western religions, or investigate current projects. The primary objective is to establish the focus of an ongoing discussion that engages the relevant areas of the academy. A second related objective is to bring scholars from “outside” the AAR into this discussion. As such, we hope to strongly encourage the AAR to engage international scholars from across the disciplines of humanities and social sciences.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS
E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)
E-mail with Attachment (proposal is in attachment, not in body of e-mail)
Other

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

Leadership:
Chair - Duncanson-Hales, Christopher, University of Sudbury, theolog3n1@gmail.com
Chair - DeTemple, Jill, Southern Methodist University, detemple@smu.edu

Interreligious and Interfaith Studies Group

Call Text:
The Interreligious and Interfaith Studies group invites paper and panel proposals that critically examine modes of response to religious pluralism from multiple disciplinary perspectives. We value presentations that incorporate alternative pedagogies. We welcome proposals that are interdisciplinary and reflect the dialogical nature of this field.

In particular, this year we invite papers in the following areas:

- Interreligious discourses on forced migration
  We invite analyses of global experiences of forced migration and internal displacement due to a variety of causes and conditions (civil war, genocide, sectarianism, climate change, and others). Attention may fall on interdisciplinary and interreligious models of collaboration and other forms of praxis responsive to experiences of forced migration.

- Engaging ritual in the classroom (co-sponsored with the Ritual Studies Group)
  How do site-visits and sharing in communal practice/worship expand or challenge the theory and pedagogy of interreligious studies? What is at stake for hosts and guests? How do we define success and failure in the domain of “inter-riting”? We welcome proposals that incorporate alternative pedagogies of presentation.

- Interreligious resources for addressing climate change
  What interreligious resources (theological and practical) are being employed in the discourse around and responses to climate change? How has this issue created new or “unlikely” interreligious alliances? To what extent are indigenous practices and systems of thought foregrounded in this
• Structural inequities in interreligious engagement
Many models of interreligious engagement are based on implicit or explicit ideas about religious representation and authority. For example, interreligious dialogue has been largely dominated by the concerns of white male Christians. We are interested in papers that expose and critique the structural inequities of interreligious engagement. We particularly invite proposals that engage gender studies, race and ethnicity studies, post-colonial studies, or other disciplines that raise consciousness of marginalization. What can interreligious studies, as an emerging area, learn from the concerns and methodologies of these disciplines?

• Diplomacy, religious freedom and pluralism
What is the role of faith-based actors in diplomacy? How is pluralism understood and engaged in the discourse around “religious freedom”?

• Religious hybridity or multiple religious belonging
As religious identity is foregrounded in interreligious work, how is the reality of religious hybridity present or absent in theories or practices related to interreligious engagement? To what extent does multiple religious belonging impact models of religious pluralism?

• Revolutionary Love in Interreligious Learning and Action
The theme for next year's AAR is revolutionary love. This includes (in the words of AAR President Serene Jones) "love as a social and political force, a structural reality, a collective endeavor, a shared social practice, a language, a relationship, a moment, a gesture, an identity, a quest." Figures like Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Thich Nhat Hanh, Abdul Sattar Edhi, Dorothy Day, Nelson Mandela and others, model the power of revolutionary love in their work for social transformation. We welcome papers that engage models of revolutionary love in the context of interreligious learning and action.

Mission Statement:
This Group creates a space for critical interdisciplinary engagement with interfaith and interreligious studies, which examines the many modes of response to the reality of religious pluralism (theological, philosophical, historical, scriptural, ethical, praxiological, and institutional). This Group will:

Expand and enrich the modalities of interreligious and interfaith discourse in a diverse set of academic disciplines that have grappled with religious pluralism

Give voice to what has already been happening for years at the cutting-edge of institutional and pedagogical innovation and at the intersection of the academy and civic engagement in many disciplines
Our intention is that this Group will encourage the rigorous analysis necessary to establish the contours of this emerging field. A crucial first step involves systematic attention to common terminology (interfaith, interreligious, engaged pluralism, multifaith, multireligious) and the intersection of these terms with the disciplinary approaches that are increasingly using this language (interfaith just peacemaking, comparative theology, and scriptural reasoning). Similarly, we will encourage critical analysis of both national and international interfaith organizational models and other praxis-oriented responses to religious pluralism.

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

Leadership:
Chair - Peace, Jennifer Howe, Andover Newton Theological School, jpeace@ants.edu
Chair - Ziad, Homayra, Institute for Christian and Jewish Studies, hziad@icjs.org

Interreligious Reflections on Immigration Seminar

Call Text:
The Interreligious Reflections on Immigration Seminar invites proposals for papers that address religion and immigration, broadly conceived, that engage two or more religious traditions. This is the third year of the Seminar whose goal is to produce a follow-up volume to *Strangers in this World: Multi-Religious Reflections on Immigration* (Fortress Press, 2015). Scholars interested in contributing to the new volume of essays are encouraged to submit a proposal/abstract that addresses immigration and religion from any scholarly perspective—for example, philosophical, economic, political, theological, historical, and sociological. We are especially interested in papers that address African-American "forced" immigration and the "Great Migration," as well as modern Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu experiences and perspectives.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Alexander, Laura, University of Virginia, lek2fb@virginia.edu
Chair - Hwang, Alexander Y., Xavier University, hwangalex@yahoo.com

Islam, Gender, Women Group

Call Text:
Mentoring Session:
In our second year as a program unit we will again host a co-sponsored mentoring/networking session for those who study Islam and Muslims. We particularly invite the participation of those who study gender and women in Islamic texts and Muslim contexts. Program unit leadership will organize this session; IGW is not accepting paper/panel proposals for it.
Workshop Session:
Our other session will be a workshop that explores the ways in which “gender” is understood in scholarship on Islam and Muslims: as embodied, socialized, constructed, negotiated, binary, on a spectrum, in concert with sexuality, as fluid, etc.

In keeping with our commitment to non-traditional programming, the session will be organized as a workshop, with pre-circulated readings (made available for advanced reading on the AAR website in fall 2016) and themed discussion tables formed around those readings. Therefore, IGW is not accepting proposals for standard conference papers or for prearranged paper panels. Rather, we solicit proposals from those who would like an article or chapter length piece of their writing that has already been published or otherwise completed/drafted in full to serve as a basis for one table’s discussion at the session.

Possible topics include: the complicated nexus of authority and tradition, nonacademic forms of intellectual production on women/gender in Islam (e.g., the blogosphere, visual arts, grassroots activist literature, film, poetry); questions of normativity and confessional investments, including the location of non-feminist work on gender/women in Islam; the location of academic and nonacademic intellectual production in the larger context of transnational feminism; and the tensions between colonial feminism and Islamic gender justice movements.

Proposals to IGW for this session should:
- include an abstract of the piece
- explain clearly how the piece relates to the suggested themes of the call
- indicate the length of the full piece
- indicate its status in the publishing process (if published, details; if under review, where; draft, etc.) and whether it forms part of a larger project
- suggest possible facilitators for discussion of the pieces at the workshop

Note: After reviewing proposals, IGW will request from finalists the full text of papers/articles in early March 2016 before making final selections. Though only work that can be circulated for review is eligible, authors will be able to revise the text before it is posted on the AAR website for participants in September 2016. Although we have a strong preference for scholars proposing their own work, we are also willing to consider proposals to serve as table facilitator for a discussion of another scholar’s published work. Such proposals should indicate why the work matters for the themes under consideration and what qualifies you to facilitate such a discussion. Should such a proposal be accepted, we would then also encourage the author to attend and participate in the session.

After final selection of the texts, themed tables will be announced broadly, and facilitators for each table will be solicited. Workshop attendees will be asked to sign up for the themed table at which they will participate and will have advance access to the designated text beginning in September 2016.

Mission Statement:
The Islam, Gender, Women (IGW) Group uses non-traditional programming to address meta-questions of the study of gender and women in relation to Islam and Muslims, to support the mentoring and development of its scholars, and to create resources and scholarly networks to advance the field. The name IGW signals that the study of gender and women is an essential subfield of the larger study of Islam and Muslims while shifting attention away from the “woman question in Islam” and toward the study of gender. Our group examines the relational formation and subversion of genders, while still taking into account “women” as they are interpellated by complex social and symbolic systems.
IGW brings together scholars at all career stages, including those working outside the academy. It supports scholarly reflexivity in a collaborative and collegial setting, discussing methods/approaches and the professional dimensions of research and teaching in the field. It fosters collective consideration of the aims, evolution, and lacunae of the field as a way to nurture new lines of inquiry. Our non-traditional programming, such as workshops and mentoring/networking sessions, aims to strengthen rather than compete with the work of related program units, prevent the segregation of scholarship on gender and women into one unit, encourage sustained “mainstream” engagement with questions of gender and women, and expand opportunities for collaboration and conversation with and among other units.

Anonymity:
Other

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Ali, Kecia, Boston University, ka@bu.edu

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

Islamic Mysticism Group

Call Text:
The Islamic Mysticism Group solicits paper and panel proposals for the 2016 AAR Annual Meeting. While all proposals related to Islamic mysticism are welcome, special consideration will be given to the following topics formulated at the 2015 AAR Islamic Mysticism Group business meeting:

- Prophetic and 'Alid traditions of love and devotion
- the pious sensorium and material culture
- Sufism and the Islamic sciences
- countercultural manifestations of love and its critiques

Pre-arranged session or panel proposals reflecting diversity in gender, ethnicity, theoretical method, and rank are highly encouraged.

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

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

Method of submission:
Jain Studies Group

Call Text:
The Jain Studies Steering Committee, in consultation with other interested scholars, has decided on the following topics as possible themes for its one session in 2016:

- Jains in South India: Karnataka and Tamil Nadu (contact John E. Cort, cort@denison.edu)
- Jains, Sallekhana, Assisted Suicide and the State (contact Liz Wilson, wilsone@MiamiOH.edu)
- Rethinking the North-South Divide (contact Sarah Pierce Taylor, sarahpiercetaylor@gmail.com)

We also welcome proposals for complete pre-formed paper sessions, with four papers and a respondent. The steering committee prefers to see proposals for pre-formed sessions, and so strongly discourages submission of individual paper proposals.

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Owen, Lisa, University of North Texas, lowen@unt.edu

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

Japanese Religions Group

Call Text:
This group invites panel and individual proposals related to all aspects of Japanese religious practice and thought, both historical and contemporary. For 2016, we welcome proposals relating to, but not confined by, the following topics: Religion and modern institutions, Religion and politics, Religion and Gender, the role of silence and meditation, Religion and environment/ecology, Apocrypha-real and imagined, "meet the author" discussion, and Japanese Religions in depopulated areas. We are also keenly interested in proposals for
screening a film or documentary and then building a panel around discussions with the director. In submitting proposals, please follow the AAR guidelines carefully. Panel proposals should include a panel abstract and individual paper abstracts, to be submitted as a complete package by the panel organizer. Proposals that include explicit reflection on the study of religion more broadly are preferred. Creative formats: film, organized discussion, pre-circulated papers/texts, workshop, etc. - are encouraged. First-timers are encouraged to contact the co-chairs for additional advice.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Rowe, Mark, McMaster University, rowemar@mcmaster.ca
Chair - Sango, Asuka, Carleton College, asango@carleton.edu

Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture Group

Call Text:
The Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture is proposing three calls for papers for the annual meeting next year. For its single session, the Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture Group proposes the following call:

- **Kierkegaard – The Nature and Dimensions of Power**
  For this session we invite papers that address the ways in which Kierkegaard articulates the nature and dimensions of power, broadly conceived, in his thoughts about God, the single individual, persons in relation, love, the Church, faith, the social and political, etc. Papers might focus on one or more of these topics or on other topics related to the theme of Kierkegaard and power.

For its co-sponsored session with the Society of Christian Philosophers, the Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture Group proposes the following call:

- **Faith and Hope, Doubt and Despair**
  "Doubt is a despair of thought, despair is a doubt of the personality." Despair thereby lies deeper within one's self than doubt, insists Kierkegaard's ethicist B in *Either/Or*. Moreover, in other writings, both pseudonymous and acknowledged, Kierkegaard often finds despair to be the negative sign of both faith and hope. For this co-sponsored session, we invite papers that explore some of the interrelationships among the concepts of doubt, despair, faith, and hope within Kierkegaard's philosophical psychology.
And for its co-sponsored session with the Music and Religion Group, the Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture Group proposes the following call:

- **Kierkegaard and Music**
  
  Music pervades Kierkegaard’s corpus, from reflections on the immediacy of singing, to a critique of the role of hymns in a triumphant institutional church, to the harmony of the self. For this co-sponsored session, we invite papers that explore the role of music in Kierkegaard’s thought. Papers might focus on opera (e.g., Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*); the relationship between music and ideas (e.g., the musical erotic or more broadly the relation of romanticism and music); hymns, singing, and the spiritual life (e.g., an exploration of how Kierkegaard’s critique of Grundtvig’s folk hymns might be acknowledged, yet transcended in the musicality of his discourses); the significance of musical metaphors in conceptions of the self (e.g., the pervasive theme of the harmony of the self); etc. Comparisons to other 19th-century philosophies of music and 21st-century examples of Kierkegaardian notions of musical meaning are also welcome.

**Mission Statement:**

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

**Anonymity:**

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

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

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

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**Korean Religions Group**

**Call Text:**

The American Academy of Religion is holding its 2016 meeting in San Antonio, Texas, USA, November 19-22, 2016, and the Korean Religions Group of the AAR invites you to submit proposals for panels or individual papers. Any proposal relating to Korea and religion will be considered but particular consideration will be given to proposals addressing the themes listed below.

**Possible Themes for the Standalone Session:**

- **Religion and Politics in Korea.** Subtopics might include Religion, Conflict and Violence; Religious Imagery and Korean Unification; Political Imagination and Religion; Neoliberalism and Korean Religion; Economy and Religion; Political Involvement of Korean Religions Past and Present.

- **Religion and Social Ethics in Korea North and South,** with possible discussions of Social Justice, Confucian ethics, Communist Ethics, and Virtue Ethics in Communism, Augustinian Christianity, and Confucianism.
- Religion and Cultural/National/Ideological Identity. Questions of Religion and Identity in Korea might be linked to these subtopics: Ideological Labels; Korean Diaspora; Immigration: Mixed-Nationality Families in Korea; Foreign Laborers in Korea; North Korean Defectors; Missions and Indigenization.

Possible Themes for a Joint Session with the Chinese Religions Group:

- Religions of China and Korea
- Religion, Politics, and Law
- Religion and Science
- Prayer and Meditation
- Ethics and Thought

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Torrey, Deberniere, University of Utah, djtorrey@gmail.com
Chair - McBride, Richard D., Brigham Young University, Hawaii, rick_mcbride17@hotmail.com

Latina/o Critical and Comparative Studies Group

Call Text:
The Latina/o Critical and Comparative Studies Group fosters interdisciplinary and theoretically innovative analyses of Latina/o religiosities and spiritualities in the Americas. We welcome any and all proposals that expand traditional areas of study, including critical explorations of non-Western beliefs and practices, as well as projects that advance a more complex understanding of culturally hybrid Christianities. We encourage feminist- and queer-centered perspectives, and we value theoretically-innovative investigations that are rooted in community experience. This year we are especially interested in papers that address topics such as the following: Latina/o humanism (especially in light of the rising number of Latina/o "nones"); critical analyses of nostalgia, necropolitics of the border, theorizing border experience as an "open wound," and performance studies approaches to Latina/o religiosity.
In addition, our group is also encouraging papers for two possible co-sponsored sessions:

The first possible joint session is *Borderline Christian Spiritualities: Hybrid Pieties in the Borderlands* with the World Christianity Group and the Christian Spirituality Group. Ethnographic approaches are especially encouraged.

The second possible joint sessions, co-sponsored panel with Religion in Latin America and the Caribbean Group: Religion on the Border: Religious practices and identities are increasingly transnational, even as geographic and national borders are locations of much debate. We seek papers which address religious practices which "cross boundaries," of whatever sort (physical, but also in terms of the re-combination of identities, be they national, ethnic, racial, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation) and research which itself crosses borders (of academic disciplines).

For Book Panel Proposals: Please submit individually as a "paper" (not "paper session") submission. Submissions should explain the central claims of the book and its overall scholarly significance. If the author envisions a panel with 1 or 2 other "New Book" authors, the author should include this information in their individual submission.

Mission Statement:
This Group, founded in 2009, fosters interdisciplinary and theoretically innovative analyses of Latina/o religiosities and spiritualities in the Americas. Our goal is to advance knowledge and ways of knowing that expand traditional areas of religious studies with respect to Latina/o communities, mindful of transnational and global realities. Thus, we encourage studies that explore non-Western beliefs and practices, including the indigenous, the African diasporic, Buddhist, and Islamic, as well as those that advance more complex understanding of culturally hybrid Christianities. We wish to foster dialogue that is respectful of the culturally different theological understandings of the sacred within different traditional or emerging spiritualities. We encourage feminist- and queer-centered perspectives as well as thought rooted in community experience.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Tirres, Chris, DePaul University, ctitres@gmail.com
Chair - Hughes, Jennifer Scheper, University of California, Riverside, jhughes@ucr.edu

Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Group

Call Text:
For the upcoming 2016 meeting in San Antonio, our group is planning three sessions on the following themes:

- Queer Latinx spiritualities and spiritual pedagogies
  While much activism for and scholarship around LGBTQ communities, especially communities of color, has focused on risk, crisis, and (mis)behavior, in keeping with this year’s conference theme of
revolutionary love, we invite papers that consider and/or foster queer-of-color spiritual pedagogies and healing practices devoted to communal survival, cross-generational dialogue, and transmission of knowledge and history. Relevant theological/spiritual thinkers to consider might include Audre Lorde, Marcella Althaus-Reid, or John Rechy, to name only a few; work that engages artists and communities in and around San Antonio would be especially welcomed.

- Lived religions/religious art in the borderlands of Texas
In anticipation of San Antonio’s 300th year anniversary (May 5th, 2018) and in co-sponsorship with the Pentecostal/Charismatic Movements Group, we invite paper proposals focused on lived religions/religious art in the borderlands of Texas. Potential themes/topics to explore include (but are not limited to): Las Guadalupanas and other women activists, the Guadalupe cultural arts center, Texan pilgrimage sites, missions and memory a decolonial conversation, and theory/epistemology and non-textual ‘sources' of religious thought. In addition, given the 100 year history of Pentecostalism in Texas we welcome proposals discussing aspects of lived religion, material culture, and non-textual expressions from this and other traditions.

- Religion, Revolutionary Love and Women of the U.S. Southwest: Honoring the Legacy of Las Hermanas
In keeping with this year’s conference theme, this group seeks submissions, for a tentatively co-sponsored session with La Comunidad of Hispanic Scholars of Religion, on critical and/or comparative analysis of religion and transformational advocacy by indigenous women and other women of color in the U.S. Southwest. This panel honors the legacy of Las Hermanas, a national organization of Latina women founded in 1971 that has achieved numerous transformational changes within Catholic ecclesial bodies, academia, and the broader U.S. society; we also consider the import of Yolanda Tarango in particular as a leader and a thinker. We welcome submissions from any academic discipline dealing with socially transformative religion from any tradition among these women of the U.S. Southwest. Potential topics include, but are not limited to, religious institution-building, spiritual practices, and theological discourses that embody and strive toward fundamental social change.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Alfaro, Sammy, Grand Canyon University, sammy.alfaro@gcu.edu

Chair - Cruz, Jeremy, St. John’s University, New York, cruzj@stjohns.edu
Law, Religion, and Culture Group

Call Text:

- Citizenship and Civil Rights:
The Law, Religion and Culture group invites proposals that explore the intersections and divergences of citizenship and civil rights as they impact religious groups, persons and identities. Possible avenues of exploration include questions of immigration, emigration and refugee status as they relate to the "religious". How is the category of religion drawn and redrawn in debates around citizenship and civil rights? How do these debates intersect with speech rights as they are understood in the U.S. and abroad?

- Race, Law and Religion:
The group invites proposals on legal formations of racial identity as they impact religious identity. Where religion is racialized, how can/should/do legal systems negotiate the blurring of these categories?

- The AAR-Luce Fellowships Initiative:
The AAR has joined with the Luce Foundation in a program that would place scholars of religion at the U.S. State Department. The group invites papers discussing the scholarly, political and ethical dimensions of this initiative. What responsibilities inhere when scholars of religion enter the public sphere? How, if at all, does or should performing scholarship under the aegis of or in the service of a state shape that scholarship?

- Perspectives on religious freedom and interfaith marriage in U.S. and abroad (co-sponsored session with Religion and Politics Section)

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Adcock, Cassie, Washington University, Saint Louis, cadock@wustl.edu
Chair - Roantree, Bronwyn, bronwynroantree@gmail.com

Lesbian-Feminist Issues and Religion Group

Call Text:
National and Transnational Lesbian Feminisms: Disparity and Connection
For a paper session devoted to Lesbian- Feminisms and Religion, we are seeking papers that explore, among
other topics, transnational lesbian feminisms, their disparities and connections. By lesbian feminisms we mean to explore the intersections among the various communities of lesbian and/or feminist populations, among them, but limited to the communities of womanist, mujerista, non-Christian faith traditions such as Jewish and Muslim feminists, lesbian-feminist, genderqueer and transgressive female expression. What are the ways to understand the meaning of the words feminist, feminism and lesbian, womanist, mujerista, among other words used in the national and transnational community? What are the various points of resonance and dissonance? Where is the common ground for feminists and where is it not? We are searching for papers that explore variance in race, gender and identity, and culture/community. We are happy to read any submission related to the topic of lesbian, feminism, feminisms and religion. We welcome any work on this topic.

For a co-sponsored session with Gay Men and Religion, entitled Gay Marriage: Did We Win? we propose the following:

On 26 June 2015, the US Supreme Court issued its opinion in Obergefell v. Hodges and “marriage equality” for gay and lesbian couples became the law of the land. For a possible co-sponsored session with the Gay Men and Religion group, we seek papers that respond to the question: “did we win?” In other words, while marriage equality represents a significant civil rights victory for many, it needs critical appraisal by scholars of religion among others. Who won? What did we win? What was lost? Who was lost? What does Obergefell mean for the present and future of queer politics, theory, theology and other discourses as well as LGBTQI activist movements? How should this victory in the US be understood in relation to other global contexts—nations where equality has been or soon will be achieved and in places where LGBTQI lives remain very much under threat because of (among other things) the colonial and missionary importation of western homophobia?

For an additional co-sponsored session with African Religions entitled Responding to Sexual and Gendered Violence in Africa: Action, Ethics, Policy, and Religion, we propose the following:

African Responses to Violence in the Realms of Gender and Sexuality: Action, Ethics, Policy, and Religion: This panel seeks documentation and reflection on attempts to counter gendered and sexualized violence in Africa all their forms, including thoughts about their causes and consequences. Over the past three years, the African Religions Group and Lesbian and Feminist Issues in Religion Group have co- and quad-sponsored panels on LGBTIQ Africans and gendered violence in Africa. This year we seek papers that document responses to such offenses, whether they be attempts to end, heal, prosecute, reduce, or testify to the resulting injuries, injustices, or wounds. We also welcome thoughts on how to encourage and enhance such efforts.

For a WILD CARD SESSION:
Lesbian Life Pre-Stonewall in San Antonio and the Acme Bar

The cover photograph for co-chair Marie Cartier’s book, Baby You Are My Religion: Women, Gay Bars and Theology Before Stonewall (Routledge 2013), shows a gay bar in San Antonio, Texas, 2013, the Acme Bar. The woman pictured in the photo is an informant in the book, and a former San Antonio resident. We propose a session where we bring an invited panel composed of this informant, Carolyn Weathers (who has already agreed to attend) and two panelists from the University of San Antonio to talk about pre-Stonewall gay life, and the significance of the gay bar to contributing community and possible spirituality to this culture. Dr. Marie Cartier will moderate this session, and preface the panel with a brief synopsis of the thesis of her book that gay bars for pre-Stonewall culture were alternate church spaces to LGBTQ peoples in exile from
traditional religions. An incorporated "field trip" to see the former site of this bar is also suggested, depending on logistics of travel, etc.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS
Other

Leadership:
Chair - Milligan, Amy, PA College of Health Sciences, amymilligan12@gmail.com
Chair - Cartier, Marie, California State University, Northridge, ezmerelda@earthlink.net

Liberal Theologies Group

Call Text:
We seek paper or panel proposals that engage the question: Can liberal theology be revolutionary? While we welcome varied points of entry into this question, we hope to focus one of our two sessions upon liberal faith communities’ roles in racial justice work, the Black Lives Matter movement, and/or responses to the extrajudicial killing of Black persons by law enforcement. As always, we welcome both normative and descriptive scholarship, both spirited defenses and polemical critiques of liberal theologies, and studies of both classical western liberalism and its analogues in other cultural traditions.
All proposals will be evaluated according the following criteria: 1) clarity of thesis and argument; 2) explicit and creative engagement with liberal theologies, broadly understood; 3) relevance to the pressing concerns of both the academy and the world; 4) fit with the call for papers, and with other proposals received.
Selected presenters will be asked to provide a full manuscript for pre-circulation to other speakers by October 14, 2016.

Mission Statement:
Liberal theology in all its varieties has been a robust intellectual and religious presence from the early modern period to the present. The theologians involved with this Group, who come from many different universities and religious schools in North America and from abroad, are committed to continuing this tradition. Our focus is plural — we look across religious traditions. It is interdisciplinary — we welcome the participation, among others, of historians, political scientists, anthropologists, sociologists, and philosophers engaged with questions of vital moment to liberal theologies. Our gaze is to the future — we are determined
to develop new perspectives, new ways of speaking, and new combinations of ideas that will better address the intellectual and social circumstances in which we find ourselves.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

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

Liberation Theologies Group

Call Text:

- Revolution, Not Love
  The Liberation Theologies Group invites proposals for papers for a session titled: “Revolution, Not Love.” Our world and its ecology cry out; so too do majorities of people on its surface. We encourage reading the prompt “Revolution, Not Love” as a provocation or a manifesto, as a proposition to be denied or a proposition to be defended, or as a nudge toward the places where the pain or promise of revolution, not love, predominates. We especially invite proposals that hold the tension between revolution and love open without falling too quickly or too simply into flat arguments for one, the other, or easy reconciliations of the two.

- As always, the Liberation Theologies Group values contextualized proposals that articulate incisive theological and theoretical arguments with the specificity of scholarship on the ground. Human and environmental suffering, like human or environmental revolutions, are uniquely particular as well as interrelated. With this in mind, possible themes could span:
  - Anti-theologies or Theologies of Protest, Dissent
  - Neoliberal Economics
  - Sites, Practices, Theories, Theologies of Resistance to Colonialism or Coloniality in the Public Sphere
  - Racialization, Corporatization....Tentacles of Oppression and Domination
  - Post Arab Spring Love: Revolutionary Failure? Success?
  - Lived Experiments in Radical Political Alternatives (e.g. Rojava, Syria)
  - Violence as a Possibility for (Im)possible Political or Economic Resistance
  - Violence and Protest; Violence for Social Change
  - Contemporary Student Movements or the Turn Towards Decolonizing the University
  - Radical Queer Politics
  - Terrorism
  - The Prison-Industrial Complex
  - Violent Responses to Black Lives Matter
  - Revisiting Marxist Revolutions
  - Violence of “White Lone Wolves”
  - Resistance as a Form of Genuine Relationships
  - Creating Community
  - Environmental racism
Refugee Crisis: Past and Present

We invite proposals for a panel titled “Refugee Crisis: Past and Present” that expose and explore the resonance or dissonance between refugees in the 1930s and 1940s with that in the present day. This could, for instance, include examinations or analyses of the treatment of refugees or the discourses (e.g. political, social, religious or economic) that surround them. The panel is co-sponsored by the Liberation Theologies and the Religion, Holocaust and Genocide groups.

The Liberation Theologies Group encourages crossover dialogue — between contexts, between disciplines, and between religions — and reflection on the implications of liberationist discourse for the transformation of theology as a whole, both its methods and substance. We welcome proposals arising out of or engaging all religious or ritual traditions including, but certainly not limited to: indigenous religions, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Christianity, traditional African religions and Buddhism. We encourage broad interpretation of the terms of the call and creative, constructive proposals for liberation theologies in the 21st century.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Hofheinz, Hannah, Harvard University, hhofheinz@mail.harvard.edu

Chair - Slabodsky, Santiago H., Claremont School of Theology/Hofstra University, santiago.slabodsky@hofstra.edu

Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Group

Call Text:

Eco-Reformation: Toward a Lutheran Approach to Eco-Justice
The Martin Luther and the Global Lutheran Traditions Group invites proposals on the topic of eco-justice from the perspective of Lutheran thought. While we expect papers grounded in the Lutheran tradition, our session seeks to facilitate a critical re-evaluation of what the Reformation means in the face of current ecological challenges and in different global contexts. Topics may include environmental racism, environmental degradation, habitat destruction, loss of biodiversity, food and water insecurity, environmental racism, etc. We invite papers that address the topic using historical or constructive methodologies, either drawing upon resources for eco-justice in the work of Martin Luther or other figures within the broader global Lutheran tradition. Papers may: explore a specific individual whose thought has been overlooked or underdeveloped; draw a comparison between theological responses in the past and present challenges; examine concrete political advocacy work,
particularly in and among excluded or marginalized groups; describe liturgical and spiritual resources aimed at the lives of worshiping communities. We look for papers that promise to make a major contribution to the ongoing intellectual and practical responses to the grave ecological challenges before us.

- Coming Together, Coming Apart: Luther and Schleiermacher on the Cusp of 2017
  In anticipation of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation (2017), the Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Group and the Schleiermacher Group will co-host a session that explores what it could and/or should mean to ‘reform’ today. We seek proposals that address the overall question by critically engaging either [1] a specific aspect of the ecclesial roles that Luther and/or Schleiermacher played, respectively, in spurring reformation or [2] a specific theological claim that Luther and/or Schleiermacher advanced. We will give special consideration to proposals that engage (to some extent) with both Luther and Schleiermacher. We also heartily welcome proposals that focus on one of the two figures. Above all, we prize proposals that articulate clearly how the presenter’s thesis (about either [1] an aspect of Luther’s and/or Schleiermacher’s ecclesial role, or [2] a specific theological claim from one or both figures) will address the session’s overall question about what it means to ‘reform’ today.

  Though we are open to alternatives, we suggest the following ‘reformation’ themes:
  The role of confessional thought (historically, and in a post-confessional culture)
  Schleiermacher as an interpreter of Luther
  Church division and ecumenism
  How subaltern perspectives affect a Protestant ecclesiological commitment to reformata semper reformanda
  Faith and experience as theological categories
  Christian freedom and unity rooted in the Word of God
  The role of the spoken word in theology and/or ministry
  Hermeneutics, biblical and otherwise

- Christian Approaches to Deification
  A QUAD: The Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Group, the Eastern Orthodox Studies Group, The Roman Catholic Studies Group, and the Mormon Studies Group:

  In a pre-arranged session on Christian approaches to "deification," invited panelists will speak from within their own traditions - Lutheran, Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Mormon - on what it means to “become like God” and the practices that have emerged in light of the belief in divine-human communion.

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

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

  Method of submission:
  PAPERS
Material Islam Seminar

Call Text:
The Material Islam seminar invites submissions for a pre-circulated paper panel on the mosque. Of particular interest is how the study of the mosque as a feature of Muslim social lives and cultures contributes to our understandings of religion and materiality.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - GhaneaBassiri, Kambiz, Reed College, ghaneabk@reed.edu
Chair - Bigelow, Anna, North Carolina State University, anna_bigelow@ncsu.edu

Men, Masculinities, and Religions Group

Call Text:

- Masculinities, Sacred Texts and Archetypes: Representation and Reception

The Men, Masculinities and Religions Group invites proposals for a session on the theme of “Masculinities, Sacred Texts and Archetypes: Representation and Reception.” Of particular interest are proposals featuring representations of male figures (deities, prophets, saints, sinners, antiheroes, etc.) or constructions of male or female masculinities in sacred texts; masculine/gendered readings, reception, and interpretation of sacred texts; explorations of discourses about male others in
religious texts (or gendered representations of religious others in sacred texts). Proposals for both individual presentations and panel presentations are welcome.

- **Methodologies and Pedagogical Strategies for Incorporating Treatments of Men and Masculinities into Gender and Religion Courses**

The Men, Masculinities and Religions Group, the Transformative Scholarship & Pedagogy Group, and the Body and Religion Group invite proposals for a co-sponsored session on methodologies of studying men, masculinities and male/masculinized/female/feminised bodies in relation to religion; and on pedagogical strategies for incorporating treatments of men/masculinities and male embodiment into gender and religion courses. Of particular interest are proposals featuring novel methodological or theoretical approaches to the study of men, masculinity, and religion and of religion and male embodiment; analyses of methodologies used to study men/masculinity within a specific religious tradition or comparatively; teaching practices that are particularly innovative or demonstrably effective in integrating men/masculinities and the male/masculinized bodies into religion courses; as well as proposals for presentations designed to build the capacity of audience members to develop their own pedagogical practices for integrating the study of men/masculinities and male/masculinized bodies into religion and gender courses (e.g., through interactive exercises, sample syllabi, etc.). Proposals for both individual presentations and panel presentations are welcome.

**Mission Statement:**
This Group provides a forum within which the phenomenon of masculine gender – as identity, practice, discourse and structure – is examined, building on scholarship in masculinity, gender and, queer studies, and using the range of methodologies found in the broad field of religious studies. This Group engages in the critical study of men and the performance of masculinities in culturally and religiously specific settings and traditions.

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

**Method of submission:**
PAPERS

**Leadership:**
Chair - De Sondy, Amanullah, University College Cork, amanullah.desondy@ucc.ie

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

**Middle Eastern Christianity Group**

**Call Text:**

- **Christians in the First Islamic Century**

The Middle Eastern Christianity Group is soliciting paper proposals that shed light on Middle Eastern Christians during the 7th and 8th centuries CE. This call for papers seeks scholarship from all scholarly disciplines, including history, language, theology, scriptural studies, sociology, and others. And the topic is conceptualized broadly such as to include knowledge about any aspect of Middle Eastern Christian life during the time period of the rise of Islam, particularly (but not exclusively) in relation to Islam.
• Middle Eastern Churches, Missionaries, and Missiology
The Middle Eastern Christianity Group is seeking paper proposals engaging the topic of Missions with relation to Middle Eastern Christians. The review committee will consider proposals related to any historical period from any rigorous method of analysis related to missions and the Middle Eastern Christians. Proposals may examine Muslim missions to Middle Eastern Christians and vice versa, as well as missionary activities between Western Christian communities and the Middle Eastern Christians, both in situ and in their immigrant communities abroad.

• Political Theology in Middle Eastern Christianity
Christian communities in the Middle East have long faced the challenge of political instability. Local Christian communities developed political-theological expressions for enduring diverse forms of political distress, such as: the occupation of Palestine, inter-ethnic conflicts, the emergence of ISIS, new military regimes, etc. The Middle Eastern Christianity Group is calling for papers addressing any form of political theology among Middle Eastern Christians. The Group welcomes cross-disciplinary proposals based in thorough research.

• The Legacy of Chalcedon (451): Christology, Ecclesiology, and the Communions of Middle Eastern Churches
This call for papers is a reprise of the constructive theological conversation that began in 2015 under the same title. The panel will focus on the legacy of Chalcedon (451) to generate expert discussion on the Council of Chalcedon and its aftermath. The Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) marked a turning point in Church history and Christian theology on account of the schism that resulted from disputes over the statements of Christology promulgated by the council. That schism endures to this day. Although most Western Christians have little awareness of the Chalcedonian Council, its legacy directly impacts the Middle Eastern Christian communities who are divided among each other and from Western churches along Chalcedonian lines. The committees invite paper proposals from any reasonable discipline (church history, patristics, theology, sociology, etc.) and focused on any historical period or theological theme that can shed light on Chalcedon and its legacy. Special consideration will be given to proposals that link their research in some way to Middle Eastern Christian communities. Paper proposals must demonstrate methodological and theoretical rigor and suggest a coherent argument.

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

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

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

Leadership:
Chair - Andraos, Michel, Catholic Theological Union, mandraos@ctu.edu
Moral Injury and Recovery in Religion, Society, and Culture Group

Call Text:
Moral injury is a wound of moral subjectivity within a social context. It combines loss of faith in one’s own moral goodness and in the goodness of the surrounding society and occurs either through the experience of particular acts or through a longer-term experience of social suffering and moral distrust. It is linked to the loss of a meaningful world where “assumptions and beliefs about right and wrong and personal goodness” have been violated. “An individual with moral injury may begin to view him or herself as immoral, irredeemable, and un-reparable or believe that he or she lives in an immoral world.” (Litz, et. al., 2009 Cl Psych Rev) First identified in 1993 by VA psychiatrist Jonathan Shay as a response to the violation of what is right in a high stakes situation by someone in legitimate authority—especially those in command, Litz redefined it to include a range of relevant agency, from actual perpetration to witnessing violations, defining moral injury as involving “an act of transgression that creates dissonance and conflict because it violates assumptions and beliefs about right and wrong and personal goodness,” (Litz) It can include shame for violating core moral values, survival guilt, remorse at causing harm, alienation from religious communities and beliefs, being haunted by mistreating human remains, and grief at losses, including the loss of a sense of being a good person.

For the 2016 AAR Annual Meeting, we invite papers or complete panels on:

- The traumatic implications of the militarization of society and the role of religion in resistance and recovery (for a potential co-sponsored session with the Religions, Social Conflict, and Peace Group)
- The ways moral injury can inform pedagogies, both in course content and in methodologies (for a potential co-sponsored session with the Teaching Religion Section)
- Chaplaincy, moral injury, military sexual violence, and the care of souls (for a potential co-sponsored session with the Psychology, Culture, and Religion Group)
- Doctrines, practices, rituals and sacraments addressing moral injury.

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

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

Contributions are welcome engaging:
- diverse religious, cultural, and social systems and their sacred texts;
- neuroscientific approaches to ritual, moral formation, and the moral emotions;
• proposed methods for recovery, such as ritual, pastoral counseling, spiritual direction, arts, community life, narrative, and interreligious cooperation; and
• the roles of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, class, race, and other forms of oppression in relation to personal agency and theories of ethics.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Bounds, Elizabeth Margaret, Emory University, ebounds@emory.edu
Chair - Brock, Rita, Brite Divinity School, ritabrock@sbcglobal.net

Mormon Studies Group

Call Text:
The Mormon Studies Group seeks proposals for full sessions or individual papers that consider any aspect of Mormon experience. This includes the use of Mormonism as a case study for informing larger questions in the study of religion and, thus, only indirectly related to the Mormon experience. For 2016, we are particularly interested in proposals that utilize methods other than historical analysis.

For a possible joint session with the Childhood Studies Group, we invite proposals on Mormon children and families.

In 2016 the Mormon Studies Group will also co-sponsor a pre-arranged session with the Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Group, the Eastern Orthodox Studies Group, and the Roman Catholic Studies Group for which we do not seek proposals. In this session on Christian approaches to deification, invited panelists will speak from within their own traditions on what it means to “become like God” and the practices that have emerged in light of the belief in divine-human communion.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - McDannell, Colleen, University of Utah, colleen.mcd@utah.edu
Chair - Fluhman, J. Spencer, Brigham Young University, fluhman@byu.edu
Music and Religion Group

Call Text:
The Music and Religion Group invites papers or panels on the relationship between music and religion in the context of contemporary or historical cultures. We seek proposals that bring innovative methodological considerations to the study of musical phenomena in relation to the following 2016 themes. Papers or panels which incorporate/demonstrate live performance as part of the session (or at other venues in the AAR program) are particularly welcome:

- In co-sponsorship with the Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture Group, we are inviting papers on the role of music in Kierkegaard’s thought. Music pervades Kierkegaard’s corpus, from reflections on the immediacy of singing, to a critique of the role of hymns in a triumphant institutional church, to the harmony of the self. Papers might focus on opera (e.g., Mozart’s Don Juan); the relationship between music and ideas (e.g., the musical erotic or more broadly the relation of romanticism and music); hymns, singing, and the spiritual life (e.g., an exploration of how Kierkegaard’s critique of Grundtvig’s folk hymns might be acknowledged, yet transcended in the musicality of his discourses); the significance of musical metaphors in conceptions of the self (e.g., the pervasive theme of the harmony of the self); contemporary applications in music of Kierkegaard’s perspective on love; etc.

- The year 2016 marks the 40th anniversary of the Soweto Uprising in South Africa. We welcome papers broadly investigating the role of music in South African liberation movements, as well as papers specifically relating to the role of music during the Uprising and in subsequent cultural interpretations of the events. Papers might reflect on a connection to the 2016 AAR theme Revolutionary Love.

- Music in the context of religious violence and trauma. We welcome proposals investigating the use of musical materials in responding to religiously-inspired violence or the response of religious communities to violent or traumatic social conflict. This might also include a critique of the uses of music in inciting or inspiring religious violence, or of the dynamics of dimensions of violence in the lyrics or the performance of music.

- Music and religion of the borderlands. In view of the history of San Antonio and Texas in relation to Mexico and the United States, and the ferocious national debate underway over immigration, we encourage papers reflecting on the role of music and religion in shaping the identities of people and communities of the American southwest, as a marker of ethnoreligious identity or a solvent of social differences. Related to this regional theme, we welcome proposals exploring religion and pilgrimage connected to the South by Southwest (SXSW) annual music and culture festival.

- East/South Asian influence in popular music. We invite papers that explore the question of what happens, sonically, when East meets West? Which religious traditions have made an impact on American music, and how have those sacred sounds been changed or adapted? A focus on the sounds of contemplative practice could offer an interesting line of inquiry.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Stowe, David, Michigan State University, stowed@msu.edu
Chair - Rycenga, Jennifer, San Jose State University, jrycenga@earthlink.net

Mysticism Group

Call Text:
• Mysticism and Depth Psychology
• Mysticism and the Arts
• Symbolism of Death and Violence in Mysticism
• Pagan Mysticism
• Critical Approaches to Mysticism: Text, Philosophy, and Epistemology
• Africa and Everyday Islam: Sustaining Pluralist Publics through Mysticism, Ritual, and Theology (for possible joint session with African Religions) In contrast to the extremism evidenced in the recent attack at the Radisson Bleu Hotel in Mali stand most African Muslims whose daily lives balance diverse forces and endeavors, from ancestors, divination, farming, healing, hunting, local rituals, market success, personal advancement, territorial spirits, and so on, all of which require an adaptive and cosmopolitan engagement with the world. We invite papers that explore such pluralistic forms of Islam in contrast to the reformist movements that oppose them and with which media coverage seems preoccupied. We also invite contributors to ask if religious studies has yet developed the proper lens through which to examine this variety of African Islams.
• Esoteric Sciences and Mystical Technologies (for a possible joint session with the Religion, Science and Technology Group and the Western Esotericism Group) The aim of this session is to focus on sciences at the edge of respectability, and to explore areas of overlap between religious and scientific ideas. Astrology, for example, which has always been important to magical and esoteric thought, has been debunked as folly at least from the time of Augustine; however it continued in use all the way through the Early Modern period, and was a kind of normal sideline for sixteenth and seventeenth century scientists. Alchemy similarly links both to mystical and spiritual allegory and laboratory chemistry from antiquity to modernity. Telepathy and the early 20th century ideas about stratified consciousness are simultaneously part of the development of psychology and of spiritualism and occultism; quantum mechanics has often inspired counter-cultural visions of reality. Finally the 21st century has witnessed a resurgence of scientific research into entheogens and mystical experience, and the development of new technologies to
promote altered states of consciousness. This session is meant to foster discussion about loci where science is used as a bridge, rather than foil, to esoteric knowledge and mystical experience. Papers will be pre-circulated.

Mission Statement:
This Group began as a Consultation within the AAR in 1987 and achieved formal Group status in 1989. While its early focus was primarily Christianity and Western religions — and the study of experience and textual interpretation within those areas — the Group has grown and changed over time, paralleling the change and growth in the AAR itself. Today, our conversations cut across boundaries that characterize many of the Program Units within the AAR — boundaries of discipline, tradition, temporality, and region. Members of our Group use different methodologies and work across a variety of disciplines, among which are the psychology of religion, sociology of religion, history of religions, hermeneutics and textual analysis, biographical analysis, feminist studies, film studies, philosophy of religion, mysticism and science, art criticism, postmodern theory, cultural studies, and anthropology of consciousness, among others. This interdisciplinarity has importance not only to our work as scholars, but also to our work as teachers and public educators. We post our current call, past sessions, a selection of past papers, as well as links in the field of mysticism to our Website at www.aarmysticism.org. We have also started a listserv, and those interested may write to aarmysticism-owner@yahoogroups.com or sign up through the Website.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS
We do NOT accept proposals by email.

Leadership:
Chair - Gleig, Ann, University of Central Florida, ann.gleig@ucf.edu
Chair - Sarbacker, Stuart R., Oregon State University, stuart.sarbacker@oregonstate.edu

Native Traditions in the Americas Group

Call Text:
We invite individual paper and group proposals on any aspect of Native traditions in the Americas (North, Central and South). We encourage proposals on the following topics:

- Teaching Native American Religious Traditions: Pedagogical Approaches and Practical Considerations.

- We would like to continue the theme from our session in Atlanta on forced removals of nations from the southeastern United States as Reimagining or Reclaiming Home: Pilgrimages, Forced Migrations, and Commemorative Rides related to the western United States. This topic is for a possible co-sponsored session with the Religion in the American West Group.

- Borderlands: navigating multiple religious and cultural identities, especially in the Southwest; transnational indigeneity and resistance to globalization.
• Language and Native American religions: tribal language programs; issues of linguistic analysis; language families; and translations as acts of conversion.

• Climate change and Native American responses.

• In light of this year’s AAR presidential theme of Revolutionary Love as a political or social force for change, we invite proposals on the following: rethinking how the other is valued or perceived; challenging the category of love from Native American perspectives; #Native Lives Matter / other movements; framing of terrorism and how terrorism rhetoric impacts Native people.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Zogry, Michael, University of Kansas, mzogry@ku.edu
Chair - Pesantubbee, Michelene, University of Iowa, michelene-pesantubbe@uiowa.edu

New Materialism, Religion, and Planetary Thinking Seminar

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

Rather than being a final reflection on these connections and differences, this seminar calls for a more sustained comparative study of these different spatial approaches. Recently, a number of methods and ideas for re-thinking ideas as part of the rest of the natural world (including religious ideas and values) have appeared on the religious studies landscape. The ideas of emergence theory, new materialisms, and object-oriented ontologies are all geared toward thinking about religion and science, ideas and nature, values and matter from within what Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari call a “single plane” of existence.
Mission Statement:

Anonymity:

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Mary Evelyn Tucker, Yale University, maryevelyn.tucker@yale.edu
Chair – Whitney Bauman, whitneyabauman@mac.com

New Perspectives on Religion in the Philippines Seminar

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

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

- moments and movements of protest and dissent in Filipino religion
- historical and current perspectives on Islam in the Philippines.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Hermann, Adrian, University of Hamburg, adrian.hermann@gmail.com
Chair - de la Cruz, Deirdre, University of Michigan, ddelac@umich.edu

New Religious Movements Group

Call Text:
The New Religious Movements Group is especially interested in topics that utilize theoretical frameworks, as well as topics that engage issues of material culture.

For 2016, we are particularly eager to receive paper proposals that relate to any of the following:

- Fear and Loathing in New Religions
- Revolutionary Love, however it is conceived
- New Religions of the American Southwest
- Not-so-new/aging/transforming New Religions

In addition, we always welcome and consider paper proposals on any topic relevant to our subfield.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Rapport, Jeremy, College of Wooster, jrapport@wooster.edu
Chair – Goodwin, Megan, Bates College, meganpgoodwin@gmail.com
Nineteenth Century Theology Group

Call Text:
We plan to sponsor two prearranged sessions at the 2016 annual meeting.

- The first is an invited panel entitled Religion, Morality and Politics: Revisiting the New Nietzsche for Religious Studies.

- The second is a book review panel on Johannes Zachhuber’s *Theology as Science in Nineteenth-Century Germany: From F. C. Baur to Ernst Troeltsch* (Oxford University Press, 2013).


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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

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

North American Hinduism Group

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

Specifically for the 2016 AAR, we invite individual papers, paper sessions, and roundtable proposals on the following five topics:

- Hindu religions in American media and popular culture
- Constructing gender and sexuality in North American Hindu religions
- Race, identity, and Hindu religions in North America. We especially welcome papers on conflations of Asian religious identities (e.g. Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, etc.)
- Meditation retreats across Asian traditions in North America for a joint sessions with the Buddhism in the West Group
The NAH Group especially solicits roundtables and other panel formats that resist the formal reading of papers and invite discussion, collaboration, and creativity.

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

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

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

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Altman, Michael, University of Alabama, michael.altman@ua.edu
Chair - Pokazanyeva, Anna, University of California, Santa Barbara, anya.pokazanyeva@gmail.com

North American Religions Section

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

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

In addition to the above, we also encourage proposals on the following topics for our 2016 meeting in San Antonio:
• Religion, Immigration, and Borders

• Religion, New Spain, and US origins

• Religions of Meso-America

• Intolerance, Islam, and Academic Freedom

• Religion in Electoral Politics

• Religion and Reproductive Rights

• Panels or papers on topics for co-sponsorship with the Religion and the West group

• Black religious traditions in New Spain, and the early American West, more broadly; as well as in Texas up through the present day (for a potential co-sponsored panel with the Afro-American Religious History Section)

• Religion, labor, and race

• Technology and Religion

• Book panel (either recent books or those with demonstrated influence over several years)

Mission Statement:

Purpose, Practices & Procedures:

1. Purpose of an AAR Section, from the AAR website: Sections are the most inclusive units of the AAR Program, encompassing various research projects within a broadly defined, enduring field. The purpose of sections is twofold: to provide a forum for dialogue and exchange among differing approaches and projects in the field and to provide opportunities for the discussion of work that does not fall within the agendas that find other expressions in the Annual Meeting program. The section structure is intended to provide significant time for presenting research in the major subfields of religion.

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

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

4. Composition: The Steering Committee is made up of seven members, two of whom are elected by the members to serve as co-chairs. A Steering Committee term is three years, renewable for a second three years if everyone is amenable. The terms are staggered, so that there are continuity and change on the committee. During a total of six possible years, a member might serve a co-chair term, which is three years. A member elected to serve as co-chair has at least one full year’s experience on the Steering Committee. The co-chair elections are staggered as well, so that each new co-chair serves with an experienced co-chair.
5. Responsibilities: The co-chairs take care of the business of NAR and moderate communication of the Steering Committee. All members of the Steering Committee make decisions on substantive matters. All attend the Annual Meeting and reserve Friday dinner and Saturday lunch for Steering Committee socializing, envisioning and business. All attend the NAR Business Meeting.

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

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

Anonymity:
Other (please explain below)

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Johnson, Sylvester, Northwestern University, sylvester.johnson@northwestern.edu
Chair - Suh, Sharon A., Seattle University, suhs@seattleu.edu

Occupying Latino Male Bodies Seminar

Call Text:
Papers will be given by the six participants only for this year.

Mission Statement:
The seminar explores the challenges, dangers, and pitfalls of occupying a Latino male body. Although some attention has been given to issues surrounding Hispanics and/or women in the academy, none has focused on what it means to occupy a Latino male body. And yet, Hispanic men face unique challenges that complicate their ability to teach, as well as their personal lives. We would argue that how society constructs male Hispanic bodies is problematic, especially when said bodies find themselves occupying positions of authority. For this reason, we are gathering Hispanic male scholars of religion to serve as consultants helping to address issues of ethnic and racial identity. This is the first time male Latino professors will be asked to reflectively examine, share, and create new models centered on being. The gathering is charged with exploring this often neglected phenomena so as to construct possible pedagogies of empowerment that can be employed, not just by the six participants. Through the dissemination of our findings, we hope to begin a broader discussion on the materiality of Latino men.

Anonymity:
Other (please explain below)

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - De La Torre, Miguel A., Iliff School of Theology, mdelatorre@iliff.edu

Open and Relational Theologies Group
Call Text:
We invite paper proposals that address, in some fashion, matters of theodicy, suffering, mourning, love, and lament within theological and philosophical reasoning. Priority is given to papers that meaningfully engage the strengths and/or weaknesses of an open-relational perspective on these subjects.

Mission Statement:
This group explores theological ideas generally related to the following:

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Schwartz, Wm. Andrew, Claremont Graduate University, waschwartz@hotmail.com

Pentecostal—Charismatic Movements Group

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

• immigration in its demographic, practical, ritual, and/or theological aspects (with possible co-sponsorship by the African Diaspora Religions Group), examining transnational and global links, including studies that treat immigrants of various faiths (Pentecostals, Muslims, Jews, African indigenous or diasporan religionists), who often share geographical spaces as members of broader, migrating communities, in connection and in tension with one another

• San Antonio and/or borderland religions—in anticipation of San Antonio’s 300th year anniversary (May 5th, 2018), proposals focused on lived religions/religious art in the borderlands of Texas (other than the widely-discussed San Fernando Cathedral), including (but not limited to) Las Guadalupanas and other women activists, the Guadalupe cultural arts center, representations of the 100 years of Pentecostalism in Texas, pilgrimage sites, missions, decolonial conversations, and non-textual representations of religion in San Antonio (with possible co-sponsorship by the Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Group)
• money, finances, and philanthropy in the North American and/or global pentecostal-charismatic movement

• theologies or theories of the Holy Spirit (with possible co-sponsorship by the Christian Systematic Theology Section) pertaining to a politics of the Spirit; the Spirit of revolution; the Spirit within theologies of religions; theologies of grace; differing views of inspiration and illumination; angels, and demons, holy or not; discerning the Spirit or spirits; gifts of the Spirit (esp. healing); and/or pentecostal expressions or manifestations generally.

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - McClymond, Michael J., Saint Louis University, michael@slu.edu
Chair - Sanchez Walsh, Arlene, Azusa Pacific University, Asanchez-walsh@apu.edu

Philosophy of Religion Section

Call Text:
This section invites proposals on the following topics:

• Gender and the practice of philosophy of religion

• The Philosophy of Religion and Approaches to Afro-pessimism

• Idealism in Indian Philosophies of Religion

• Colonial hauntings

• Spiritual perception

• Responses Thomas A. Lewis’s Why Philosophy Matters for the Study of Religion--and Vice Versa (Oxford, 2015)

• Hume on religion
• Philosophical and theological perspectives on hope and/or optimism
• Grief-shaming: who can/should mourn for whom?
• Implicit Religion

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

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Rubenstein, Mary-Jane, Wesleyan University, mrubenstein@wesleyan.edu
Chair - Lewis, Thomas A., Brown University, tlewis@brown.edu

Platonism and Neoplatonism Group

Call Text:
The Platonism and Neoplatonism Group explores the central issue of love, desire and the search for, and experience of, transcendence in the ancient and early medieval worlds, bringing together perspectives from traditions that are often treated in isolation from one another.

The Group also invites papers on any subject pertaining to the theme of eros and ascent in antiquity and the medieval world. We already have admissions on Origen and Origen and the Cappadocians, and so any theme that would work together with this general period in any tradition, for example, Judaism, Islam, Gnosticism or Neoplatonism. We also encourage papers on any topic in the fields of Platonism and Neoplatonism.

Mission Statement:
This Group is committed to the ongoing study of Platonic traditions in connection with the history and philosophy of religions, from antiquity to the present. We are supported in this effort by the International Society for Neoplatonic Studies. Several of our panelists have published their papers in the Society's Journal of Neoplatonic Studies as well as in other refereed journals in classics, religious studies, theology, and philosophy.
Anonymity: Proposer names are visible to chairs and steering committee members at all times.

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Corrigan, Kevin, Emory University, kevin_corrigan@hotmail.com

Practical Theology Group

Call Text:

- **Pedagogies of Practical Theology:** We welcome papers that reflect on the pedagogies of practical theology, that is, on how ministry leadership practice is taught in seminaries and divinity schools. We are especially interested in either 1) innovative teaching practices in the intersection of theology, spirituality and ministry or 2) pedagogies which integrate or draw upon the whole theological curriculum in service of leadership of particular faith practices in all their varied forms (preaching, presiding, prayer, pastoral care, teaching, administrative leadership, community or social justice organizing).

- **Action Research as Social and Ecclesial Transformation:** At a time of great social and ecclesial change globally, Action Research (AR) is increasingly being used as a participative approach in transformative ecclesiological and theological research. In this co-sponsored session with the Ecclesial Practices Group we welcome papers presenting both empirical work from AR projects and papers reflecting on theory and method. In both cases the papers should relate to practical theology, ecclesiology or Christian practices.

- **The 2016 Presidential Theme of Revolutionary Love.** AAR President Serene Jones uses words by James Baldwin to provoke our thinking about this theme: “I use the word love here not merely in the personal sense but as a state of being, or a state of grace – not in the infantile American sense of being made happy but in the tough and universal sense of quest and daring and growth.” We welcome proposals for papers or panels that address the intersections of love and revolution from practical theological perspectives. As Jones suggests, such proposals will result in a critical dialogue in which revolutionary love is "a social and political force, a structural reality, a collective endeavor, a shared social practice, a language, a relationship, a moment, a gesture, an identity, a quest....that seeks to transform the world, which includes love that both tears down and builds up."

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

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

For theological and religious studies — to foster interdisciplinary critical discourse about religious practice, contextual research and teaching for ministry, and practical theological method and pedagogy
For a variety of religious traditions — to enhance inquiry in religious practice and practical theology

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

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

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

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

Pragmatism and Empiricism in American Religious Thought Group

Call Text:

• Session 1: The American Evasion of Philosophy and the Reconfiguration of the Canon
  Cornel West’s innovative interpretation of the Americanist and pragmatist philosophical canon is much neglected. This session aims to remedy that defect by focusing on the ways that West’s work blew apart the old canon, which suffered from various kinds of tunnel vision and astigmatism. West polished and multiplied the lenses through which we see the canon. He exposed the politics of canon formation within the American tradition of critical intelligence that disabled our ability to see what ought to have been apparent. His deeply ambivalent reading of Emerson as protopragmatist, inclusion of Du Bois within the pragmatist circle, and engagements with the blues, underscore this reconfiguration. Though clearly “blue,” is West, acknowledging the contested nature of the concept, an Afropessimist? We invite papers that focus on the reconfiguration of the canon made possible by West’s work.

• Session 2: Pragmatism and Nonviolence
  This session explores the place of nonviolent resistance to injustice within the pragmatist tradition. While open to other foci and considerations, we envision papers that address the centrality of the debate between Martin Luther King, Jr. and Reinhold Niebuhr on the spiritual, ethical, and political dimensions of nonviolent resistance. Ideally, papers will engage King and Niebuhr but push beyond them in ways that address our current predicament regarding violence, nonviolence, and social justice. Papers might fruitfully triangle the King/Niebuhr focus with the foundational importance of Josiah Royce’s notion of “the beloved community” and his role in co-founding the pacifist organization Fellowship of Reconciliation. This session also invites papers that offer a critique of pragmatism and nonviolence from radically oppositional perspectives such as that of Frantz Fanon.
• Session 3: Critical Reflections on Eddie Glaude’s *Democracy in Black: How race still enslaves the American soul*

Dedicated to his most recent book, this session focuses on Glaude’s latest effort to make sense of America, her democratic self-image, and the enduring dilemma of race and racism, structured by white supremacy, within a broadly pragmatist frame. This session invites papers that engage this text from a variety of perspectives. In what ways does *Democracy in Black* (Crown Publishers 2016) extend and revise Glaude’s arguments from *In a Shade of Blue: Pragmatism and the Politics of Black America*? (Chicago 2007). We are especially interested in papers that engage Glaude’s arguments regarding racial habit-formation among white Americans, the political response of black liberals, and their respective implications for a robust democratic polity.

Mission Statement:
Our mission is to foster the advancement and understanding of the pragmatic and empiricist traditions in American religious thought, as well as the intersections of those traditions with other methodologies, intellectual figures, artistic movements, communities, and issues. This Group is concerned with critically interrogating, evaluating, and developing the insights and relevance of the pragmatic and empiricist traditions of American thought, broadly construed, for the study of religion and theology, with attention both to the historical interpretation of ideas and contemporary developments within this critical sphere of philosophical and theological reflection. Recent areas of interest include pragmatism and democracy, the continued relevance of empiricism to the revival of pragmatism, multidisciplinary aspects of the tradition (intersections with other fields of inquiry), overlaps with cultural criticism and analyses of gender and race, and the application of pragmatic and empiricist analyses to contemporary problems.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Hart, William David, Macalester College, whart1@macalester.edu

Psychology, Culture, and Religion Group

Call Text:
The PCR group invites proposals on the following topics:


• Commemorating traumas and disasters: Psychological and religious approaches to understanding rituals that memorialize experiences of personal and collective loss. Examples include commemorations of 9/11, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the Newton school shooting in 2012, and other traumatizing events in the US and other countries.
• “What do you mean?”: Politics, religious rhetoric, and psychological dynamics in the 2016 race to the White House. How might psychological and religious analyses broaden public understanding of the political process in the US and elsewhere?


Proposals are also welcome on other topics relating to the study of psychology, culture, and religion.

Mission Statement:
The PCR group is a Related Scholarly Organization (RSO) of the AAR, comprised of scholars and practitioners in the fields of psychology, religious studies, and cultural analysis. The interests of our members range from Freudian and Jungian psychoanalysis to the practice of pastoral counseling, from object relations theory to cultural studies of trauma and healing. Our primary purposes are to foster creative research, encourage the exchange of ideas among the membership, and provide a forum within the AAR for people with shared backgrounds in the interdisciplinary study of psychology, religion, and culture. Please visit our Website at http://pcr-aar.org/.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Campbell-Reed, Eileen, Central Baptist Theological Seminary, eileen.campbellreed@gmail.com

Chair - Bulkeley, Kelly, Graduate Theological Union, bulkeleyk@gmail.com

Quaker Studies Group

Call Text:

• Way Opening? Quakerism, the “Nones,” and Contemporary Spirituality/Emergent Religion
  From several points of view, Quakerism appears well situated to respond to new developments in the American religious landscape, particularly the rise of the religiously unaffiliated (the “nones”), especially among Millennials. While Pew data indicates the “nones” are growing more secular, 61 percent still believe in God or universal spirit, and a third say religion remains somewhat or very important to them. At the same time, Quakers’ traditional rejection of many aspects of organized religion (creeds, dogma, etc.) and embrace of individual experience (via the “inward light”) would seem to square well with more religiously inclined “nones.” This panel seeks papers that explore this (possible) intersection. Possible topics include:

  • To what extent does Quakerism, as practiced in North America today, actually correspond to religious trends, emergent religion and contemporary spirituality? Are there differences among the various branches of Quakerism?

  • What barriers exist between “nones” and Quakers?

  • How are the religiously unaffiliated or “spiritual but not religious” finding, encountering, and
experiencing Quakerism? How do Millennials respond to Quaker practices and testimonies?

- Are any patterns discernible among newly convinced Friends?
- In what ways are Quakers and Quaker groups seeking to address changes in the religious landscape?
- Is there a meaningful Quaker religious “brand”?

- In a co-sponsored session, the Quaker Studies Group and Sociology of Religion Group invite proposals on normative religious identity and notions of the 'true Church.' We are interested in papers that utilize sociological theories and methods in the analysis of this topic. We are particularly interested in the following questions: What mechanisms do religious groups use to establish normative identities, particularly against deviants or schismatics within their own group? How is 'membership' and 'authenticity' counted and measured? What types of authority are used to sustain particular identities and how are these operationalized within the group? How are notions of 'the world' constructed and sustained, and how are these notions adapted when they no longer serve their original purpose (for example during the processes of denominationalisation or internal secularization)?

Mission Statement:
The Quaker Studies Group seeks to advance critical scholarship of Quakerism and sub-fields that interact with Quaker history, practice and thought. This group is particularly focused on interdisciplinary analyses of Quakerism in its global contexts and the breadth of its theological diversity. Quaker Studies includes the variety of religious traditions that derive from the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), as well as the spiritual and social movements and practices that claim Quaker influence.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Kershner, Jon, University of Lancaster, jon.kershner@gmail.com
Chair - Spencer, Carole Dale, Earlham School of Religion, spencca@earlham.edu

Queer Studies in Religion Group

Call Text:
This Group welcomes proposals for individual papers, papers sessions, and roundtables on all topics related to queer theory and LGBT studies in religion, especially those focused on bisexual and/or transgender studies, those that foreground race as an analytical framework, and those that consider contexts beyond the United States and that engage religions other than Christianity.

For the 2016 annual meeting, we are particularly interested in:
• Papers for a possible Author-meets-Critics panel on Linn Tonstad’s *God and Difference: The Trinity, Sexuality, and the Transformation of Finitiude* (Routledge, 2015) to be co-sponsored with the Theology and Religious Reflection Group

• Papers that will explore the question “What Does Queer Theory Teach Us about Religion?” This panel will examine the distinct contributions, unique insights, specific critical principles and special character of a queer theoretical approach to religion, particularly in the turn to a “subjectless mode” that focuses on “normalizing logics” (of homonormativity, race, settler colonialism, imperialism, etc.) over discrete identity categories—gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans*, intersex—that might comprise “queerness” in some contexts.

• Papers related to the 2016 Presidential Theme—Revolutionary Love, and its potential queer analogue, “Strange Eros,” particularly as these themes relate to critical race concerns.

• Papers that examine and explore borders, borderlands, bridges, crossings, trans*migrations, and limits, especially in relation to the location of the 2016 Annual Meeting: San Antonio, Texas.

• Papers that explore queer studies contributions to questions of values and ethics, especially as they relate to, challenge, transform “traditional” religious values and ethics.

• Papers that explore queer versions of intimacy, relation, and kinship, with particular attention to how such new forms of relationality can be made more visible and sustainable.

• Papers that explore queer (especially trans*) religious contributions—queer canons, queer practices of canon-making, queer ritual practices.

• Expanding the Archive: Elaborating the Work of Ann Cvetkovich (for a potential co-sponsored session with the Sacred Texts, Theory, and Theological Construction Group). This session will be devoted to creative responses to and elaborations of Ann Cvetkovich’s two books, *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures* and *Depression: A Public Feeling* (Duke University Press), which reads personally felt experiences as specific limns and qualitative impacts of social phenomena such as capitalism, histories of racism, and homophobia. We are particularly (but not exclusively) interested in papers that take up Cvetkovich’s work on racism and depression and migration/diaspora and trauma. Papers would ideally be specific interventions and applications of Cvetkovich’s work within the disciplines of theology or biblical studies, rather than simply broad consideration of the importance of her work for these disciplines.

  Papers for this session will be essay/article length pieces, circulated in advance, and then summarized in the session itself. These papers may then potentially be published in an edited volume through Palgrave Macmillan’s the Bible and Cultural Studies series, if generally suitable to the series and appealing to the panelists.

**Mission Statement:**

The core goals of this Group are as follows:

*Foster the application of queer theory and gender theory to the study of religion*

*Encourage comparative study of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues in religion*
Support the growth of bisexual studies and transgender studies in the field. We actively seek to explore the connections between queer theory in religion and complementary or overlapping fields of inquiry, such as postcolonial theory, critical race theory, disability theory, feminist theory, and cultural studies, among others.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Brintnall, Kent, University of North Carolina, Charlotte, kbrintna@uncc.edu
Chair - Young, Thelathia, Bucknell University, nikki.young@bucknell.edu

Qur’an Group

Call Text:
The Qur’an Group invites proposals on the following themes for the Annual Meeting of the AAR in 2017:

• modern tafsir
• Qur’an, tafsir and science
• Translation
• narrative storytelling and sermons as tafsir

Individual paper proposals are always welcome. The Qur’an Group encourages proposals from junior scholars.

Mission Statement:
This Group seeks to provide a forum for comprehensive scholarly discussion of the Qur’an, its commentaries, and its role in Muslim and world societies through a variety of disciplinary and methodological perspectives. We particularly welcome student-scholars and scholars from all areas of the academy to help us achieve our goals of promoting an understanding of the Qur’an.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Newby, Gordon D., Emory University, gdnewby@emory.edu
Chair - Saleh, Walid, University of Toronto, walid.saleh@utoronto.ca
Reformed Theology and History Group

Call Text:

- The Reformed Theology and History Group seeks proposals on the theme of sin within the Reformed tradition. Papers may be historical or theological in nature; the best contributions will ordinarily not be merely descriptive but rather also constructive, seeking to relate these questions to the contemporary cultural context. Topics might include:
  - the relationship between “systemic” and “personal” sin. Where, how, and why have Reformed thinkers related the sin of systems and institutions to the sinful condition and/or to the sinful behavior of human individuals? In what sense are sinful individuals culpable for corporate sins?
  - the distinction between “sins of omission” and “sins of commission.” How have Reformed thinkers related these, and how are they remedied both similarly and differently? How are both of these the sins of institutions as well as the sins of individuals?
  - the persistence of sin in Christians and the church. How has the Reformed tradition dealt with “simultaneously sinner and saint”? How has that idea affected Reformed ways of thinking about the church and sanctification? Have Reformed thinkers been too pessimistic (or too optimistic) about the ability of Christians to resist sin?
  - sin and liturgical practices. How, in the context of Reformed worship, has sin been confessed, repented of, healed, and/or corrected by way of liturgical practices including the prayer of confession, declaration of pardon, hearing of God’s law, passing of the peace, baptism of believers, and partaking of the Lord’s Supper?

- The Reformed Theology and History Group seeks proposals on the theme of catholicity within the Reformed tradition. What has it meant, and what might it mean today to be both "catholic" and "Reformed?" A variety of contemporary theological proposals have appropriated this terminology, which has a long history in the Reformed tradition. But what are the possibilities and limits for "catholicity" in the Reformed tradition? We are inviting papers which utilize a historical examination to respond to this question, and/or papers which examine recent theological works appropriating the terms.

- The Reformed Theology and History Group along with the Christian Systematic Theology Unit will host a panel of invited speakers who will critically engage the contribution of Katherine Sonderegger. Significant consideration will be given to her recent publication, The Doctrine of God, vol. 1 (Fortress Press, 2015).

Mission Statement:

This Group seeks to open up the Reformed tradition for critical review and study, focusing on its characteristic themes in theology and historical patterns of polity and practice. Our aim is to present panels and paper sessions that balance historical with theological methods, single figures within larger cultural movements, and core themes with emerging or forgotten elements of Reformed thought and practice. In all of these topics, we hope to demonstrate the vitality, originality, and diversity of Reformed Christianity in its worldwide expression.
Anonymity:
Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Billings, J. Todd, Western Theological Seminary, todd.billings@westernsem.edu
Chair - Rigby, Cynthia, Austin Theological Seminary, crigby@austinseminary.edu

Religion and Cities Group

Call Text:
The 2016 AAR meeting to be held in San Antonio, Texas, which was once the capital of the Spanish and later the Mexican province of Tejas, opens up possibilities for using a regional lens in discussions about religion and cities and their contested historical meanings, occupations, and borders. We are looking for papers that focus on issues of migration, militarization, and religious movements for justice in contested urban contexts.

Topics may include:

- theological reflection on the impact of the militarization of national borders in shaping our theological horizons on issues such as migration, the meaning of citizenship, or the ability of people to flourish
- the role of varying forms of religiously inspired resistance that challenge political and national borders
- religious groups and military installations, detention centers, and prisons in Texas
- religious narratives or counter-narratives about urban sites that are symbols of identity (the Alamo, the state capitol, etc.)
- other topics considering religion and cities from sociological, historical, theological, or other relevant academic perspectives. Individual paper proposals will be given priority, but we will consider panel proposals that present a multi-disciplinary approach to a unified topic.

Mission Statement:
This Group is focused on scholarship that explores the dynamics of religion in urban contexts. We draw largely, though not exclusively, from social research in looking at the ways in which the cultures, economies, space, and politics both shape and are shaped by the presence of an increasing diversity of faith traditions in cities.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Religion and Disability Studies Group

Call Text:
The Religion and Disability Studies Group welcomes paper submissions on any aspect of the intersection between religion, theology, and disability studies. We have particular interest in the following topics:

- Papers that address religion and disability in the context of incarceration and the experiences of refugees
- Papers engaging issues of mental disabilities and/or neurodiversity in religious contexts and communities
- Papers that engage critical race theory and disability studies, and/or which develop Black Liberation Theologies of Disability
- Papers working at the intersection of disability studies, queer/transgender studies, racial justice, and/or sexuality studies, for a possible roundtable on Alison Kafer’s *Feminist Queer Crip* (Indiana University Press, 2013)
- Papers for a possible joint session with the Human Enhancement and Transhuman Group, on the complex relationships between disability studies and the use of various technologies to “fix” or enhance human bodies or capacities. Original work that probes the social, political, moral, and religious dimensions of the disabilities/enhancement interface is especially encouraged.
- Papers that engage disability in diverse religious and cultural contexts, whether from historical, textual, or contemporary perspectives

Mission Statement:
The Religion and Disability Studies Group is committed to maintaining the visibility, viability, and value of the experience and politics of disability as they relate to the study and practice of religion. We promote engagement between disability studies theory and the study of religion, examine the role of disability in lived religious experience and theology, and consider the historical and contemporary role of disability in diverse religious traditions, texts, and cultures.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Watts Belser, Julia, Georgetown University, jwb84@georgetown.edu

Chair - Iozzio, Mary Jo, Boston College, mary.jo.iozzio@bc.edu
Religion and Ecology Group

Call Text:
After a brief flurry of interest in the 1970s, Religion and Ecology was founded at the 1991 AAR as a consultation, moving to group status shortly afterwards. In 2016, therefore, we are celebrating our 25th anniversary, and are looking to assemble two complete panels to celebrate and advance the field.

The first panel should be a critical retrospective of the field of religion and ecology over the past 25 years that aims to assess what the field has contributed to the AAR and to the study of religion more broadly.

The second panel should be one that lays out key themes or questions for the field for the next generation of scholars: what questions have gone unanswered? Which trajectories have been failures? What should the field focus on in future? We aim to select the best papers for inclusion in a special edition of the journal Worldviews, to be guest edited by the co-chairs of the group.

In addition to these two flagship session, we are seeking complete panel proposals for two shorter 90 minute sessions in an alternate format than the traditional 20 minute paper. These could be roundtable discussions, dialogs, workshops, or sessions in which papers will be circulated in advance and not read out in the session. Panels that explore Buddhist responses to the climate crisis are especially welcome.

We also aim to assemble one complete panel formed of individual paper proposals on any theme related to the study of religion and ecology.

Mission Statement:
This Group critically and constructively explores how human–Earth relations are shaped by religions, cultures, and understandings of nature and the environment. We are self-consciously inter- and multi-disciplinary and include methods such as those found in the work of theologians, philosophers, religionists, ethicists, scientists, and anthropologists, among others.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Berry, Evan, American University, berry@american.edu

Chair - Miller, James, Queens University, james.miller@queensu.ca

Religion and Economy Group

Call text:
The Religion and Economy Group invites proposals for papers or panels that examine how religious and economic systems, concepts, and practices variously co-constitute, collaborate, or conflict. Dedicated to cultivating interdisciplinary, trans-historical, and multi-religious conversations about the complex ties that bind religious and economic activity, we especially welcome proposals that examine how religious practices,
ethics, and bodies authorize economic systems, as well as proposals that explore how religious traditions are articulated in and through systems of exchange. Although we welcome proposals for panels or papers on any relevant theme, we seek proposals on the following topics in particular:

- Religion and the corporation. The term "corporation" most immediately brings to mind images of modern capitalist institutions, but the concept also has a much older history, in which religion often plays a central role. Potential papers might explore the religious idioms that guide capitalist corporations, the religious sensibilities and activities of colonial or imperial companies and their critics, as well as the systems that orient the production of corporate bodies, broadly conceived.

- Cosmologies of exchange. How have systems of exchange and economy relied upon religious conceptions of objects, bodies, resources, land, and more? Critics of the category of religion have reminded us that the ancient meaning of the term religion involved the work of binding and rebinding. How, as scholars of religion, can we contribute to understandings of economy that look beyond present-day capitalist idioms? How have religious and ethical understandings of the material world operated as engines of movement and exchange, bringing together people, objects, histories, traditions, and perceptions of divinity? Examinations of cosmologies of exchange might draw upon ethnographic, historical, theoretical, or theological lenses.

- Economic transition and transformation. Whether exploring transitions from feudal or mercantilist to capitalist economies in the medieval and early modern past, or addressing transformations involved in the last few centuries of capitalism’s global expansion, we seek papers that address how religious practices, concepts, and institutions not only help to explain periods of transition but also transform through such transitions. How have religions encountered, confronted, effaced, and challenged social and economic change?

- Moral Mobility: Class, Labor, and Religious Ethics (co-sponsored with Comparative Religious Ethics Group)

Mission Statement: This group sponsors multidisciplinary conversations that explore intersections between religious and economic modes of social life. Building upon and extending scholarship that considers how economic terms and constraints orient religious activity, this group cultivates scholarship that asks how economic systems and orientations have developed through fields of thought, practice, and resistance that come into view through attention to the "religious." Encouraging conversations that traverse religious traditions, geographic locations, methodologies, and historical time periods, this group’s collaborative explorations not only address and explore capitalist and non-capitalist economic systems but also consider how broader systems of “exchange” produce social relations among varied actors—from humans to spirits to material objects. By interrogating religion and economy, this group also encourages scholars to consider the stakes of other concepts with ongoing currency in the study of religion, including secularism, postsecularism, spirituality, affect, networks, ritual, agency, and subject formation.
Anonymity:
Proposer names are visible to chairs but anonymous to steering committee members

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Daniel Vaca, Brown University, Daniel_vaca@brown.edu
Chair - Elayne Oliphant, New York University, elayne.oliphant@nyu.edu

Religion and Food Group

Call Text:
This Group provides an opportunity for scholars to engage in the intersection of religion and food, foodways, and food ethics. We are interested in examining these topics across broad geographical areas, religious traditions, and historical eras. We seek papers investigating practices and beliefs related to food, drink, fasting, the production of food, the ethics of production and consumption, or on any aspect of religiously influenced foodways.

Topics might include, but are not limited to the following:

Inspired by our San Antonio location, we welcome submissions that treat the question of “Authenticity” with respect to the intersection of religion and food. Possible areas of focus:

- Border food such as Tex-Mex or Hummus (regional, ethnic, political concerns)
- Sacramental food (regional, spiritual, and liturgical concerns)
- Barbecue (religious, regional, ethnic concerns). Related to this question of authenticity, we are interested in Religion and faux foods (e.g. turkey bacon, kosher shrimp, tofurkey).

We also welcome submissions that engage the themes related to Food and Feminism (for a possible-cosponsored session with Women and Religion).

Mission Statement:
This Group provides an opportunity for scholars to engage in the intersection of religion and food, foodways, and food ethics. We are interested in examining these topics across broad geographical areas, religious traditions, and historical eras. We encourage critical reflection regarding:

The relationships of religious commitments to food (consumption, production, and invention)

Diet and sustainability
Issues of food (in)justice, which may include food availability or insecurity, commitment to wellness, access to healthy foods, etc.

Theological, spiritual, and religious interrelationships as expressed in food commitments or confluence

The cross-cultural applicability of the categories of “religion” and “food” themselves

We seek to develop ongoing investigations into practices and beliefs related to food, drink, fasting, the production of food, the ethics of production and consumption, or on any aspect of religiously influenced foodways

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Rubel, Nora L., University of Rochester, nrubel@mail.rochester.edu
Chair – Hicks, Derek, Wake Forest University, hicksds@wfu.edu

Religion and Humanism Group

Call Text:
Panel on Terence Martin’s Truth and Irony: Philosophical Meditations on Erasmus
Presiding: Slavica Jakelic, Valparaiso University
Panelists:
David Hall, Centre College
William Schweiker, University of Chicago
Constance Furey, Indiana University
Response: Terence Martin, St. Mary's College, Notre Dame

Terence Martin’s new book Truth and Irony: Philosophical Meditations on Erasmus taps into selected works of Erasmus of Rotterdam to offer a series of philosophical meditations designed to retrieve and deploy a distinctively Erasmian manner of thinking. As an invitation to think ironically about the truth of our lives for the sake of enhancing human existence, the book represents a defense of ironic truth-telling, a staunch but idiosyncratic complaint for peace, and a daring defense of pleasure in religious life. The three panelists will offer their critical reflections on Martin’s book, with the author responding to those reflections.

Business Meeting: Sage Elwell, Texas Christian University

We are also in consultation with the Religion and Science-Fiction Group about how we imagine the future of religion and humanism in creative works.

Mission Statement:
This Group seeks to open a space of reflection at the intersection between various positions that fall under the general title of “humanism” and the contemporary study of religion. This reflection includes philosophical, historical, and comparative methodologies. We provide a forum for scholars exploring the following:
The historical legacy of religious humanism

Traditional humanist concern with rhetoric as a means to study religion

The offer of critiques and constructive reappraisals of humanism as a contemporary theological and philosophical stance

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS
E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)

Leadership:
Chair - Jakelic, Slavica, Valparaiso University, sj3d@virginia.edu
Chair - Elwell, J. Sage, Texas Christian University, sage.elwell@tcu.edu

Religion and Migration Group

Call Text:
The AAR religion and Migration Group seeks panel submissions on films related to the impact of migration on religious beliefs and practices, as well as politico-social experiences of religion in home and/or host countries. Panels will be in a roundtable format, with the viewing of films up to 1.5 hours, followed by a discussion by expert panelists (some of whom may have been involved in the production of the film) and the audience. Please note that the AAR is unable to pay fees related to the showing of films in an educational setting.

The Religion and Migration Group additionally seeks proposals for a co-sponsored panel with the Religion in Europe Group related to the effect of migration on the dynamics of religious diversity in Europe. This includes, but is not limited to, such themes as the Syrian refugee crisis; the role of religion in forced migration; the permeability of European borders; the work of churches, mosques, and other religious organizations in settling refugees; the intersection of gender and religion in the settling of refugees; and the (in)visibility of Islam in Europe.

Mission Statement:
This Group is a forum in which scholars working on religion and migration from multiple perspectives can interact across methodologies, religious traditions, and regions. We solicit papers addressing the religious practices, experiences, needs, and beliefs of migrating peoples who adapt to new environments and impact their societies of origin and destination. We understand religion and migration broadly, from the religious communities of rural migrants in regional cities to the new understandings of religion that second-generation children construct in order to make sense of their ethnic identities or ethical responses of receiving communities. If you are interested in subscribing to our listserv, please contact Alison R. Marshall, Brandon University, marshalla@brandontu.ca.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS
Leadership:
Chair - Marshall, Alison, Brandon University, marshalla@brandonu.ca
Chair - Ramji, Rubina, Cape Breton University, rubina@eastlink.ca

Religion and Politics Section

Call Text:
In addition to receiving proposals on topics generally in the purview of the Section (which encompasses both domestic and global interconnections of religion and politics, in practice and theory), we especially welcome proposals that address the following:

- The conference theme of "Radical Love:" i.e., How is the concept of love articulated in political space? In our hyper-polarized political environment, is a politics or political engagement grounded in love possible today? Submissions could draw on political theology, studies of social movements, or other approaches.

- The role of religion in the 2016 national election cycle, including salient themes such as gender, demographic changes in the electorate, religious liberty, terrorism, national security concerns and Islamophobia, immigration, racial and economic inequality.

- Religion, immigration, and the refugee crisis

- Perspectives on religious freedom and interfaith marriage in U.S. and abroad (possible co-sponsorship with Law, Religion, and Culture Group--their focus is on South Asia)

- Remember the Alamo! Religion and America's military losses in contemporary context

- Religion and politics in the context of San Antonio, Texas, and the Southwest (e.g., community organizing, growing Hispanic population and its impact on politics and religious congregations).

Mission Statement:
This Section provides a forum for scholars and professionals interested in the relationships between religion, the state, and political life, both in the United States and around the world. Our members focus on the interaction between religious and political values, movements, and commitments, and the role of religious individuals and communities in bodies politic. This focus includes attention to the ways in which religion and religious actors participate in public discourse, contribute to debates over public values and social policy, and affect — and are affected by — activity in the political sphere. We welcome members doing both normative and descriptive work from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds, including religious studies, political science, philosophy, social ethics, law (including church–state studies), history (as it relates to contemporary understandings), and theology. We seek to advance scholarly inquiry on religion and politics and we seek also to speak to broad and diverse publics about areas falling under the Section’s purview.

We also maintain a lively, year-round Religion and Politics Google group, which is open to all AAR members here: https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/aar-religionandpolitics

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

Method of submission:
Leadership:
Chair - Jones, Robert P., Public Religion Research Institute, Washington, D.C., rjones@publicreligion.org
Chair - Biondo, Vincent, California State University, Fresno, vbiondo@csufresno.edu

Religion and Popular Culture Group

Call Text:
This Group invites both organized sessions and individual paper proposals that explore the intersections of religion and popular culture. We strongly encourage presentation formats that foster interactive environments and provide creative alternatives to the conventional reading of papers. This year, we encourage presentations that examine the following areas:

- The 50th Anniversary of Star Trek
- Queering Religion and Popular Culture
- Theory and Method in the Study of Religion and Popular Culture
- Texas and/or the Alamo
- Migration/Borders
- Children's Literature
- Audience Studies/Reception Theory
- Affect Theory
- Surveillance

Finally, we offer an open call for any other topics dealing with religion and popular culture, especially proposals that address the relevance of popular culture studies for larger theoretical and methodical issues in the field of religious studies.

Mission Statement:
This Group is dedicated to the scholarly exploration of religious expression in a variety of cultural settings. We encourage a multidisciplinary display of scholarship in our sessions and are committed to taking popular culture seriously as an arena of religious and theological reflection and practice.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Seales, Chad, University of Texas, seales@austin.utexas.edu
Textbooks and curricula continue to draw scrutiny for the way religion is represented and misrepresented in public schools. Research in curricula and textbooks is an important scholarly field within the study of religions and this topic allows for a comparative international treatment. Controversy may be observed on multiple fronts. What approaches to the study of religion are reflected in curricula and textbooks? How is religion represented and misrepresented in textbooks and curricula for the public schools? What is taught about religion (or specific religions) in various content areas including social studies, English language arts, and humanities or in religion or religious education school subjects as taught in public schools outside the US? With the advent of state standards in the United States in the 1990s and the rise of computer-aided textbook adaptation for different states, how have textbooks and curricula changed in recent decades? Are there new effective strategies and approaches to representing religion in textbooks and curricula?

Apart from research on textbook and curricula we also call for papers for a joint panel with the Religion in Europe group. Here we would like to see papers that bring forward the content of curricula and the nature of religion-, religious- or no-teaching of religion in different European countries, including--but not limited to—the relation of teaching religion in public education to civic formation and countering biases and radicalization. Since the way religion is taught (or not taught) can be viewed as a litmus test for state-church-society relations, we would especially like papers that take the historical and political context into account in the papers.

We also invite papers in an open call that advances the mission of this program group.

Mission Statement:
This Group will promote the comparative study of religion education in public schools around the world. By encouraging interdisciplinary research on the range of ethical, legal, political, pedagogical, and religious issues that arise in connection with the study of religion in elementary and secondary education, we seek to extend and deepen our understanding of alternative approaches to religion as an academic subject matter in public schools, alternative ways of responding to increasing religious diversity in schools and societies, and the relationship between religion education and citizenship education in pluralistic democratic societies.

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

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

Leadership:
Chair - Berglund, Jenny, Södertörn University, jenny.berglund@sh.se

Chair - Waggoner, Michael, University of Northern Iowa, Mike.Waggoner@uni.edu
Religion and Science Fiction Group

Call Text:
Religion and Science Fiction invites proposals exploring the intersections of religion and speculative fictions in ways that illuminate theoretical, methodological, and substantive issues in the study of religion. We are especially interested in proposals that invite audience conversation, make use of new media, and consider alternative "sciences" and worlds. We seek proposals on the following topics:

- Survivalist Science Fiction and/or impending eco-disaster
- Indigenous/Indigeneity in Science Fiction
- Religion and philosophy in Philip K. Dick's texts and films adaptations
- Transhumanism, disability and the future of human being
- Proposals for a possible co-sponsored session with the Tantric Studies Group on "Tantra and Science Fiction"
- Proposals that provoke sciencefictional imaginings and transgressions on the AAR's 2016 theme Revolutionary Love

Mission Statement:
This Group connects the study of religion to the limitless possibilities for world-making, soul-saving, god-imagining, community-forming, and human-being posed by science fiction (and broadly, “speculative” fictions). Science Fiction (SF) is a literary and visual medium addressing the most basic existential and teleological questions human beings can pose. As the genre of infinite possible worlds, and human and superhuman becoming, SF has a unique ability to ask, examine, and suggest answers to the most profound questions and to envision transcendence beyond traditional realist literature or religious interpretations of the world.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Ammon, Laura, Appalachian State University, ammonll@appstate.edu
Chair - Busto, Rudy V., University of California, Santa Barbara, rude@religion.ucsb.edu

Religion and Sexuality Group

Call Text:
While we welcome papers that address theory we are especially interested in praxis-based theoretical analysis.
Accordingly, this Group welcomes papers on religion and sexuality, broadly conceptualized. We are particularly interested in papers addressing and analyzing the following themes:

- **Border Crossings/Transgressings and Barrier Fixings:** We welcome papers on borders and barriers as they relate to religion, gender, sexuality, geography, identity, and race; we especially solicit papers that connect scholarship with our meeting location in San Antonio, TX and papers that engage Islamophobia and Muslim identity in North America and in Europe as religious and sexual subjects in contemporary political economies.

- **Sexuality and the Movement for Black Lives:** We welcome papers on the religio-sexual politics of “Black Lives Matter” and the contemporary movement for black lives; we also welcome considerations of the relationship between “future of sex” and Afro-Futurism with the movement for black lives through various literature that engages religion and sexuality.

- **Sexability:** We continue to welcome papers on methodologies with respect to disability, sexuality, and crip/queer theory.

- **Revolutionary Love and Foucault:** We welcome papers that draw on the works of Michel Foucault (especially the History of Sexuality series and the relevant parts of Foucault’s College de France lectures) so as to engage critically the notion of Revolutionary Love. (When is love transformative or liberatory? What are the powers of the erotic? How is power/love bodily negotiated?) Papers can be focused around theoretical, methodological, and/or empirical issues/approaches. For potential co-sponsorship with the Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group.

- **Religious Bodies, Religious Sexualities:** We welcome papers that critically address and analyze bodies and sexualities as religiously inscribed and enacted. In particular, we welcome papers that focus on problematizing the intricate relationships between bodies/sexualities and religiosity by employing creative empirical/literary/poetic approaches. For potential co-sponsorship with the Body and Religion Group.

- **Transgender and human/more-than-human materialities:** We welcome papers that critically engage the various ways in which transgender subjectivities, identities and practices challenge and destabilize perceptions of human and divine genders (especially in anthropomorphic traditions, but also including the contemporary Pagan veneration of Goddess and God). Themes can include, but are not restricted to: transgender and the ontological turn; transgender and new materialism; transgender and posthumanism. Papers can also be focused around methodological, and/or empirical issues/approaches. For potential co-sponsorship with the Contemporary Paganism Group.

Other proposals for papers, sessions, panels and/or book sessions in keeping with the general mission of the Group are always welcome.

**Mission Statement:**
This Group examines religion and sexuality, broadly conceptualized, and focuses on questions of why and how sex matters for particular religious persons, communities, or traditions. We welcome collaboration with other Program Units doing work in some area of sexuality. Distinguishing this Group from other Program Units are an emphasis on empirical research and analysis and an intentionally multidisciplinary and comparative religious focus. We especially encourage interdisciplinary approaches, interest in gender (broadly defined), and strong attention to methodological issues.
Anonymity:
Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Leath, Jennifer S., Iliff School of Theology, jennifer.s.leath@gmail.com

Chair - Hoel, Nina, University of Oslo, ninahoel@gmail.com

Religion and the Social Sciences Section

Call Text:
This section invites proposals on the following topics:

- Religion and trauma
- Religion and commemoration (possibly in light of the 15th anniversary of 9/11)
- Religion and refugees (Syria and/or other locations)
- Religion and migration
- Religion and terrorism
- Religion and inequality: religion as a contributor to and/or alleviator of inequality
- Religion and Religious Freedom Restoration Acts
- Religion and Equal Marriage

We always seek empirically grounded and theoretically sensitive papers on topics from scholars working with various methodologies (i.e., case studies, oral history, life story, ethnography, critical ethnography, quantitative methods) from fields such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, economics, religious studies, and cultural studies. We welcome papers presenting original social scientific research.

All submitted proposals should clearly specify issues, concepts, and/or questions of relevance to contemporary social scientists as well as the use of social scientific research methodology.

Mission Statement:
This Section supports scholarship at the intersection of the social sciences — including psychology, ethnography, sociology, political sciences, economics, and cultural studies — and religious or theological studies. Topic areas include the study of religious and theological questions through specific social scientific methodologies, the contribution of religious and theological approaches to the work of social scientific
disciplines, and comparative assessments of current issues by humanities-based and social scientific methods.

Anonymity:
Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection. Please do not include any identifying information in the body of your proposal.

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Phillips, Nichole, Emory University, nichole.r.phillips@emory.edu
Chair - Nabhan-Warren, Kristy, University of Iowa, kristy-nabhan-warren@uiowa.edu

Religion and US Empire Seminar

Call Text:
The AAR Seminar on Religion and U.S. Empire invites individual paper proposals for a session on “U.S. Empire and the Production of Religion.” In his recent book Empire of Religion: Imperialism and Comparative Religion, David Chidester writes, “in the practices of comparison and containment, the very categories of ‘religion’ and ‘religions’ were produced and reproduced as instruments of both knowledge and power in specific colonial situations.” Chidester analyzes the consequences of complex relationships and the results of intellectual labor in and between Europe and southern Africa. He concludes that “a triple mediation”—imperial, colonial, indigenous—contributed to the production of knowledge about religion. Such knowledge was always entangled with the formation and support of empire, but these “material mediations” also introduced contingencies at every level (Chidester 2014: ix-xx). The question we would like to explore, then, is how might such ideas about the connection between imperial expansion and the production of religion be applied in the U.S. context? Papers will be pre-circulated to encourage discussion and debate.

Mission Statement:
This seminar supports a critical examination of the complex relationship between religion and US empire from the formal inception of the US as a nation-state to the present. The seminar will encourage attention to fundamental theoretical issues relating to religion and US expansionism, including but not limited to the following: the co-constitution of race, religion, and nation; the political and institutional mechanics of empire; the role of civic, ethnic, and religious nationalisms in supporting and critiquing empire; the value of transnational and national approaches to understanding US religious history; and the implications of reconceiving the standard periodization of US history to depart from standard state-building categories. The specific research projects of the collaborators attend to such issues as militarism and the materiality of religion and empire; the influence of empire on rituals, practices, and beliefs of US public religion; and the linkages between colonial administrators, missionaries, and the scientific study of religion.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Religion in Europe Group

Call Text:
This Group analyzes religion in Europe or related to Europe in any historical period. We encourage interdisciplinary, interreligious, and comparative approaches to the topic. For the 2016 meeting we especially seek proposals related to one or more of the following themes:

- radicalization and extremism surrounding European religious ideals, including topics such as generational differences in Islamist extremism; the intersection of religion and right-wing movements, including forms of neo-national-socialist or nationalist extremism; and the radicalization or sacralization of civic values such as laïcité, tolerance, and liberty;

- the effect of migration on the dynamics of religious diversity in Europe, including--but not limited to--such themes as the Syrian refugee crisis; the role of religion in forced migration; the permeability of European borders; the work of churches, mosques, and other religious organizations in settling refugees; the intersection of gender and religion in the settling of refugees; and the (in)visibility of Islam in Europe (co-sponsored with the Religion and Migration Group);

- the content of curricula and the nature of religion-, religious-, or no-teaching of religion in different European countries, including--but not limited to--the relation of teaching religion in public education to civic formation and countering biases and radicalization; since the way religion is taught (or not taught) can be viewed as a litmus test for state-church-society relations, we would especially like papers that take the historical and political context into account (co-sponsored with the Religion and Public Schools: International Perspectives Group);

- on the occasion of the 800th anniversary of the approval of the Dominican order, we invite papers and/or panels that explore Dominican history, particularly in relation to the Dominicans’ “other,” whether antagonists or objects of mission (e.g., Albigensians, Muslims, Jews, Protestants, Mesoamericans, etc.), in comparative and transatlantic perspective (co-sponsored with the History of Christianity Section);

- the religious significance of places of memory in Europe (co-sponsored with the Space, Place, and Religion Group).

Mission Statement:
This Group is designed to serve as a forum for the examination of religious issues related to the social, cultural, and political development of Europe. Its guiding principles include a commitment to scholarly dialogue across disciplines, a comparative spirit sensitive to Europe’s religious diversity, and a transhistorical appreciation of the full trajectory of the European experience.

Anonymity:
Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection.
Religion in Latin America and the Caribbean Group

Call Text:
RILAC panel: Religion and Immigration: Particularly in light of the 2016 U.S. Presidential election, we seek papers which address how Latin American and Caribbean religious institutions and practices are performed by immigrants, as well as how religious institutions and practices are effected by, and seek to effect, political debates about immigration.

Co-Sponsored panel with Latino/a Critical and Comparative Studies Group: Religion on the Border: Religious practices and identities are increasingly transnational, even as geographic and national borders are locations of much debate. We seek papers which address religious practices which "cross boundaries," of whatever sort (physical, but also in terms of the re-combination of identities, be they national, ethnic, racial, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation) and research which itself crosses borders (of academic disciplines).

Mission Statement:
This Group explores the richness and diversity of religious traditions in Latin America, the complex and often explosive relations between religion and politics in the region, the centrality of religion in Latin American culture since pre-Conquest times, and the global significance of religious events and lived religion in Latin America. We provide a forum for scholars to address religion in Latin America and the Caribbean with special attention to their larger sociopolitical and cultural contexts. Diverse disciplinary and methodological perspectives are highlighted in presentation of this scholarship.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Schmidt, Jalane D., University of Virginia, jds7b@virginia.edu
Chair - Gonzalez Maldonado, Michelle, University of Miami, mmaldonado@miami.edu

Religion in Premodern Europe and the Mediterranean Group

Call Text:
This group brings together scholars working on premodern Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in order to create a venue where religious phenomena can be considered comparatively. We invite paper and panel proposals on all subjects related to religion in medieval and early modern Europe and the Mediterranean. Individual papers might (and usually do) focus on one specific tradition, but presenters should be interested in engaging this material comparatively during the discussion period. This year, we especially encourage papers that
explore interreligious conversion, as well as those consider the role of books and manuscripts in medieval and early modern religious cultures and/or the study of these cultures.

Mission Statement:
This Group provides a venue for scholars of premodern Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to examine questions of comparison and influence in a geographically and temporally defined context.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Catlos, Brian, University of Colorado at Boulder/U California Santa Cruz, brian.catlos@colorado.edu
Chair - Freidenreich, David, Colby College, dfreiden@colby.edu

Religion in South Asia Section

Call Text:
RISA is currently seeking submissions for the 2016 AAR meeting. RISA’s mission is to provide a venue for new research in the many religious cultures, texts, and histories of South Asia. We have a strong preference for papers sessions (not roundtables) as well as sessions in which the papers cover a range of traditions, regions, and languages of South Asia. The theme for the 2016 AAR is Revolutionary Love, so panels related to this theme are also encouraged. The deadline for submissions via the AAR’s PAPERS system is 5:00 pm US Eastern Time, on Tuesday, March 1st.

RISA only accepts prearranged paper sessions (consisting of 3 or 4 papers on a single theme). A standard AAR session has 6 participants: 4 paper presenters, a discussant or respondent, and a presider (150 minutes total). Current AAR policy mandates that one of RISA’s allotted sessions be a shorter session of 5 participants, typically consisting of 3 paper presenters, a discussant, and a presider (90 minutes total). Please specify your preferred format in your submission. If you are looking for others to organize a papers session, please feel free to reach out to colleagues on the RISA listserv, or to contact the RISA co-chairs for assistance. The current co-chairs are Carla Bellamy (Carla.Bellamy@baruch.cuny.edu) and Andrea Pinkney (Andrea.Pinkney@McGill.ca).

The one exception to RISA’s preference for prearranged sessions is the New Directions in South Asian Religion panel, a 150-minute session dedicated to emerging scholarship. The RISA steering committee will select four papers for inclusion in this panel. For this panel, RISA will only consider INDIVIDUAL paper submissions. Applicants for this panel must never have presented at the national AAR meeting. Proposals for this panel should explicitly state that they are being submitted for the New Directions panel and, in addition to uploading the usual title, abstract, and paper description to the PAPERS system, applicants should email the title and abstract of their paper to RISA steering committee member Dr. Harshita Kamath at hkamath@middlebury.edu by the March 1st deadline. If you have any questions about this panel, please contact Dr. Kamath at hkamath@middlebury.edu.

Some themes already identified as potential papers sessions are listed below. Please contact the session organizers for more details:
• Interpreting South Asian Art: New Directions
  Karen Pechilis at kpechili@drew.edu

• Religion and Ecology in South Asia
  Elaine Fisher at emfisher@wisc.edu

• Affect and Emotion in South Asian Religion
  Daniel Heifetz at dpcheifer@gmail.com

• Death and the Afterlife in South Asian Traditions
  Amy Allocco at aallocco@elon.edu

• Elder Care and Alternate Spaces for Caring for Aged Persons
  Liz Wilson at wilsone@miamioh.edu

• Religion and Play
  Gopal Gupta at ggupta@fgcu.edu

• Doctors, Saints and Dalits: Rethinking Gandhi and Ambedkar after Arundhati Roy
  Timothy Dobe at dobetimeo@grinell.edu

• When is Change Religious Change?
  Luke Whitmore at Luke.Whitmore@uwsp.edu

• Evangelism and Violence in South Asia
  Chad Bauman at cbaum@butler.edu

• Garland of Forgotten Goddesses: Toward a Sourcebook of Fierce Indic Goddess Myths, Visual Forms,
  and Hymns of Praise (textual and oral traditions)
  Michael Slouber at Michael.slouber@wwu.edu

Mission Statement:
This Section’s mission is to provide a venue for new and important research in the many religious cultures,
texts, and histories of South Asia. Within the area of South Asia, all world religions exist in unique forms, from
religions that originated in India — such as Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Tantra, and tribal religions
— to religions that have taken on longstanding and distinctive forms in South Asia — such as Islam, Judaism,
Christianity, and Zoroastrianism. The focus of our work is thus on a geographical area, the religious, cultural,
and intellectual traditions of that area, and changes that have occurred in those traditions over several
millennia. Scholars of South Asia explore the distinctive manifestations of religious traditions in the
subcontinent, their interactions, and their movements to and expressions in other parts of the world. This
Section encourages contextualizing religion within debates on a broad array of parallel and intersecting
issues, such as (but not limited to) politics, secularism, literature, philology, globalization, modernity,
colonialism and postcolonialism, history, society, media, popular culture, material and visual culture, and
economics. Our scholarship often emphasizes sessions and papers that look at more than one tradition and
thus frequently entail some degree of comparative approach. Our Website is www.montclair.edu/RISA. We
also have a listserv, which is essential to the work of our Section. Information on joining the listserv can be
found on our Website.
Anonymity:
Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Bellamy, Carla, City University of New York, carlabellamy@gmail.com
Chair - Pinkney, Andrea Marion, McGill University, andrea.pinkney@mcgill.ca

Religion in Southeast Asia Group

Call Text:
The Religion in Southeast Asia Group invites proposals for individual papers, paper sessions, and round tables. To facilitate discussion, we are particularly interested in panels with papers posted online to the AAR website prior to the conference. (This is one of the options you'll be offered in submitting your panel proposal.)

Topics of special interest include:

• Religion and the state: Conflict and collaboration
• Language and translation in the study of SE Asian religions
• The moral efficacy of objects
• Ghost stories
• Religion and the environment
• Teaching Southeast Asian religions: best methods
• Religion and diplomacy

Proposals may also be submitted on any other subject relating to religion in Southeast Asia.

Mission Statement:
Situated at the nexus of several civilizational influences — including Indian, Chinese, and Middle Eastern — Southeast Asia, as a region, remains understudied in terms of its relevance to the theoretical and methodological study of religion. This neglect is in part due to the tendency to reduce Southeast Asian religious systems to the named “world religions” often identified with other regions. As a result, indigenous practices are not viewed in terms of their conceptual and other linkages — and in some cases the dynamic interactions between those practices and the religious practices brought over by different classes of immigrants are frequently overlooked. However, and especially in the last fifteen years, exciting materials addressing different religious cultures in Southeast Asia have emerged. Hitherto, there has been little scholarly conversation at the AAR on Southeast Asia. And, perhaps even less commonly, are Southeast Asian religious cultures (e.g., Buddhist, Islamic, Christian, Hindu, “animist,” Chinese, and Pacific) put into
conversation with one another. In light of this need in the field, we strive to provide a context for this conversation as well as to foster critical thinking about Southeast Asia as a region.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Fox, Richard, Universität Heidelberg, rfox@eth.uni-heidelberg.de
Chair - Angeles, Vivienne, La Salle University, angeles@lasalle.edu

Religion in the American West Group

Call Text:
Migration in the American West: Settling, Populating, Transplanting, Displacing, Moving, Claiming, and Leaving

The American West is an imagined place that is often idealized as new, dynamic, a tabula rasa ripe with possibility. Or, it is the destination of the down and out, the economic migrant and immigrant, the last chance. Or, it is the ancient home of native peoples as well as Spanish haciendas and missions. Finally, perhaps it is also where people depart from, a point of disembarkation to other regions, other lands, carrying with them some ineffable sense of being “Western.” Early histories of the West focused on pioneers and settlement as well on displacement while more contemporary analyses of the West address issues of cultural contact, environmental concerns, transnational flows, and economic growth.

Drawing on this ideational context of mobility, we solicit paper and panel proposals on the myriad intersections of religion with migration into and out of the American West. How have religious homes been made in the West? How have westerners brought their religions with them when they leave the region? How have racial, ethnic, gender, and religious identities been co-constituted in this space of continual migratory cultural flows?

We are interested in all patterns of religion and migration, and also are particularly interested in papers contributing to a co-sponsored session with the Native Traditions in the Americas, on indigenous pilgrimages, forced migrations, and commemorative rides in the Western United States.

Please note that the format for the session will feature pre-circulated papers as is the long custom of this group.

Reimagining or Reclaiming Home: Pilgrimages, Forced Migrations, and Commemorative Rides, as related to the western United States. This topic is for a possible co-sponsored session with the Native Traditions in the Americas.

Mission Statement:
The Religion in the American West Group is a forum for graduate students, independent scholars, and faculty who situate their work regionally in the North American West, broadly conceived. The study of religion in this
region allows scholars to use a broad array of methodologies (historical, anthropological, literary, sociological, and others) to explore the most pressing questions in the field of American religion and in Religious Studies more generally. These include, but are not limited to: the history of empire and colonialism; the connections between religion and violence; the construction and deployment of racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual identities; transnational movement of people and ideas; religion and the natural and built environments; myth-making and its role in the construction and critique of nationalist ideologies; and the development of the category of religion. The purpose of this subfield is not to remain in the American West, to define the West, or to argue that religion in the West is unique. Instead, by situating scholarship regionally, scholars of the American West are able to develop theories and methods that can be useful interpretive lenses for other regions defined by land, transnationalism, migrations, diversity, and colonialism. Moreover, the Group supports the development of a rigorous intellectual community by pre-circulating papers in advance of the national meeting and maintaining a blog.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Denison, Brandi, University of North Florida, b.denison@unf.edu
Chair - Hendrickson, Brett, Lafayette College, hendribr@lafayette.edu

Religion, Affect, and Emotion Group

Call Text:
We consider paper proposals on the theoretical and practical intersections of religion, affect, and emotion, with particular interest in the following themes, and with particular encouragement to submit proposals that engage the 2016 AAR theme, Revolutionary Love.

- Affective approaches to race, migration, and mass incarceration, including questions about borders, surveillance, media images of refugees, police brutality, and solitary confinement.
- Affect, religion, and literature, possibly with a focus on the work of James Baldwin or Claudia Rankine.
- The "transmission of affect" as applied to politics. Moving beyond rhetorical analysis. How to use and resist affect in the public sphere.
- The convergence of love and the political. Assessing and resisting politics of rage.
- The question of form: what formal and genre decisions help us to analyze affect in scholarly work? How are intelligibility and unintelligibility deployed in work on affect?
- Affect and Emotion in South Asian Religion: for a possible co-sponsored session with the Religion in South Asia Section, papers exploring the application of recent theoretical discussions about affect.
and emotion to the study of religion in South Asia. Contact: Daniel Heifetz at dpcheifer@gmail.com


Mission Statement:
This Group provides space for theoretically-informed discussion of the relationship between religion, affect, and emotion. The Group serves as a meeting point for conversations on the affective, noncognitive, and passional dimensions of religion coming from diverse fields, including anthropology, comparative religion, psychology, decolonial theory, gender and sexuality studies, cultural studies, philosophy, and theology. Proposals drawing on these theoretical resources to examine specific religious traditions, shifting historical understandings of religion and affect/emotion, comparative work that looks at affective forms across traditions, and broader theoretical reflections are all welcome.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Hamner, M. Gail, Syracuse University, mghamner@syr.edu
Chair - Schaefer, Donovan, University of Oxford, donovan.schaefer@theology.ox.ac.uk

Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Group

Call Text:
We welcome all individual and panel proposals that engage postcolonial perspectives in the study of religion. In addition, we are interested in three specific topics for the 2016 annual meeting:

- proposals that draw on, speak to, or critique modernity. Proposals may explore theories of modernity, alternative modernities, or multiple modernities. Considerations include, but are not limited to, the relationship between colonialism and modernity, decoloniality and being modern, the nexus of secularism, neoliberalism and modernity.

- proposals that address the concepts of postcoloniality or decoloniality. We are especially interested in work that addresses material attempts to reconcile or repair colonial violence in the form of reconciliation, reparations, etc.

- For a co-sponsorship between Indigenous Religious Traditions, Religion, Film and Visual Culture, and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism, we invite paper or panel proposals that that engage film or visual culture (including new social media) in postcolonial and/or post-revolutionary contexts, including the representation of indigenous traditions in film and other forms of visual culture. Some possible sites for exploration include, but are not limited to, religion and visual culture in Africa, East Asia, and South Asia or current issues dealing with indigenous religiosity in colonial settings such as Australasia and the Americas. Such analyses might consider such topics as visual sovereignty, gender and sexuality, self-representations, and settler colonialism.
Mission Statement:
This Group presents an opportunity for scholars in various subfields of religious studies to explore a topic whose relevance cuts across specializations. We bring together scholars treating different time periods, geographical regions, and traditions in working to strengthen our field’s role in the study of empire, colonialism, and postcolonialism.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Foody, Kathleen, College of Charleston, foodykm@cofc.edu
Chair - Hussain, Syed Adnan, St Marys University, syedadnan.hussain@smu.ca

Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group

Call Text:
We invite individual and pre-arranged panel proposals on the following Themes and Topics for 2016:

- Revolutionary Maternal Love: Blending the 2016 AAR Presidential Theme of Revolutionary Love with a lens on maternal love as it is depicted in film and visual culture, we seek proposals that not only explore this theme visually but also incorporate historical, theological, feminist, or film theory.

- A tri-sponsorship between Indigenous Religious Traditions, Religion, Film and Visual Culture, and Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism: We invite paper or panel proposals that engage film or visual culture (including new social media) in postcolonial and/or post-revolutionary contexts, including the representation of Indigenous traditions in film and other forms of visual culture. Some possible sites for exploration include, but are not limited to, religion and visual culture in Africa, East Asia, and South and Southeast Asia, or current issues dealing with Indigenous religiosity in colonial settings such as Australasia and the Americas. Such analyses might consider such topics as visual sovereignty, gender and sexuality, self-representations, postcolonial syncretism, and settler colonialism.

- Star Wars Fandom and Mythos in Today's World: We encourage proposals that include considerations of generational differences, social media, marketing, race, gender, and how The Force Awakens is developing this unique myth and fan culture.

- Auteur Session: Philosophy and Religion in the Films of Richard Linklater: Native Texan Richard Linklater has been feted for his unique style and independent filmmaking. We invite analyses that consider how religion, philosophy, and/or various directors (e.g., Andrei Tarkovsky, Robert Bresson, Roberto Rossellini, and Carl Theodor Dreyer) inform his writing and cinematic style.

- Filmic Critique of the Catholic Church: Several recent films have tackled the difficult subject of the Catholic Church’s sexual abuse scandal. Proposals for this topic may reflect on how films such as Spotlight and The Club (and others) advance the discussion.
We strongly encourage the use of visual media in academic presentations and ask that all proposals include some form of the visual. We also request, along with the AAR, that presenters strive to synthesize their main points and communicate them clearly, moving away from a formal and dry reading of academic papers. We endeavor to create more creative and dialogical sessions at the annual meetings.

Mission Statement:
This Group offers a forum for theory and methodology of the visual for those interested in the interdisciplinary study of religion, film, and visual culture. There is no single way to study religion and the visual, and we expect scholars to provide new perspectives on the way we understand visual culture and to provide this understanding through traditional and emerging methodologies.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Derry, Ken, University of Toronto, ken.derry@utoronto.ca
Chair - Reedy Solano, Jeanette, California State University, Fullerton, jsolano@fullerton.edu

Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Group

Call Text:
We are seeking individual paper and panel proposals on the following topics:

- The refugee crisis past and present, co-sponsored with the Liberation Theologies group, comparing the resonance or dissonance between the 1930s-1940s and the current refugee situation, and examining treatment of refugees and the discourses (e.g. political, social, religious or economic) that surround them.

- The global legacy of colonialism and genocide of native and indigenous peoples, including how indigenous peoples themselves are calling for religious rights or practicing performative spiritual resistance, in light of The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s (2015) call to “all religious denominations and faith groups who have not already done so to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius,” co-sponsored with the Indigenous Religious Traditions Group.

- The use of Holocaust imagery in relation to the treatment of non-human animals, co-sponsored with the Animals and Religion Group.

Paper and panel proposals on other topics are also welcome.

Mission Statement:
This Group provides an academic forum to integrate the analysis of the Holocaust with past and ongoing problems of genocide around the globe. It asks critical questions about the implications of these histories and
their legacies for the study of religion, building on Jewish and Christian theological, literary, ethical, ritual, and philosophical responses to the Holocaust, and opening conversations with responses to genocide from other communities, such as Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, and Indigenous peoples.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Vincent, Alana, University of Chester, alana.vincent@gmail.com
Chair - Pinnock, Sarah K., Trinity University, sarah.pinnock@trinity.edu

Religion, Media, and Culture Group

Call Text:
This group invites individual presentations, paper/multimedia research presentation sessions, and roundtable proposals on the following themes:

- Media, Secularity/Non-religion, and the Performance of Secularities (possible co-sponsorship with Secularism and Secularity Group)
- Religion in digital spaces
- Religion, Data Mining, Digital Capitalism and/or Surveillance and Drones
- Academics in New Media and Public Engagement in Non-Traditional Forums
- Media, Gender, Legislated Morality, and Public Policy in Texas (possible co-sponsorship)
- Animals as Media, Religion, and Affect (Internet cat videos/Twitter cats and cats memes as religio-political expression and/or critique [e.g., Brussels Twitter cats]; virtualized animals in commercial media displays and the impact on animal conservation [e.g., virtual whales/dolphins replacing wild animals at Sea World, etc.]; and epistemologies of animal media representations). (possible co-sponsorship)

We are particularly interested in session proposals and presentations that break from traditional paper-reading formats and encourage panels that propose innovative ways to develop collaborative conversation. Hint for proposals to our unit: When discussing media, actually use media. Make your use of media clear in your proposal, please. We discourage read papers not accompanied by some sort of audio/visual assistance in communicating scholarly material to the audience.

Mission Statement:
This Group provides a multidisciplinary forum for exploring the intersections between media and religion. Areas of interest include the participation of religion in digital culture, mediation of religion, the interplay
between religious and media communities and between religious and media practices, and the significance of both media and religion in the transformation of religious structures and practices.

Anonymity:
Other (please explain below)

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Taylor, Sarah McFarland, Northwestern University, sarah@northwestern.edu

Chair - Aghapour, Andrew, University of North Carolina, andrewaghapour@gmail.com

Religion, Memory, History Group

Call Text:
We are especially interested this year in the ways that memories are mobilized in relation to refugees, migration, race, and religion. What histories and memories are being harnessed, and how, in contemporary discourse around refugee crises? How do nostalgia and perceived loss affect representations of race and religion?

Our second theme this year questions the ephemerality of changing technologies, including but not limited to social media platforms. How do new technologies of memory alter the ways they are harnessed, preserved, and erased? How do various media transform the consumption and circulation of memory?
We seek to include a broad array of religious traditions, historical periods, and theoretical and methodological approaches.

Mission Statement:
This Group explores the construction of narratives of the past as memory and history in relation to religious practices, ideologies, and subjectivities. The role of memory and history in the formation of religious subjectivities calls for examination within a comparative context, to allow for an intercultural and interdisciplinary exploration of its forms and contexts, and to provide engagement with theoretical and methodological concerns across traditions.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Hassan, Mona, Duke University, mona.hassan@duke.edu

Chair - Eichler-Levine, Jodi, Lehigh University, jeichlerlevine@lehigh.edu

Religion, Sport, and Play Group

Call Text:
The Religion, Sport, and Play Group invite proposals for two 90 minute sessions on rivalry and race.

The first panel will address the religious contexts and implications of rivalry. Potential lines of inquiry might locate and contextualize religion as it relates to questions such as: How do the emotions of love and hate bind together certain people and groups in opposition to others? What role do corporations play in instigating rivalries? Who benefits (monetarily, politically, spiritually, etc.) from rivalries, both on and off the field? How does social position inflect the language of rivalry? What do rivalries reveal and conceal about the communities that develop and sustain them?

The second panel will specifically focus on race in sport/play rivalries. Potential lines of inquiry might locate and contextualize religion as it relates to questions such as: Does sport/play challenge and/or reinforce the racial status quo? In what ways do the racialized bodies of athletes produce and/or sanctify particular gendered and sexual identities? How are black, brown, and white bodies narrated differently in media coverage, and what are the social implications of these differences? How and when has sport/play influenced social justice movements? What does the racial future of higher education look like in light of current events at the University of Missouri and elsewhere?

Successful proposals for both sessions will employ historical or contemporary cases and draw on a range of disciplinary perspectives and diverse religious traditions. Papers will be pre-circulated.

Mission Statement:
This Group provides an opportunity for scholars to engage in the emerging research at the intersection of religion and sport, games, and play. We are interested in examining these topics across broad geographical areas, religious traditions, and historical eras. We encourage critical reflection regarding relationships of religious institutions to sport, play, and games; theological and spiritual experiences of participants and spectators invested in these activities; and the cross-cultural applicability of the received categories.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Remillard, Arthur, Saint Francis University, aremillard@francis.edu
Chair - Blazer, Annie, College of William and Mary, annie.blazer@gmail.com

Religions in Chinese and Indian Cultures: A Comparative Perspective Group

Call Text:
Given the scholarly challenge of dealing with both Chinese and Indian materials in a specialized academic environment, we no longer require proposals to explicitly compare the two sides and will allow the comparative dimension to emerge organically during the discussion among the panelists. For this year’s panel, we will consider any proposal that can lead to fruitful explorations on India-China connections, especially proposals for fully formed panels on one of the following topics:
• Afterlife in Chinese and Indian religions
• Saints and Sainthood in Chinese and Indian traditions
• Maritime silk road

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

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Ram-Prasad, Chakravarthi, Lancaster University, c.ram-prasad@lancaster.ac.uk
Chair - Lusthaus, Dan, Harvard University, lusthaus@fas.harvard.edu

Religions, Medicines, and Healing Group

Call Text:
The Religions, Medicines, and Healing group welcomes proposals that explore specific intersections of religious and healing traditions and practices. We ask that proposals address the socio-political context of the topic, as well as theoretical and analytical framework(s). Our group is also experimenting with posting full papers online before the meeting, with brief presentations, responses and open discussions at one or more of our sessions.

The group is particularly interested in reviewing proposals on the following themes for the upcoming year:

• Case studies reflecting critical engagement with Revolutionary Love (AAR theme) as religiously-informed/inspired healing in communities responding to violence against non-white bodies (police violence, mass shootings, terrorism, bombing campaigns) and the struggle for racial justice and healing.
• Methodological and theoretical approaches to the Globalization of Traditional Medicines, with analyses that are historically, socially, culturally, and politically contextualized.

• Reflection on pedagogical strategies for teaching about religions and healing in public health, medical school, and nursing school curricula in ways that reflect religious studies concerns.

• Critical analysis of definitions of spirituality in the framework of healthcare, medicines, and healing, paired with constructive proposals that avoid reductionism, attend to diverse cultural contexts, and qualitatively enhance quantitative analyses in medical and public health contexts

• PTSD and healing of Veterans and/or Refugees from War

• Healing processes of Tantra and Yoga traditions

Mission Statement:
The study of religions, medicines, and healing is a growing field within religious studies that draws on the disciplines and scholarship of history, anthropology (particularly medical anthropology), phenomenology, psychology, sociology, ethnic studies, ritual studies, gender studies, theology, political and economic theory, public health, bioscientific epidemiology, history of science, comparative religion, and other interdisciplinary approaches to interpret meanings assigned to illness, affliction, and suffering; healing, health, and well-being; healing systems and traditions, their interactions, and the factors that influence them; and related topics and issues. As a broad area of inquiry, this field incorporates diverse theoretical orientations and methodological strategies in order to develop theories and methods specific to the study of illness, health, healing, and associated social relations from religious studies perspectives. Although religious texts serve as important resources in this endeavor, so do the many approaches to the study of lived religion, religious embodiment and material culture, and popular expressions of religiosity. Finally, like its sister field of medical anthropology, the field of religions, medicines, and healing encourages examination of how affliction and healing affect social bodies through fractured identities, political divides, structural violence, and colonialism. We support the work of graduate students, religion scholars, scholar-activists, and scholars in allied fields. We promote collaboration with other interdisciplinary Program Units and those focused on particular traditions and/or regions.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Wu, Emily, Dominican University of California, emily.wu@dominican.edu

Chair - Laird, Lance D., Boston University, laird@bu.edu

Religions, Social Conflict, and Peace Group

Call Text:
This group welcomes individual papers and paper session proposals (presider, 3-4 papers, and respondent) on intersections of religion with violence, social conflict, and peace. For the 2016 Annual Meeting, we are particularly interested in proposals that address the following topics and intersections:
• the politics of grieving and public rituals of mourning
• the role of religion in prisons and detention centers in a variety of global contexts
• multi-cultural and multi-religious neighborhoods as a lab for understanding conflict and peacebuilding
• religion, conflict, peacebuilding, and climate justice
• religion, conflict, peacebuilding, and displacement

For a possible co-sponsored session with the International Development and Religion Group: we seek papers that explore the challenges and/or opportunities presented by the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals through the intersection of peacebuilding, development studies and religious studies.

For a possible co-sponsored session with the Moral Injury and Recovery in Religion, Society, and Culture Group: we seek papers that address the traumatic implications of the militarization of society and the role of religion in resistance and recovery.

Mission Statement:
Relationships between religions and the causes and resolution of social conflict are complex. On the one hand, religion is a major source of discord in our world, but on the other, religious agents have often played a central role in developing and encouraging nonviolent means of conflict resolution and sustainable peace. While religion as a factor in conflicts is often misunderstood by military and political leaders, it is also the case that the popular call for an end to injustice is quite often a religious voice. We seek to add a critical dimension to the understanding of how religion influences and resolves social conflict. We want to develop and expand the traditional categories of moral reflection and response to war and also to investigate kindred conflicts — terrorism, humanitarian armed intervention, cultural and governmental repression, ecological degradation, and all of the factors that inhibit human flourishing. We also hope to encourage theoretical and practical reflection on religious peace-building by examining the discourses, practices, and community and institutional structures that promote just peace. Through our work, we hope to promote understanding of the relationships between social conflict and religions in ways that are theoretically sophisticated and practically applicable in diverse cultural contexts.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Omer, Atalia, University of Notre Dame, aomer1@nd.edu
Chair - Marshall, Ellen Ott, Emory University, ellen.marshall@emory.edu

Religious Conversions Group

Call Text:
Individual paper or full paper/panel session proposals are welcome on any topic related to religious conversion, including, but not limited to the panel topics proposed at the 2015 business meeting (the person whose name is listed in parentheses has expressed an interest in organizing the panel). They are:

- Interdisciplinary approaches to conversion in Paul (possible co-sponsorship with SBL Pauline studies group/s; Athanasios Despotis, despotis@uni-bonn.de)
- Hybridity, multiple religious belonging, multiple religious practice (Linda Mercadante; LMercadante@mtso.edu)
- Interreligious Dialogue and/as Religious Conversion (Jesudas Athyal, jesudas@athyal.org)
- Forced conversion and migration (possible co-sponsorship with Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Group; Chad Bauman, cbauman@butler.edu)
- Reliability, Objectivity and Other Methodological Challenges in Conversion Studies (Srdjan Sremac; s.sremac@vu.nl)
- Global literature and conversion (Geomon George, geomon@cityseminaryny.org)
- Power and conversion (Geomon George, geomon@cityseminaryny.org)
- Conversion of women to Islam (Karla Evans, kn Evans@uga.edu)
- Conversion and cognitive science (possible co-sponsorship with Cognitive Science of Religion Group)
- Narratives of conversion: fictional, biographical, and autobiographical (John Barbour; barbourj@stolaf.edu)

Mission Statement:
This Group studies the full spectrum of issues related to religious conversions, in any historical or geographic context, encompassing different forms of religious belief and practice. The scope of the issues we cover is broad and wide-ranging. We consider investigations into the reasons for various types of religious conversions including, but not limited to intellectual, theological, philosophical, historical, experiential, psychological, social, cultural, political, and economic causes. We also study the consequences of religious conversions, both individually and socially, and their implications. We encourage the methodologies of multiple disciplines, as well as interdisciplinary approaches. More narrowly focused areas of inquiry suggested by interested scholars include, but are not limited to the following:

Multiple conversions

Group and individual conversions

Forced conversions

The narrative and/or literary aspects of conversions
Hybridity

Ecclesiological consequences of conversion

The place and role of conversion in a specific religious tradition

Theories of conversions

Formulas of religious conversion (as step-by-step processes)

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Pugliese, Marc, Saint Leo University, marcpug@gmail.com

Chair - Bauman, Chad, Butler University, cbauman@butler.edu

Ricoeur Group

Call Text:
Crossing Borders: Navigating Boundaries with Ricoeur
Border crossing is an apt metaphor for Ricoeur, who fluidly navigated multiple intellectual disciplines, social and political contexts, historical periods, as well as important thinkers, texts, and movements. We invite paper proposals on the following topics as well as other topics that relate to the historical, constructive, and critical study of the thought and works of Paul Ricoeur applied to religious studies.

- Engagements with *On Translation*. This slim volume offers a conceptually rich treatment of “translation,” the shuttling of meaning from one linguistic context to another. We seek paper proposals that critically evaluate and appropriate Ricoeur’s view of translation for religious studies. Special consideration will be given to proposals that address any of the following questions: How does translation relate to other key themes in Ricoeur’s work (history and culture, hospitality of language, ethics of recognition, ambiguity of memory, etc.)? Is translation applicable to extralinguistic contexts, where meaning must cross religious, social, disciplinary, and other kinds of cultural borders? For example, how might translation help us connect theory with practice, religious with political discourse, or the hermeneutical practices of different traditions or communities?

- Kearney and Ricoeur. Richard Kearney has long been an effective interpreter, translator, and constructive expander of Ricoeur’s work for religious studies. We seek paper proposals that address Kearney’s work, especially with respect to how he appropriated Ricoeur. What did Kearney keep, drop, modify, or embellish in this appropriation? What is the enduring value of Kearney’s work for religious studies, either in relation to his use of Ricoeur or on its own merits?

- Ricoeur and Context. We seek paper proposals that put Ricoeur into dialogue with contextual interpretation and theology. How might resources from Ricoeur’s work (e.g. hermeneutics, narrative,
tradition, translation, memory, embodiment) assist, complicate, or prohibit the methods, themes, or contents of contemporary contextual biblical interpretation and/or contextual theologies? Conversely, how might Ricoeur's ideas be supported, complemented, or corrected by contextual approaches? Proposals will be considered for a co-sponsored session with the SBL Contextual Biblical Interpretation Group.

- A Tale of Two Pauls. Paul Ricoeur and Paul Tillich were both European transplants that taught at the University of Chicago, although at different times. We seek paper proposals bringing together the work of these two thinkers. Special consideration will be given to proposals that address any of the following questions. Is there evidence that Ricoeur was influenced by the work of Tillich, and if so where and how? How might we compare and contrast the influence of Mircea Eliade (a colleague of both at Chicago) in the work of Ricoeur and the late essays of Tillich? In light of their respective methods for crossing borders between theology and philosophy, what is the continued relevance of their approaches for contemporary work in philosophical theology and/or philosophy of religion? Proposals will be considered for a co-sponsored session with the North American Paul Tillich Society.

Mission Statement:
The purpose of this Group is to promote the work of Paul Ricoeur within the broad fields of theology and religious studies. We believe that Paul Ricoeur, as a dialogue partner, has continued relevance to the manifold disciplines that constitute the AAR. Yet more than a group dedicated to the study of a particular scholar’s work — as a form of academic fandom — this Group seeks to build up and creatively utilize Ricoeur’s work in a way that enriches a wide range of theological and religious subdisciplines.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Sohn, Michael, Cleveland State University, mikedwsohn@gmail.com
Chair - Reynhout, Kenneth A., Bethel Seminary, kenneth.reynhout@gmail.com

Ritual Studies Group

Call Text:
The Ritual Studies Group encourages submissions from scholars whose research focuses on the study of ritual and from scholars keen to develop theoretical sophistication in ritual studies. Although we are open to reviewing all proposals that contribute positively to the academic study of ritual, this year we are looking for papers and panels addressing the following topics:

- Revisiting Classical Theories of Ritual: We welcome proposals which revisit and examine the contemporary significance of classical theories and theorists. In particular, we would like to revisit the themes of sacrifice and symbol or to specifically address the significance of the Manchester School of Anthropology and/or the role of Africa in the development of ritual studies.

- The Eucharist as Revolutionary Love Feast: In alignment with the theme of revolutionary love, we seek proposals from critical scholars, theologians, liturgical scholars, and biblical scholars that use a ritual studies lens to explore the transgressive/revolutionary nature of historical and current ritual
practices, potentially for a cosponsored session with the SBL Ritual in the Bible Group.

- Reflexivity in Ritual: We are looking for proposals which take up issues of either (or both) ritual as a reflexive space or reflexivity in the context of theories of ritual. As a related issue, we are also seeking proposals examining the engagement of ritual in educational spaces, most especially as these proposals on educational spaces might contribute to a cosponsored session with the Interreligious and Interfaith Studies Group.

- Dance, Movement, and Sound: We hope to consider proposals that examine both movement and sound within the context of ritual performances and ritual spaces.

- Rituals of Hate: Finally, we are interested in proposals which take up contemporary issues related to ritual and the ritual studies, such as the examination of rituals and violence and rituals of hate and aggression or the relationship between secular and religious dimensions in ritual.

- Engaging ritual in the classroom: (co-sponsored with the Interreligious and Interfaith Studies Group) How do site-visits and sharing in communal practice/worship expand or challenge the theory and pedagogy of interreligious studies? What is at stake for hosts and guests? How do we define success and failure in the domain of “inter-riting”? We welcome proposals that incorporate alternative pedagogies of presentation.

We are interested in both individual paper proposals and proposals for full panels. Panel proposals should include full proposals for individual papers. Contributors will be asked to submit their papers in advance of the meeting to be available to attendees, and to present a short summary instead of a full paper at the meeting. Proposals that do not substantively engage with broader theoretical issues in the study of ritual are unlikely to be considered.

Mission Statement:
This Group provides a unique venue for the interdisciplinary exploration of ritual — broadly understood to include rites, ceremonies, religious and secular performances, and other ritual processes — in their many and varied contexts, and from a range of theoretical and methodological perspectives. To learn more about this Group, visit our Website at http://www.ritualstudies.org.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Potts, Grant H., Austin Community College, gspot@austincc.edu
Chair - Kreinath, Jens, Wichita State University, jens.kreinath@gmail.com

Roman Catholic Studies Group

Call Text:
The Roman Catholic Studies Group invites submissions on diverse subjects in Catholic Studies but especially on the following topics:
• Dissent: We invite papers on historical and contemporary forms of dissent within and against the Roman Catholic Church. What constitutes “faithful” dissent? What are the goals, methods, and results of dissent? How does the episcopal hierarchy react to dissent? Must dissent take the form of radical protest, or are there less purposely antagonistic ways in which reform is sought? How does the practice of dissent change if we consider the ethnicity, race, class, gender, and sexuality of the dissenter?

• Ex/Former Catholics: According to a Pew survey, Catholicism in the United States loses more members than it gains at a higher rate than any other denomination. A similar phenomenon has already affected much of Europe. We invite papers on this growing body of Catholics who no longer claim connection to the Church? What is the experience of Catholicism or other religions for those who no longer affiliate with the institutional church? What are the reasons for people leaving the church? What does it even mean to “leave” Catholicism? Are there metaphors and frames of analysis beyond the architecture of “staying or leaving” that provide insight into the experience of Catholics struggling with identifications with the tradition?

• Modern Sainthood: With Mother Teresa rumored to be canonized in 2016 and in light of recent high-profile (and sometimes controversial) canonizations, we invite papers on what it means to be a “saint” today. How has the institutional church’s attitude toward sainthood changed over the last few centuries? From the local parish to the Vatican, what are the politics of canonization? Are there non-canonical efforts to identify Catholics as saints?

• Missions: With San Antonio, Texas, as the site of the annual meeting, we are reminded of the legacy of Catholic missions in the Americas and around the world. We invite papers that address the historical, anthropological, and theological ramifications of Catholic missionary initiatives on a global scale, both past and present. What does it mean to be a Catholic missionary today and how does this compare to earlier periods? What does it mean to be the target of missionary enterprises and what are some of the ethical concerns of missionary work?

• We are especially interested in proposals that are attentive to the ways in which history and theology relate to one another within the field of Roman Catholic studies. Co-chairs are happy to consult with individuals who are developing individual papers, paper sessions, or roundtable proposals to answer questions, discuss ideas, and help shape final submissions.

• Additionally, in a pre-arranged session on Christian approaches to deification, invited panelists will speak from within their own traditions on what it means to “become like God” and the practices that have emerged in light of the belief in divine-human communion. If you think you might be an appropriate panelist on this topic, please contact the co-chairs.

Mission Statement:
This Group provides a scholarly forum to study the global Roman Catholic community. Consequently, we welcome critical studies, cultural, ethical, historical, and theological perspectives. We seek to mirror the subject community’s diversity in pursuing equally diverse methods to study that community.

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

Method of submission:
Sacred Texts and Ethics Group

Call Text:
The Sacred Texts and Ethics Group invites proposals from scholars and/or activists that closely analyze the use of sacred and foundational religious texts, including commentaries, in ethical or political discourse (either contemporary or historical). We welcome individual papers and panel proposals from all religious traditions and methodologies, including constructive ethical reflection with a textual basis.

Proposals on all topics are welcome. We are particularly interested in the following questions:

- Sacred texts and refugees
- Texts in exile. How are sacred texts read in exilic or diasporic communities? What texts, passages, and ethical themes come to the fore in exilic interpretations?
- Sacred texts and housing issues, either contemporarily or historically. This topic honors the 50th anniversary of the Chicago Freedom Movement led by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King.
- Reflections on the intersection between love as a theme in sacred texts and its employment as ethical norm in particular contexts. This topic speaks to the 2016 AAR Presidential Theme, Revolutionary Love.
- The relationship between different textual genres (narrative, legal, poetry, letters, etc.) and religious ethics

Mission Statement:
The Sacred Texts and Ethics Group invites scholars and activists across the disciplines to consider (or re-consider) the complex and enduring role of scriptural and foundational religious texts in the contemporary world as well as historically, and to theorize the roles these texts play in ethical reflection, lived religious practice, and political debate.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Filler, Emily, Earlham College, filleem@earlham.edu
Chair - Phillips, Elizabeth, Westcott House, erp31@cam.ac.uk
Sacred Texts, Theory, and Theological Construction Group

Call Text:
This year’s call for papers is exciting in its range and scope. We openly welcome and consider papers and panel proposals that fit within the mission and work of this group. We especially welcome papers working with (1) sacred texts and theological construction in the “Anthropocene,” (2) affect theory and the work of Ann Cvetovich, and (3) constructively with the work of Rene Girard (1923-2015).

- Sacred Texts and Revolutionary Love in the Anthropocene
  Inspired by AAR’s 2016 theme of Revolutionary Love, the Sacred Texts, Theory, and Theological Construction Group welcomes papers or panel proposals that address the theme, Sacred Texts and Revolutionary Love in the Anthropocene. Coined by Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer to describe the contemporary era of the planet pervasively altered and influenced by human activities, “Anthropocene” is a term gaining traction and criticism with contemporary thinkers in the environmental humanities, environmentalists, activists, and ecocritics.

  In the wake of anthropogenic climate change and theory for the “Anthropocene”:
  • What significance, insight, or complication does the term hold for contemporary constructive theology or biblical studies?
  • How might theologians or biblical scholars read or think with sacred texts for the sake of revolutionary love?
  • How do(es) our contemporary planetary context(s) shape the ways in which scholars read ancient or sacred texts?
  • What defines, inspires or creates “sacred texts” of revolutionary love for the Anthropocene?
  • How are ecologies or naturecultures sacred texts in and of themselves in the Anthropocene?

  Specific topics may include: climate refugeeism (human and nonhuman), art and protest, climate justice, environmental justice, postcolonial ecocricticism, environmental debt, boundaries of humanity and animality, interreligious or comparative theological proposals for climate justice, ecocritical hermeneutics, or any other proposals that wrestle with theories of the Anthropocene.

- Expanding the Archive: Elaborating the Work of Ann Cvetkovich
  This session, potentially co-sponsored with the Queer Studies in Religion Group, will be devoted to creative responses to and elaborations of Ann Cvetkovich’s two books, An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures and Depression: A Public Feeling (Duke University Press), which reads personally felt experiences as specific limns and qualitative impacts of social phenomena such as capitalism, histories of racism, and homophobia. We are particularly (but not exclusively) interested in papers that take up Cvetkovich’s work on racism and depression and migration/diaspora and trauma. Papers would ideally be specific interventions and applications of Cvetkovich’s work within the disciplines of theology or biblical studies, rather than simply broad consideration of the importance of her work for these disciplines.

  Papers for this session will be essay/article length pieces, circulated in advance, and then summarized in the session itself. These papers may then potentially be published in an edited volume through Palgrave Macmillan’s the Bible and Cultural Studies series, if generally suitable to the series and appealing to the panelists.

- Considering Apocalypses and Scapegoats: The Legacy of René Girard
  For a potential co-sponsored session with the Colloquium on Violence and Religion, we welcome
proposals across the disciplines that assess and think with the contributions of René Girard (1923-2015). From Violence and the Sacred to Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World to The Scapegoat and beyond, Girard’s writing about religion, violence, mimetic desire, sacrifice, and apocalypse indelibly marks religious studies and theology. We especially welcome papers and panel proposals that constructively evaluate Girard’s legacy and think in theologically new ways with Girard’s theory and writing:

- We welcome proposals that evaluate the future of Girard’s thought in reading sacred texts, on biblical studies and theology.
- We welcome proposals that think about specific sacred texts (broadly construed) with Girard’s writing.
- We welcome constructive theological proposals that think with Girard on themes like desire, violence, sacrifice, Christology, God, etc.
- We welcome proposals that place Girard’s work in conversation with contemporary liberation and postcolonial theology, feminist and queer theology, or contemporary ecological theologies.
- We welcome proposals that place Girard’s thought in conversation with AAR’s 2016 theme of revolutionary love.

Mission Statement:
This Group works with the unique intersection of sacred texts, contemporary theory, and theological construction. We call for papers engaged in contemporary constructive theology that think in innovative ways with sacred texts and contemporary biblical studies. We encourage dialogue between constructive theologians and biblical scholars from AAR and SBL, dealing with themes of interest to both academic disciplines in the wake of postmodernity. Topics range from theological hermeneutics to the value of theology, interrogations of our new theoretical contexts to constructive theological proposals, and from the use of sacred texts by contemporary theorists to the use of those contemporary theorists in constructive theology. This group encourages and is receptive to creative proposals that work at the intersection of biblical studies, contemporary philosophy, theory, and theology.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
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Chair - Erickson, Jacob, St. Olaf College, jacobjerickson@gmail.com

Schleiermacher Group

Call Text:
Schleiermacher Group Session:
The Schleiermacher group will host a session entitled, Networks of Becoming: Individuality, Intersubjectivity, Sociality, that explores Schleiermacher’s lifelong interest in the formation of individuals and social entities. We invite proposals that interpret and/or critique aspects of Schleiermacher’s views about individual/social formation. Specific topics could include (among others): relationships; friendships; ways of being in social relationships; the necessity of social relations; and relations and cultural institutions, such as church. A variety of approaches may be taken, including (but not limited to) a focus on hermeneutics; dialectics; or key
philosophical, natural scientific, and/or theological premises. We also welcome proposals that critically explore the implications of Schleiermacher’s views about individual/social formation for discussions current within religious studies and/or theology. Both individual papers and ‘paper session’ proposals will be considered.

Co-Sponsored Session:
In anticipation of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation (2017), the Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Group and the Schleiermacher Group will co-host a session that explores what it could and/or should mean to ‘reform’ today. We seek proposals that address the overall question by critically engaging either [1] a specific aspect of the ecclesial roles that Luther and/or Schleiermacher played, respectively, in spurring reformation or [2] a specific theological claim that Luther and/or Schleiermacher advanced.

While we will give special consideration to proposals that engage (to some extent) with both Luther and Schleiermacher, we also heartily welcome proposals that focus on one of the two figures. Above all, we prize proposals that articulate clearly how the presenter’s thesis (about either [1] an aspect of Luther’s and/or Schleiermacher’s ecclesial role, or [2] a specific theological claim from one or both figures) will address the session’s overall question about what it means to ‘reform’ today.

Though we are open to alternatives, we suggest the following ‘reformation’ themes:

- The role of confessional thought (historically, and in a post-confessional culture)
- Schleiermacher as an interpreter of Luther
- Church division and ecumenism
- How subaltern perspectives affect a Protestant ecclesiological commitment to reformata semper reformanda
- Faith and experience as theological categories
- Christian freedom and unity rooted in the Word of God
- The role of the spoken word in theology and/or ministry
- Hermeneutics, biblical and otherwise

Mission Statement:
This group promotes scholarship--from specialists and non-specialists alike--that critically engages the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834). We encourage historical, textual, and constructive analyses that open new lines of inquiry into Schleiermacher’s oeuvre and contribute to contemporary discussions in theology, religious studies, philosophy, ethics, and hermeneutics.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Poe, Shelli, Millsaps College, poe.shelli@gmail.com

Chair - Waggoner, Ed, Brite Divinity School, ed.waggoner@tcu.edu

Science, Technology, and Religion Group
Call Text:
The Religion, Science, and Technology Group seeks paper and panel proposals on the following themes:

- **Pedagogy of Religion and Science**
  What techniques, strategies, or assignments do you use in your classes on religion and science? Do you have a novel approach to the material? Which scientific topics, religious traditions, historical or philosophical points of view do you prioritize and why? Give there particular books, videos, and/or other resources that have worked well in your teaching? Given that this is a pedagogical panel, we especially encourage innovative presentation techniques.

- **In 2016 we will celebrate the 400th anniversary of the beginnings of the “Galileo Affair” and be on the cusp of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. With this historical moment upon us, we invite papers that look back to the ways that new technologies as well as scientific discoveries and ideas have influenced and even reshaped religion OR studies of contemporary issues that are informed by this history (e.g. the mutual influence of media technologies and religion).**

- **Esoteric Sciences and Mystical Technologies**
  The aim of this session is to focus on sciences at the edge of respectability, and to explore interesting areas of overlap between religious and scientific ideas. Astrology, for example, which has always been important to magical and esoteric thought, has been debunked as folly at least from the time of Augustine; but it has a technical component important in medical treatments all the way through the Early Modern period, and was a kind of normal sideline for sixteenth and seventeenth century scientists. Alchemy similarly links both to mystical and spiritual allegory and laboratory chemistry from antiquity to modernity. Telepathy and the early 20th century ideas about stratified consciousness are simultaneously part of the development of psychology and also of spiritualism and occultism; quantum mechanics has often inspired counter-cultural visions of reality. The 21st century has witnessed a resurgence of scientific research into entheogens and mystical experience, and the development of new technologies to promote altered states of consciousness. This session is meant to foster discussion about loci where science is used as a bridge, rather than foil, to esoteric knowledge and mystical experience. Papers will be precirculated. Co-sponsored with Western Esotericism Group and the Mysticism Group.

- **Religion, Technologies, and Violence:** examinations into technologies that facilitate religiously fueled violence, such as cyber-religious communities’ recruitment to commit violence or technologies that have been used in the experimention on prisoners (e.g., Nazi experiments, the Tuskegee experiments). Co-sponsorship with the Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Group.

- **We also welcome high-quality proposals or panels on other topics related to the group’s overall themes.**

Mission Statement:
This Group supports scholarship that explores the relationship of religion, theology, technology, and the natural sciences. We support research that attempts to bridge the gap between religious and scientific approaches to reality and encourage the development of constructive proposals that encourage engagement and dialogue with the sciences, along with a critical assessment of the meaning and impact of technologies for the human condition and the natural world.
Anonymity:
Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Fredericks, Sarah, University of Chicago, sfredericks@uchicago.edu

Scriptural Reasoning Group

Call Text:
This Group gathers Jewish, Christian, and Muslim thinkers for the study of scriptural texts related to themes of contemporary import. Papers should examine brief scriptural passages—drawing on both textual scholarship and reception history—and suggest how they address contemporary readers’ concerns. Participants will be asked to circulate drafts in advance and revise their papers in conversation with each other. At least one session will include text study in small groups.

We invite paper or panel proposals in the following areas:

• This year's AAR annual meeting theme of love, including but not limited to revolutionary and transformative love, in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim scriptural texts
• The use of religious texts (including commentaries) in understanding, debating, and negotiating the relationship between Religious Studies and Theology
• Hermeneutics
• Scriptural reasoning methodology
• The nature of Scripture

We welcome proposals on other topics as well and encourage complete panel proposals. For guidance on the sorts of topics and proposals that have worked well in the past, see the sessions from previous years here:

https://jsr.shanti.virginia.edu/the-scriptural-reasoning-group-at-the-am...

Mission Statement:
“Scriptural reasoning” is a practice of interreligious scriptural study with a twenty year history and a number of associated institutions, doctoral programs, and journals. This Group provides one “home,” within the AAR itself, for sustained study of the Abrahamic scriptural traditions, for exploring postmodern approaches to the study of scriptural religions, for interreligious and intercultural fellowship as an essential aspect of study, and as an experimental workshop in the practices of collaborative, dialogic, and interdisciplinary study.

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

Method of submission:
Secularism and Secularity Group

Call Text:
The Secularism and Secularity group is interested in papers concerning media, non-religion, and the performance of secularities for a potential co-sponsored session with the Religion, Media, and Culture group.

We are also interested in issues of sovereignty and the secular, especially as they relate to violence, both threatened and enacted. These submissions will be considered for a possible co-sponsorship with the Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence, Indigenous Religious Traditions, and Comparative Religious Ethics groups. We encourage those submitting proposals to think within and outside of Euro-America and to consider case studies, historical and contemporary, that can help us reflect on recent events.

The Secularism and Secularity group is once again especially interested in papers that address these and other issues through the secular’s complicated relationship with race and sex/gender. What forms of activism does the secular enable that are not available in spaces governed by religious norms, and what forms does it foreclose? How does the divide between secular and religious map (or fail to map) onto struggles for rights and recognition, such as those of indigenous people or activists fighting for racial and gender equality?

We encourage paper and session proposals that engage these and related questions through original historical or social scientific research.

Mission Statement:
This Group seeks to explore a set of questions associated with secularism, secularity, and secularization — questions that pertain to the shifting relationship between “the religious” and “the secular” — to the changing role of religion in law, politics, and public life, to the metamorphosis of personal identities, practices, and affiliations (figured as religious, spiritual, secular, or otherwise), and to a broader set of historical transformations that have conditioned and been imbricated in these and other changes. The Group seeks to promote and enable more sustained interdisciplinary engagement among scholars of secularism, secularity, and variously conceived forms of “nonreligion.”

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - VanAntwerpen, Jonathan, The Henry Luce Foundation, New York, NY, vanantwerpen@hluce.org

Chair - Blankholm, Joseph, University of California, Santa Barbara, blankholm@religion.ucsb.edu
Sikh Studies Group

Call Text:
The Sikh Studies Group invites papers on any topic related to Sikhism, with any methodological and theoretical approach, but in particular papers that address the issue of representations of/by Sikhs, or Sikh (or allied) music. We encourage persons interested in presenting with the Group at the next annual meeting to contact the Chairs ahead of the submission date, in the hope of organizing a pre-arranged panel. We also strongly encourage people to suggest papers and panels through this Group as well as others, to promote the development of jointly sponsored sessions and encourage the inclusion of content on the Sikh tradition across the AAR. Complete paper sessions or roundtable proposals and cosponsored sessions are especially welcome and will be prioritized, and we encourage those with participation from different ranks in the field (from graduate students to faculty) and reflecting diverse perspectives.

Mission Statement:
This Group provides a forum for highlighting the most recent and innovative scholarship in the area of Sikh studies. Our work draws from a broad range of methodological and theoretical approaches — history, postcolonial theory, performance theory, popular culture, philosophy, literary criticism, gender studies, etc. — by both established scholars as well as those new to the field. Seeking a balance between critical theory and substantive content, we seek to call into question key critical terms, challenge established frames of reference, and offer innovative and alternative ways in which Sikhs and Sikhism can be understood and studied in the academy.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Murphy, Anne, University of British Columbia, anne.murphy@ubc.ca

Chair - Singh, Pashaura, University of California, Riverside, psingh@ucr.edu

Sociology of Religion Group

Call Text:
Theory, Method, and their Application:
Sociology of Religion as part of a larger discipline is marked by a canonization of its theory and its division by paradigms and methodologies—whether these be the classics (Weber and Durkheim), the old paradigm (functionalism and social constructionism), or the new paradigm (rational choice) on the one hand or quantitative, qualitative, or historical-comparative sociology on the other. As it intersects with sociology of religion, the study of religion has drawn from theories and methodologies in conversation with sociology, anthropology, critical theory, psychology, history, and other related disciplines. We are interested both in papers that utilize the methods and theories in the study of religion and bring them into the sociological canon as well as those that help religious studies gain a better grasp of the sociological theory of religion. We encourage papers that exploit both the theory and methodology of sociology of religion and religious studies and use them as frames for analysis of concrete cases. In particular, we request papers that touch upon social divisions examining race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, region, age, etc.
Internationalism and Diversity:
Critics of sociology of religion have pointed out that the field is dominated by North Americans scholars primarily interested in Protestantism. The discipline of religious studies provides a clear antidote to these perceived limitations. Therefore, we encourage contributions from academics who study the various religious traditions around the world as well as those studying North American religious communities. In particular, we would like submissions from scholars from all academic ranks across the lines of nationality, region, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc.

Call for Papers:
The Sociology of Religion Group (SOR) invites both panel and paper proposals across a wide range of topics of interest to both the sociology of religion and religious studies and are particularly interested in papers, which speak to both thereby encouraging increased dialogue between them. In particular, this year’s CFP expresses interest in the following topics:

- Following the theme of AAR’s 2016 annual meetings, the Sociology of Religion Group invites papers that address the multi-dimensions of Revolutionary Love. This includes but is not limited to love communism (or the communism of love), brotherly/sisterly love, or love as an impulse for social change. Conversely, it could include the inverse hypothesis - where love is not revolutionary at all but is egoistic or narcissistic (self-love), where revolutions are not based on love but on hate, where love is harmful and tears down dreams rather than build them up. Finally, papers could contain a synthesis addressing the contradictory impulses of revolutionary love – e.g. paradoxical reflections of the religious adage to love thy enemy.

- Social and Religious Movements and/or Social Movements Theory and Religious Movements Theory

- Competing Canons within the Sociology of Religion and Religious Studies

- Theory and Methodology including issues of reproducibility, validity, and empiricism

- Religion and the Public Sphere

- Religion and Education including but not limited to Religion and Education in Pluralistic Societies or Religion and Education in the Postsecular Age.

- In a co-sponsored paper session, the Quaker Studies Group and Sociology of Religion Group invite proposals on normative religious identity and notions of the ‘true Church.’ We are interested in papers that utilize sociological theories and methods in the analysis of this topic. We are particularly interested in the following questions: What mechanisms do religious groups use to establish normative identities, particularly against deviants or schismatics within their own group? How is ‘membership’ and ‘authenticity’ counted and measured? What types of authority are used to sustain particular identities and how are these operationalized within the group? How are notions of ‘the world’ constructed and sustained, and how are these notions adapted when they no longer serve their original purpose (for example during the processes of denominationalization or internal secularization)?

- The topics mentioned above are meant merely as suggestions. We encourage submissions of all papers that utilize sociological theories, methods, and questions in their analysis of religion. We are particularly interested in papers that address issues of inequalities of race, class, ethnicity, gender,
sexual orientation, or those that utilize critical paradigms including but not limited to critical theory, Marxism, feminism, queer theory, post-colonialism, post-structuralism, and environmentalism.

Publication:

The Sociology of Religion Group of AAR regularly co-sponsors panels with the peer-reviewed print and online journal Critical Research on Religion (CRR) (http://crr.sagepub.com). Published by SAGE Publications, over 2600 libraries worldwide have subscriptions to the journal. Presenters of promising papers in SOR panels will be invited to turn their papers into articles and submit them for peer review to CRR.

Leadership:

Mission Statement:
The Sociology of Religion Group of the American Academy of Religion serves as a bridge between religious studies and the subdiscipline of sociology of religion. It functions as a two-way conduit not only to import sociological research into religious studies but also to export the research of religious studies into both the subdiscipline and the broader field of sociology. Only through a cross-fertilization transgressing departmental boundaries can there be breakthroughs in research in both fields. The group has a wide conception of sociology of religion. It is open to a multiplicity of paradigms and methodologies utilized in the subfield and sociology more broadly: theoretical as well as empirical, quantitative, qualitative, and comparative-historical.

By liaising with other Program Units, the Sociology of Religion Group is able to bring the rich diversity of critical and analytical perspectives that are housed in the American Academy of Religion into mainstream sociology of religion. Conversely, it aims to provide scholars of the study of religion with a deeper understanding of the landscape of sociology of religion.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - King, Rebekka, Middle Tennessee State University, rebekka.king@mtsu.edu

Chair - Goldstein, Warren S., Harvard University, goldstein@criticaltheoryofreligion.org

Space, Place, and Religion Group

Call Text:
We welcome individual papers, papers sessions, and roundtable proposals for topics exploring space and place as they relate to religion. We are particularly interested in papers and sessions that employ theoretically or methodologically self-conscious and innovative approaches to understanding space as it relates to, conditions, and constitutes aspects of religious life including: belief, ritual, meaning, aesthetics, and experience. We also welcome ethnographically-informed studies of sites and historically-informed studies of texts that shed light on the role of space and location in religious traditions. We desire to have one session focusing on religious spaces in Asia.
This year we anticipate organizing three sessions and suggest the following topics:

- religious significance of places of memory in Europe, for a co-sponsored session with the Religion and Europe Group.

- mountains and rustic / rural sites of religious authority and power (interested presenters may contact Pamela Winfield (pwinfield@elon.edu).

- appropriation of religious spaces by other religions, especially the sites of local religions by trans-national ones.

- the relationship of trauma and tragedy to places of religious significance.

Proposals on other topics will be considered.

Mission Statement:
This Group is a forum for exploring religious sites and the spatial dimensions of religions. We feature ethnographically-informed studies of living sites, historically-informed studies of texts and artifacts, and analyses of architecture and landscape. Our work seeks to shed light on the role of space and place in religious traditions and communities or to examine religious activity (performance, ritual, and practice) in spatial contexts.

This group recognizes that spaces and places, real and imagined/visionary, are constitutive elements in religious life; it is dedicated to investigating how they contribute to contemplative, ritualistic, artistic, economic, ethnic, or political aspects of religious life using a variety of approaches and methods. We expect to include at least one session focused on spaces and places in Asia, in addition to sessions focused on other themes, regions, traditions or advancing the theoretical analysis of space and place.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Nichols, Brian J., Mount Royal University, shilong.nichols@gmail.com

Chair - Bains, David, Samford University, drbains@samford.edu

Student Lounge Roundtable

Call Text:
The Graduate Student Committee invites scholars of religion to share their hard-earned wisdom in the Student Lounge Roundtable Series. We are looking for individuals who will be responsible for leading a conversation or workshop (60-90 minutes) about a topic of practical interest to student members. A variety of formats are welcome. Possible topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Online resources and computer programs to aid research, writing, or teaching
• Managing a specific stage of graduate school (courses, exams, thesis, ABD, etc.)
• Research project design or methods
• Balancing graduate school with other dimensions of life and identity
• Creating or managing an online presence (websites, blogging, online portfolios, etc.)
• Job market (applications, interviews, alt-ac, etc.)
• Publishing (open access vs. peer review; alternative forms of publishing, etc.)
• Teaching (activities, online, technology, controversial issues, etc.)
• Presenting research to the public
• Networking
• Grant writing
• CV writing
• Leadership

Please send a brief proposal (~150 words) and a CV to Gwendolyn Gillson at gwendolyn-gillson@uiowa.edu by March 1, 2016. Please indicate if you are willing to co-present if your topic aligns with another proposal. Roundtable time slots are flexible. This does not count toward the two-proposal submission limit within the PAPERS system.

Mission Statement:
The Student Lounge Roundtable Series consists of a series of workshops dedicated to professional development and the current needs of graduate students. The series is sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee and the workshops are led by graduate students, professors, and other professionals with relevant expertise to offer.

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

Method of submission:
E-mail without Attachment (proposal appears in body of e-mail)
E-mail with Attachment (proposal is in attachment, not in body of e-mail)

Leadership:
Chair - Mamtora, Bhakti, University of Florida, bhaktim@ufl.edu
Chair - Gillson, Gwendolyn, University of Iowa, gwendolyn-gillson@uiowa.edu

Study of Islam Section

Call Text:
This Section encourages individual paper, papers session, and roundtable proposals in all areas of Islamic studies. Successful proposals will reflect theoretical and methodological sophistication and engagement with existing scholarship along with innovative examination of Muslim practices, texts, and material culture in diverse contexts and geographies. As always, we welcome submissions dealing with the Qur’an and the Sunna, law, philosophy, theology, mysticism, ritual, gender and sexuality, modernity and globalization, teaching, religious pluralism, and other areas of general interest. Furthermore, we encourage proposals dealing with Shī’ism within and across these areas.

For the 2016 meeting in San Antonio we are especially interested in paper and/or panel proposals on the following themes:

- Muslims in Texas
- Adoration and Devotion
- Love and Violence
- The Occult
- Theorizing Translation
- Climate Change and Sustainability
- Music and Aesthetics
- Race and Racialization

The Study of Islam section seeks to encourage and facilitate dialogue between panelists before, during, and immediately following individual presentations. To this end, it is essential that presenters commit to providing the full text of their presentation for pre-circulation among panel participants at least three weeks before the conference (i.e., Friday October 28, 2016).

All proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria: a descriptive title, a clearly formulated argument; engagement with secondary literature; articulation of a contribution to the field; and clearly identified methodology and sources. Further suggestions for AAR proposal writers can be found in Kecia Ali’s “Writing a Successful Annual Meeting Proposal”:
https://www.aarweb.org/annual-meeting/writing-successful-annual-meeting

Mission Statement:
This Section is the home for the academic study of Islam within the AAR. This Section encompasses various approaches and subjects, from Qur’anic studies to modern reform movements and from textual research to sociology. The Section also has an enduring interest in pedagogical issues associated with the teaching of Islam. The purpose of the Section is both to provide a forum for dialogue among differing approaches and projects within Islamic studies and also to provide opportunities for the discussion of work that affects the overall field of the study of religion. We normally meet for five to seven sessions at each Annual Meeting. We coordinate our work with other Islam-related AAR Program Units, including the Contemporary Islam Group, the Islam, Gender, Women Group, the Islamic Mysticism Group, the Qur’an Group, and the Material Islam Seminar.
Anonymity:
Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review, but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Hammer, Juliane, University of North Carolina, jhammer@email.unc.edu
Chair - Colby, Frederick, University of Oregon, fscolby@uoregon.edu

Study of Judaism Section

Call Text:
This Section welcomes individual paper, papers session, and roundtable proposals from the wide scope of Judaism, Jews, and Jewish studies—from late antiquity to the present. For 2016, we are particularly interested in the following topics:

- The Medieval in the Modern - how Modern Jewish Thought relies on, repurposes, and rebrands medieval thought
- Kabbalah - the roots and its interpretive branches
- Teaching Judaism in the University Classroom - issues of pedagogy
- Graphic Novels, Video Games, and Other Media (might include retrospective analyses of Maus or its reception -- 2016 marks the 30th anniversary)
- American Judaism beyond Denominational Life

Mission Statement:
The goal of this Section is to develop and expand the relationship between the study of Judaism and the broader study of religion. We work to meet this goal in three primary ways:

Methodologically
Topically
By cosponsorship with other Program Units

First, this Section engages in active conversation with the methodologies common to the study of religion by exploring the historical, social, aesthetic, and political aspects of Jewish religion in its various contexts. All the while, we challenge methodologies in place at the AAR and offer new approaches to the study of religion through our focus on textual studies and the engagement between texts/doctrines and other aspects of religious culture. Second, we wrestle with topics of concern to the community of religious scholars in general, including community and commitment, gender, and the intersection between religion and politics. Finally, we actively pursue cosponsorship with other AAR Program Units. Recently, we have worked with the Study of Islam Section, the Mysticism Group, the Theology and Continental Philosophy Group, and several SBL
Sections. In the future, we look forward to continuing to work with various AAR — and whenever possible, SBL — Program Units.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Hughes, Aaron W., University of Rochester, aaron.hughes@rochester.edu
Chair - Imhoff, Sarah, Indiana University, seimhoff@indiana.edu

Tantric Studies Group

Call Text:
Transnational Tantra; Elaine Fisher, elaine.fisher@gmail.com

Tantra and Aesthetics; David Gray, dgray@scu.edu

Tantra and Healing; Michael Slouber, Michael.Slouber@wwu.edu

Cognitive Science and Tantra; Glen Hayes, glen_hayes@bloomfield.edu

On crossing emic-etic boundaries in Tantric studies;" Mark Schmanko, ms85@rice.edu

"Tantra as a comparative and constructive category"; Mark Schmanko, ms85@rice.edu

Tantric Philosophical Traditions; John Nemec, nemec@virginia.edu

Co-sponsored panel with Religion and Science Fiction: “Tantra and Science Fiction”; Rudy V. Busto rude@religion.ucsb.edu

A Garland of Lost Goddesses: michael.slouber@wwu.edu

Mission Statement:
This Group brings together scholars who utilize a range of methodological and theoretical perspectives in their studies of the complex religious, social, and cultural phenomena known collectively as tantra. “Tantra” refers to a range of esoteric religious traditions that developed in India and were disseminated throughout Asia during the first millennium CE. These diverse traditions have used mental and bodily disciplines, devotional and ritual practices, and gendered cosmologies, and have created elaborate artistic as well as sociopolitical systems. The collective study of tantra has led to several important conclusions:

The demonstrated diversity of tantric practices and ideologies demands a plurality of methods, theories, and interpretative strategies by scholars

These richly varied tantric traditions became, by the twelfth century CE, central to many Asian religious and sociopolitical systems, including those of India, Nepal, Tibet, Mongolia, Cambodia, Japan, and China
Various traditional Asian forms of tantra have been brought to the Western world since the early twentieth century and are undergoing a vital process of reinterpretation and appropriation. Our goal is to provide a venue for scholars of different areas of tantric studies to collaborate across traditional boundaries of religious traditions (e.g., Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism), present-day nation-states, geography (e.g., India, Tibet, China, Japan), and academic disciplines (e.g., history of religions, anthropology, art history, linguistics, sociology). We seek to be a cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary enterprise. Tantra as a set of practices — a religious technology — and as a set of doctrines explaining, justifying, and rationalizing those practices in fact exists across religious, national, and geographical boundaries. For example, an adequate understanding of Japanese Tantric Buddhist practice and doctrine requires not only locating it in an East Asian Buddhist context, but also in an Indian and South Asian context where the juxtaposition of Buddhist and Hindu tantras can fruitfully reveal aspects that might otherwise remain obscured. Similarly, by setting Buddhist materials in relation to Hindu traditions — both of which might otherwise be seen either as uniquely Hindu or Buddhist — will be highlighted as part of a broader, shared tantric discourse. This Group will also allow scholars to present new methodologies for the study of tantra and help to bridge more traditional academic approaches, such as textual-based and fieldwork-based studies. We seek to further the study of tantra as a global, transnational phenomena and as an important new religious movement. Finally, the Group will also explore new perspectives for studies of gender, power, identity, and sexuality that are so germane to modern religious scholarship.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Bühnemann, Gudrun, University of Wisconsin, gbuhnema@wisc.edu
Chair - Nemec, John, University of Virginia, nemec@virginia.edu

Teaching Religion Section

Call Text:
For 2016, paper and panel proposals that address the following themes are especially welcome:

Teaching Tactics: We invite the demonstration of a teaching tactic and participating with the audience. For 2016, we are especially interested in K-12 teaching tactics that you have adapted to higher education classrooms. Please submit a short description of what you will do in the allotted time (approximately 10-12 minutes). The tip should be submitted in the format available on the Wabash Center for Teaching Theology and Religion webpage: http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/journal/article2.aspx?id=14417

We invite proposals for the following:

- A potential co-sponsored session with the Moral Injury and Recovery in Religion, Society, and Culture Group on the ways moral injury can inform pedagogies, both in course content and in methodologies. Moral injury is defined as "a wound of moral subjectivity within a social context. It combines loss of faith in one’s own moral goodness and the goodness of the surrounding society and occurs either through the experience of particular acts or through a longer-term experience of social suffering and moral distrust." For more information about this group, see their Program Unit
A co-sponsored session with the SBL's Academic Teaching and Biblical Studies Section on best practices in teaching sacred texts in Biblical Studies and Introductory Religion courses. Successful proposals will focus on student engagement, innovative and proven pedagogy, and will include a pragmatic component. Presentations will be 15 minutes of which 5 minutes are designated as hands-on demonstration time.

Writing the Scholarship on Teaching and Learning Focused on Millennial Students

Teaching Travel, Pilgrimage, and Study Away. For this session we invite papers that focus on the welding of course content and experience in teaching and learning, especially the relationship between travel programs and pilgrimage.

Reflections on Threshold Concepts. Borrowing from anthropology and ritual studies, some scholars of teaching and learning have generated the term "threshold concepts" to describe points in learning that initiate people into disciplinary conversations. We welcome papers investigating the use and utility of "threshold concepts" in teaching religions. What are your field's or subfield's threshold concepts and practices? How do you teach them? (This Faculty Focus article provides a brief introduction to “threshold concepts" -- http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-and-learning/threshold-concepts-portals-new-ways-thinking/)

Mission Statement:
This Section critically examines pedagogical theory and practice. We invite proposals that join innovative teaching practice with the scholarship of teaching and learning. Preference will be given to presentation formats that model engaged, interactive, and experiential pedagogy.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Howell, David B., Ferrum College, dhowell@ferrum.edu
Chair - Bassett, Molly, Georgia State University, mbassett@gsu.edu

Theology and Continental Philosophy Group

Call Text:
We seek panel or paper proposals that consider what continental philosophy can contribute to theological reflection on this year’s theme, Revolutionary Love, through focusing on pressing contemporary questions of property, space and place. We particularly welcome proposals that consider this question through

- figures of the circulation of (human and non-human) bodies – the migrant, the refugee, the terrorist, the immigrant; imported and exported "goods," e.g. – across (national and cultural) borders and
• proposed resources for resisting (racialized, neoliberal) capitalism to be found in notions of the commons (Esposito), the undercommons (Moten and Harney), or the gift (Louis Hyde); in liberation theologies, in critiques of the prosperity gospel. We also invite proposals that bring theology into conversation with recent attempts to theorize political rage (e.g. Appadurai, Puar, Sylvester Johnson).

As always, we invite proposals on other topics of particular interest to the membership.

Mission Statement:
This Group seeks to further discussions at the intersection of post-Kantian philosophy in its various permutations with historical and contemporary theological reflection. While we remain centered on continental European thought on the philosophical side, the term “theology” in our parlance extends to critical reflection on a range of religions worldwide. Contact the Program Unit Chairs if you seek further information on the Group’s activities.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Co-Chair - Armour, Ellen T., Vanderbilt University, ellen.t.armour@vanderbilt.edu
Co-Chair – Kotsko, Adam, Shimer College, akotsko@gmail.com

Theology and Religious Reflection Section

Call Text:
• Linn Tonstad’s new God and Difference: The Trinity, Sexuality, and the Transformation of Finitude (co-sponsored with Queer Studies in Religion Group)
• In commemoration of his recent passing, a session on the legacy of René Girard
• Feminist Readings of the Qur’an
• Apocalyptic Thinking: Teaching and Studying Religion in a Time of Chaos
• Race and Theology/Religious reflection (including but not limited to responses to Ta-Nehisi Coates’ Between the World and Me)
• The Aesthetics/Poetics of Religion for the Public Sphere
• U.S. Latino Theology: Virgilio Elizondo’s Mestizo/a Christology
• Theology/Religious Reflection and the Humanities
Any of the above topics (or others) connected to this year’s theme Revolutionary Love

Mission Statement:
This Section promotes new constructive work that is in dialogue with the historical theological traditions on the one hand, and with all aspects of the contemporary context on the other — intellectual movements, methodologies, multiple theological and religious perspectives, and ethical/social/political contexts. We have continued to indicate more specific topics in our annual call for papers, which we believe adds to the relevance and interest of the sessions.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Moore, Brenna, Fordham, brmoore@fordham.edu

Chair - Jones, Tamsin, Trinity College, tamsin.jones@trincoll.edu

Theology of Martin Luther King Jr. Group

Call Text:
The Theology of Martin Luther King Jr. Group invites proposals that focus on King’s assessment of love in the face of hatred and evil. We also invite proposals that engage or critique MLK Jr.’s interreligious, intergenerational, and interracial alliances as a model for contemporary social engagement.

We welcome critically developed individual paper proposals, or panels that speak to the overall themes outlined above from scholars at all levels. For the 2016 Annual Meeting, we are especially interested in proposals that address the following:

• King as a revolutionary

• Limitations of love in the face of evil

• Intergenerational relationships in freedom struggles

• Movements for Black and Brown Lives

• Revolutionary rhetoric of love

• King and the Black Diaspora

Mission Statement:
The work of this Group is focused on creating conversations around the unique contributions of Martin Luther King Jr. to the Christian theological tradition in the twentieth century and to the religious, cultural, political, and economic consequences of his work. We are particularly interested in the many facets of the
Civil Rights Movement, of which King was a significant part. These explorations have included a focus on the role of women in the movement, the economic dimensions of King’s work, and his use of both the theological traditions and rhetoric of the Black Church. In all of our sessions we are interested in fostering inter- and multidisciplinary approaches to this project.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Mingo, AnneMarie, Pennsylvania State University, annemariemingo@gmail.com

Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Group

Call Text:
The following topics were suggested at the Business Meeting in Atlanta or submitted by email. If you are interested in submitting a proposal related to any of these topics or if you would like to suggest another topic for the 2016 Annual Meeting, you may contact the THRG membership by sending an email to thrg@mailman.yale.edu.

- Religious Responses to the 2015 Himalayan Earthquakes
- Hidden Lands (sbas yul) in the Himalayas
- Vision and Visualization in Tibetan Buddhism
- Rig gnas: The Liberal Arts of Tibet
- Poetry and Buddhism in Tibet
- Animals and Religion in the Himalayas
- Himalayan Religion and Popular Culture
- The Application of the Senses in Tibetan Buddhist Contemplative Practice (contact: Gloria Chien gichien@vcu.edu)
- Literary Imagination in Himalayan Religions (contact: Michael Sheehy mclsheehy@gmail.com)
- Methodological Challenges in the Study of Contemporary Tibetan Buddhism (contact: Bhikshuni Lozang Trinlae bhikshuni.trinlae@cst.edu)

Mission Statement:
This Group’s mission is to create an environment that promotes discussion among scholars taking diverse approaches to the study of Tibetan and Himalayan religions. Our identity and cohesion derive from the fact that we deal with a delimited geocultural space, but the intellectual excitement comes from the fact that we are specialists in different historical periods and cultural areas, from the fact that we are interested in
different religious traditions, and from the fact that we have different methodological approaches to the study of religion. In particular, we encourage scholarship that approaches Tibetan and Himalayan religions through a wide range of approaches:

Multidisciplinary focus — we are committed to methodological diversity and to promoting scholarship that challenges the traditional disciplinary dichotomies through which the field has defined itself, such as text/practice, written/oral, philology/ethnography, and humanistic/social scientific study.

Transregional focus — we encourage a holistic approach to the study of Tibet and the Himalaya as a region, albeit a diverse one. One of the most important features of religious traditions in our field — perhaps in every field — is the degree to which they are inextricably connected, and it is only through the exploration of such interconnections that the phenomenon of religion in the Tibeto-Himalayan region can be understood. Such interconnections often cut across ethnonational boundaries.

Focus on cultural history — in the last decade, the study of Asian religions has taken a quite drastic cultural/historical turn. Nowhere is this more evident than in the study of Tibetan and Himalayan religions. A previous generation of scholars was concerned principally with elite religious institutions — and more specifically with their doctrinal/philosophical texts. Today scholarship is much more diverse. A new generation of scholars is concerned, for example, with folk religious practices, religion and material culture, the politics of religious institutions, the representation of Tibetan religions in the media, and the historical construction of the field itself. This Group is committed to fostering such a multifaceted approach to the cultural history of Tibet and the Himalayas.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Jacoby, Sarah, Northwestern University, s-jacoby@northwestern.edu

Chair - Bogin, Benjamin, Georgetown University, bbogin@skidmore.edu

Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture Group

Call Text:

- The Courage to Be . . . Alright
  This papers session, co-sponsored by Critical Approaches to Hip Hop and Religion & the Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture Group is an open call for papers that will foster a cross-generational, cross-cultural conversation provoked by the unexpected coincidence of Paul Tillich and Kendrick Lamar as generational voices illumining the dogged determination to be in the face of the annihilating forces of modernity. In 1952, Paul Tillich published The Courage to Be, as a critique of western theology’s uncritical reliance on ontological argumentation as an “objective” discourse which occluded the existential moorings of faith, which was on his account the very thing which gives human life it’s contours. Sixty years after the release of Courage, and uncannily coinciding with the anniversary of Tillich’s death—October 22, 2012—hip hop artist Kendrick Lamar released Good Kid, M.A.A.D City, his first major studio album. GKMC, like 2015’s To Pimp a Butterfly, and earlier
mixtapes and independent releases, demonstrates Kendrick Lamar’s deeply existential ruminations and a dogged determination to be, in face of contemporary and ongoing assault on Black life and on Black being the contemporary forces of modernity. Songs like “Alright” and “I” celebrate a courage to be and privilege self-affirmation in ways that are embodied, aural, and theologically-weighty, giving shape, form, and (much needed) color to The Courage to Be.

- Possible proposal topics include, but are not limited to:
  - Life in the midst of urban annihilation
  - Contemporary expressions of existential theologies
  - Hip hop and millennial appraisals of *The Courage to Be*
  - Embodied theologies and the Poetics of Hip-Hop
  - Dogged determination to be as a site of theological beginnings
  - Inter- and Intra-ecclesial and racial comparative theologies
  - Social and rhetorical techniques of authorizing religious/theological authority

- Paul Tillich’s Philosophical Theology on the Resurgence of Religious Extremism
  The news is full of stories concerning violent religious extremism in the world today, and it is important, as scholars of religion, not merely to dismiss these actors as atypical offshoots of religion, stating categorically that such agents do not represent the religion from which they originate. Faith is known in the world by how it is practiced, and the external narrative concerning a religion can be shaped, changed, and transformed by the actions of a few, resulting in widespread fear of the many. Paul Tillich’s philosophical theology grappled with the existential norms and extremes of the human condition, understanding how we can become fragmented both as individuals and as societies when we are pulled apart by the poles of our relatedness. How might Tillich’s corpus provide entryways to interrogate the dimensions of violent religious extremism, especially with regard to the origins, recruitment, construction of new religious narratives, establishment of community, and apocalyptic vision that has been demonstrated by global events of the past decade?

- Tillich and Our Environmental Crisis
  This session invites papers on the issue of Climate Change and how aspects of Tillich’s thought might be helpful in 1) interpreting the current political moment; 2) offering a theological interpretation that better situates humanity in the midst of the larger creation; or 3) discovering discrete resources in Existentialist philosophy and or theology which might motivate particular cultural responses o this looming threat. Of interest, also, would be papers or pre-arranged panels that move beyond Tillich’s specific formulation but which rely on the sorts of philosophical explorations which undergird his work (e.g., existentialism).

- Book Panel on Paul Tillich’s *Love, Power, and Justice* (Add business meeting to this session).
  We invite papers or pre-arranged panels on Tillich’s book, *Love, Power, Justice*. While we are open to a range of treatments of the work we are particularly interested in papers which deal with the ideas of creative and transformative justice either intersecting motifs or discrete loci of theological reflection. Explorations of the book as a provocation for helpful responses to contemporary instances of religion and conflict are especially encourage.

Mission Statement:
This Group fosters scholarship and scholarly exchanges that analyze, criticize, and interpret the thought or impact of Paul Tillich (1886–1965) and that use his thought — or use revisions of or reactions against his thought — to deal with contemporary issues in theology, religion, ethics, or the political, social, psychotherapeutic, scientific, or artistic spheres of human culture. We cooperate with the North American
Paul Tillich Society (a Related Scholarly Organization of the AAR), which is linked with the German, French, and other Tillich societies. Papers at our sessions are published in the Society’s quarterly Bulletin without prejudice to their also appearing elsewhere.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Ray, Stephen G., Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, stephen.ray@garrett.edu

Chair - Stahl, Devan, Michigan State University, devanstahl@gmail.com

Traditions of Eastern Late Antiquity Group

Call Text:
We will have one open session for which papers on any topic germane to the subject area of the program unit may be proposed.

A second session will focus on Race in Eastern Late Antiquity. For this session, co-sponsored with SBL’s Religious Worlds of Late Antiquity Section, we seek papers that explore ideas about “race” in the cultures and traditions of the Sasanian East. Is “race” an appropriate and fruitful category for understanding elements of social practice and worldview in Eastern Late Antiquity? Does recent scholarly work on “race” and “ethnicity” in Greek and Latin antiquity hold any promise for illuminating corresponding dynamics further east?

A third session, co-sponsored with the Religious Worlds of Late Antiquity and Aramaic Studies SBL program units, is being planned on the Aramaic magic bowls. Given the interdisciplinary sponsorship, we propose that the session focus on the intersection of diverse perspectives on these artifacts:

Aramaic Magic Bowls: Language, Ritual, and Context. How can language experts help clarify the nature of the beliefs and practices associated with these artifacts? How can those who study the societies and subgroups that used such bowls help clarify the meaning of obscure terminology? How can the study of the Late Antique context in which the bowls were produced help shed light on their use, significance, and meaning? How can the study of the bowls shed light on the usefulness on the categories of syncretism and mixing?

Mission Statement:
This program unit focused on Late Antiquity in the East aims to provide a home for the study of religious traditions that are rooted in Mesopotamia, Persia, and western Asia, particularly those parts that were outside the Roman cultural reach such as Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, and Mandaeism. While the group will focus on late antiquity, many of these traditions, and particularly their extant texts come to us from much later periods, and this scholarly issue will be part of our discussions. In addition, many of the traditions that were born in this time and place also spread to other parts of the world, and the study of them in those forms and contexts also has a place within this program unit, as does investigation of their response to the rise of Islam in the region. In addition, this group’s focus is not exclusively on those traditions that developed uniquely in this region, but also those which, when transplanted there, had significant evolutions in that
milieu that differ from their counterparts in other times and places (e.g. Christianity, Judaism). We likewise encourage research which focuses on the interaction between the various communities and traditions of this place and time.

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

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

Leadership:
Chair - McGrath, James, Butler University, jfmcgrat@butler.edu

Chair - Koltun-Fromm, Naomi, Haverford College, nkoltunf@haverford.edu

Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogy Group

Call Text:
This Group offers a forum for developing transformative strategies for integrating teaching, activism, and research across religious traditions and scholarly disciplines, challenging traditional boundaries between scholarship and activism. This includes learning and research in conversation with activist communities, thus allowing our understanding of religious traditions, culture, and knowledge itself to be challenged and shaped by such engagement.

We invite proposals for individual presentations or a coordinated papers session on the following topics:

- transformative teaching or research partnerships between scholars, teachers, and activists in the San Antonio and/or borderlands areas
- civic learning/engagement/transformation and the study or teaching of religion
- teaching anti-racism in religion courses
- "safe space" pedagogies (safe for whom and toward what end?)
- revolutionary love in the classroom/as pedagogy

Proposals are also invited for a co-sponsored session with the Men, Masculinities and Religions Group and the Body and Religion Group on pedagogical strategies for incorporating treatments of men/masculinities and male embodiment into gender and religion courses or on methodologies of studying men, masculinities and male/masculinized bodies in relation to religion. Of particular interest are proposals featuring teaching practices that are particularly innovative or effective in integrating men/masculinities and male/masculinized bodies into religion courses, as well as proposals for presentations designed to build the capacity of audience members to develop their own pedagogical practices for integrating the study of men/masculinities and male/masculinized bodies into religion and gender courses (e.g., through interactive exercises, sample syllabi, etc.). Also welcome are proposals highlighting novel methodological or theoretical approaches to the study of men, masculinity, and religion and of religion and male embodiment, or analyses of methodologies used to
study men/masculinity within a specific religious tradition or comparatively. Proposals for both individual presentations and panel presentations are invited.

Mission Statement:
This Group seeks to provide a forum for exploring transformative scholarship and pedagogy across religious traditions and scholarly disciplines, challenging the traditional boundaries between scholarship and activism while experimenting with alternative teaching strategies to address pedagogical issues in relation to social transformation. We seek to develop models of transformational pedagogy that assist educators to combine social analysis, social action, and academic vocations of teaching, administration, and research.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Ray, Darby, Bates College, dray3@bates.edu

Vatican II Studies Group

Call Text:
At the end of four years of commemoration of Vatican II: points of contact between the Catholic Church in 1965 and today's Church.

Papers are welcome on the following topics:

- Points of contact between the Church’s conciliar experience of being truly universal and the challenges of being a worldwide Church today

- Points of contact between conciliar expectations for institutional reform and their implementation in the reform plans of Pope Francis

- Points of similarity between the time of the Council and today on the level of Church-state relations (cf. religious freedom; concern for other religions; view on Islam; decolonization and autonomy)

- We welcome papers that study part of the reception process of the Second Vatican Council in other Christian churches (co-sponsorship with Ecclesiological Investigations Group). In what sense was the Council an occasion of reform and self-renewal for other churches, for example by repeating the pleas for more synodality in our churches, by setting up structures for dialogue with other churches, by paying attention to liturgical reform...? What role, if any, did the Vatican II observers from other churches play in their own reforms or self-renewal?

We also welcome proposals that address conciliar documents or aspects of Vatican II that have been under-emphasized throughout the recent anniversary commemorations.

Mission Statement:
From 2012 to 2016, this Group will pay scholarly attention to the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), one of the most significant events in the history of the Catholic Church — an event that had wide-ranging
implications for other faiths, other Christian churches, and for the wider world alike. This Group has a double focus. On one hand, we focus on deepening the understanding of the history of Vatican II, its link with movements of renewal in Catholic theology and in the Church in the decades prior to Vatican II, the history of the reception of the Council, and the redaction history of the different documents of the Council. On the other hand, we have a strong theological focus and will pay attention both to hermeneutical issues connected to methods of interpreting conciliar teaching and to the interpretation of the most important documents of Vatican II in the year of their anniversary, starting with the liturgical constitution (1963–2013). By looking more closely at the past, our Group hopes to promote conciliarity and synodality in the Christian churches in the present.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Faggioli, Massimo, University of St. Thomas, Minnesota, massimo.faggioli@gmail.com
Chair - De Mey, Peter, University of Leuven, peter.demey@theo.kuleuven.be

Video Gaming and Religion Seminar

Call Text:
In the second year of our mission to go where no unit has gone before. The seminar invites papers that critically engage embodiment and materiality in video gaming. We are especially interested in explorations of reflections on how virtual worlds and digital space frame and inform the gaming experience, gamer perceptions of the digital body, how digital space and bodies inform religious experiences in gaming. We are interested in papers that break the traditional paper-reading format through a three-part presentation. Next year presenters should first give a short description (5 minutes) of the game they are analyzing. Second, the session will break to give the audience a chance to play the games being described on consuls or other devices. Finally, the presenters will analyze the game by presenting their thesis and evidence (10 minutes).

Mission Statement:
Just like films helped to illuminate and expose the religiosity of the twentieth century, video games now depict the religious within the twenty-first century. “Video games” describes electronic forms of play across all platforms, from personal computers, consuls to mobile devices. Often in the religious studies video gaming is not taken seriously. We aim to correct this by establishing and maintaining a multidisciplinary network for the discussion of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of religion and video gaming. We will collect, systematize and develop the various recent multidisciplinary approaches to research and teaching. We have two specific deliverables for the end of the five-year period. First, we will craft an edited volume, tentatively titled Video Games and Religion: Methods and Approaches that will bring together the cutting edge work of leading scholars in this emerging field. Second, we will publish our results from our seminar in a special issue of the online journal gameenvironments.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS
Leadership:
Chair - Grieve, Gregory, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, pggrieve@uncg.edu
Chair - Radde-Antweiler, Kerstin, University of Bremen, radde@uni-bremen.de

Wesleyan Studies Group

Call Text:
Christian Perfection Now and Then
At the 250th anniversary of the publication of John Wesley's *Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (1766), we call for papers that will explore a range of historical and contemporary reflections on the ideas of Christian perfection. Proposal might address some of the following (or other) topics:

- the historical sources, context, and purpose of Wesley's *Plain Account*
- comparisons of Wesley's teaching on perfection to that of other theologians, ancient, medieval, or modern
- the use of hymnody, disciplines, and hagiography in support of Wesley's *Account*
- the contribution of Christian perfection to ecclesial developments such as the Social Gospel and Holiness movements
- the place of Christian perfection in ecumenical conversations

Migration and Wesleyan/Methodist Communities
In the spirit of our setting in San Antonio, we call for papers dealing with issues of Wesleyan communities and migrations of peoples. Proposals should address some aspects of migrations of peoples in relation to Wesleyan/Methodist communities, and might address some of the following (or other) possible topics:

- Methodism and the migrations of peoples in relation to the Industrial Revolution in the British Isles
- Methodism and the migrations of peoples to the Americas
- German and Scandinavian migrations to the Americas and the origins of the Evangelical Association and the United Brethren in Christ
- migrations of African-American peoples within the US (including the “Underground Railway” and the “Blues Highway”) in relation to Wesleyan/Methodist communities
- migrations of people in the formation of Holiness communities
- contemporary Wesleyan/Methodist responses to issues of migration of peoples today

Eastern Orthodox and Wesleyan Communities: Resonances, Parallels, and Connections (Joint session with Eastern Orthodox Studies Group)
We call for papers exploring resonances, parallels, and actual connections between Eastern Christian and Wesleyan Christian traditions. As examples, papers might explore resonances between specific Wesleyan and Eastern Christian theological traditions and spiritual practice, uses of early Eastern Christian sources on the
part of the Wesleys and other Wesleyan Christians, parallels in hymnic traditions, and actual instances of
collaboration between Wesleyan and Eastern Christian communities.

Mission Statement:
This Group seeks to promote the critical understanding and appropriation of Wesleyan traditions. Our
sessions are purposefully structured to encourage not only historical/sociological studies, but also theological
reflection, critique, and extension. We understand Wesleyan traditions to include Methodist, Holiness, and
other related strands of Christian tradition.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Campbell, Ted, Southern Methodist University, tedc@smu.edu

Chair - Colon-Emeric, Edgardo, Duke University, ecolonemic@div.duke.edu

Western Esotericism Group

Call Text:
The Group considers proposals on any aspect in the study of Western esotericism. This year the Group invites
paper proposals on the following topics:

- Esoteric Sciences and Mystical Technologies (for a possible joint session with the Religion, Science and
  Technology Group and the Mysticism Group)
The aim of this session is to focus on sciences at the edge of respectability, and to explore areas of overlap
between religious and scientific ideas. Astrology, for example, which has always been important to magical
and esoteric thought, has been debunked as folly at least from the time of Augustine; however it continued
in use all the way through the Early Modern period, and was a kind of normal sideline for sixteenth and
seventeenth century scientists. Alchemy similarly links both to mystical and spiritual allegory and laboratory
chemistry from antiquity to modernity. Telepathy and the early 20th century ideas about stratified
consciousness are simultaneously part of the development of psychology and of spiritualism and occultism;
quantum mechanics has often inspired counter-cultural visions of reality. Finally the 21st century has
witnessed a resurgence of scientific research into entheogens and mystical experience, and the development
of new technologies to promote altered states of consciousness. This session is meant to foster discussion
about loci where science is used as a bridge, rather than foil, to esoteric knowledge and mystical experience.
Papers will be pre-circulated.

- Radical Repurposing in Esotericism: People, Places and Stories
Western esotericism has always engaged creatively with information derived from traditional and
mainstream religion. To give one example, there are numerous versions of an esoteric Jesus, who differs,
sometimes radically, from the familiar Christian figure as has been theologized and historicized within
mainstream denominations of Christianity. Similarly, stories and places mentioned in sacred scriptures, which
have been interpreted and iconicized by canonical, institutionalized forms of exegesis, are often subjected to
radically new interpretations within the context of Western esotericism and alternative spirituality. We
would like to see proposals that address this transformative, creative aspect of Western esotericism focusing
on examples or case studies taken from any period from Antiquity to our days.

• Renewals and Reappropriations of Buddhism and Hinduism in Western Esotericism

Different versions of Hinduism and Buddhism have entered Western Esotericism via a number of different routes. Madame Blavatsky for example claimed to have been initiated into various astounding secrets in a Tibetan Buddhist monastery in the 1870s, and her form of theosophy was profoundly influenced by Hindu and Buddhist teaching. These influence runs through the various offshoots of theosophy, and even currents that have taken distance from the parent institution and have rejected its emphasis on Indian doctrines, such as Anthroposophy, have still adopted key concepts such as karma. Aleister Crowley studied Hindu yoga practices in India and returned to transmit them to Western learners. The transmission of Eastern teachings is renewed continually through spiritual teachers like Ramana Maharshi and Papaji, and recombined and redisseminated by popular American and European gurus like Adyushanti and Eckhart Tolle. This session will explore the forms taken by Buddhist and Hindu teachings in the contexts of modern and contemporary Western Esotericism.

Mission Statement:
This Group seeks to reflect and further stimulate the current process — reflected in the recent creation of new teaching programs, international associations, journals, book series, and reference works — of professionalization and scholarly recognition of Western esotericism as a new area of research in the study of religion. For more information on the field, see the websites of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism (ESSWE, http://www.esswe.org), the Association for the Study of Esotericism (ASE, http://www.aseweb.org), and the Center for the History of Hermetic Philosophy and Related Currents at the University of Amsterdam (http://amsterdamhermetica.nl). Information about the academic journal Aries and the Aries Book Series can be found on the website of Brill Academic Publishers (http://www.brill.com/aries; and http://www.brill.com/publications/aries-book-series).

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Fanger, Claire, Rice University, claire@celestiscuria.org
Chair - Pasi, Marco, University of Amsterdam, m.pasi@uva.nl

Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Group

Call Text:
For 2015 the Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Group invites proposals on the following topics:

• Womanist methodology as a resource in discourse against sex trafficking, mass incarceration, and violence against Black transwomen

• Womanist thought on the rise of extremist rhetoric (to include anti-Muslim, race, immigration, and gender)

• Explorations of “Black Girl Magic” as it relates to different types of methodologies or epistemologies that have to do with spiritual power, the way Black women conjure in the classroom and various
spaces, and the ability to create in hostile space and beyond; the use of African spiritual values in that creation

- Prearranged panel on intersectionality, co-sponsored by the Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Group and the Class, Religion, and Theology Group: This prearranged panel will examine how the notion of class is currently theorized or undertheorized in the context of intersectionality, and what new insights might be gained from fresh reflections on class in religious studies in relation to the concerns of race, gender, class, and other forms of oppression. Vice versa, what might the study of race, gender, class, and other forms of oppression learn from fresh studies of class in religious studies?

Mission Statement:
This Group provides a forum for religious scholarship that engages theoretically and methodologically the four-part definition of a Womanist as coined by Alice Walker. We nurture interdisciplinary scholarship, encourage interfaith dialogue, and seek to engage scholars and practitioners in fields outside the study of religion. We are particularly concerned with fostering scholarship that bridges theory and practice and addresses issues of public policy in church and society.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Lightsey, Pamela, Boston University, ronnice@bu.edu

Chair – Sheppard, Phillis, Vanderbilt University, phillis.i.sheppard@vanderbilt.edu

Women and Religion Section

Call Text:
The Women and Religion Section invites individual papers and panel proposals from a variety of religious and cultural traditions exploring women’s experiences in local and transnational contexts. We encourage the use of alternate presentation formats.

We are particularly interested in proposals related to one of the following themes:
  • the 2016 election: gender, religion, and politics
  • women, religion, and immigration/migration, including but not limited to: political rhetoric, the current refugee crisis and its impact on women and children, borders and boundaries, issues of visibility/invisibility, political prejudices and gendered perspectives on religious minorities
  • marriage as a lightning rod/rhetoric for debates about gender and sexuality
  • historical perspectives on, and intergenerational dialogue about, the study of women and religion
• the work and legacy of Rita Gross

• female figures and/as role models: for example, goddesses and female saints

For a possible co-sponsored session with the Religion, Media and Culture Group: Media, Gender, Legislated Morality, and Public Policy in Texas

For a possible co-sponsored session with the Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Group: Women's Agency, Religion, and Violence: women who link religion and violence, or women and claims to religiously justified violence; media representations, gendered stereotypes, and political rhetoric about women, religion and violence, and/or rhetoric around gender and terrorism; gun violence, classroom safety, and concealed carry in classrooms, with particular reference to campus carry laws and the AAR’s recent statement.

We also welcome submissions that engage the themes related to Food and Feminism (for a possible-cosponsored session with the Religion and Food Group).

Mission Statement:
This Section seeks to promote inclusivity and excellence in scholarship. We have been intentional about including participants and presenters from interdisciplinary approaches and we encourage nontraditional ways of sharing scholarly work on women in religion. In the process of making selections for Annual Meeting sessions, we work collaboratively with other Sections, Groups, and Seminars to promote scholarly conversations across fields and methodologies. We are committed to providing an inclusive scholarly environment where new voices can be heard and critical analyses of women, gender and religion can be advanced.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Majeed, Debra, Beloit College, mubashsh@beloit.edu

Chair - Whitehead, Deborah, University of Colorado, deborah.whitehead@colorado.edu

Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Group

Call Text:
The Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Group fosters intellectual exchange in the fields of religious studies and theology as they are developing in diverse communities of color that utilize intersectional analyses as methodological posture and site of inquiry. While the AAR features Program Units from diverse communities of color, we provide a space for conversation between communities of color.

This group welcomes proposals in any area related to women of color scholarship, teaching, and activism. For the 2016 meeting, we are particularly interested in proposals that focus on:
• Women of color and the rhetorical violence of the presidential election process
- Women of color and the politics of love
- Racialized aesthetics, women of color beauty and hatred
- Violence against immigrant women of color; women’s migration and violence (co-sponsored with Ethics Section)
- Invisibility, marginality, liminality, and women of color
- Women of color bodies as sites of resistance
- Women of color and popular culture (i.e. women of color of rappers, transnational hip-hop)
- Women of color activisms in church, academy, and society

Mission Statement:
This Group fosters intellectual exchange in the fields of religious studies and theology as they are developing in diverse communities of color from a gendered analysis. While the AAR features Program Units from diverse communities of color, we provide a space for conversation between communities of color. This Group does not assume a prior “women of color” identity, but centers a woman of color analytic that deconstructs the intersecting logics of gender and race. At the same time, we do not hold to a “post-identity” framework and are also concerned with the status of women of color in the academy, the politics of pedagogy, and the relationship between women-of-color-centered activism and scholarship. Understanding identity as performative and shifting, we make the very category of “women of color” itself a site for political and intellectual engagement.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
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Chair - Marshall Turman, Eboni, Duke University, eturman@div.duke.edu

World Christianity Group

Call Text:
The World Christianity Group invites proposals on the following topics:

- Proposals that explore Global Catholicism and the Reshaping of Catholicism in Europe and North America Through Transnational Migration, shifting power dynamics, or social/new media relations between the Majority World (the so-called “Global South”) and Europe and North America (the so-called “Global North”). Possible topics include:
  - challenges of transnational migration for reshaping Catholicism in Europe or North America,
transnational, global, or postcolonial dimensions of shifting power dynamics within Global Catholicism

impact of the proliferation of social/new media, online networks, or related emergent developments for reshaping Catholicism beyond its Eurocentric orientation

boundary or border crossings, hybridities, multiple belongings or loyalties

ecumenical or interreligious engagements

the social or ethical complexities arising from contested family, sexuality, or gender relations

popular devotions or movements within Global Catholicism

With the median age of the global population under 30, youth form a majority of the population, but are seldom the focus of inquiry. Proposals are welcome that focus on the role and impact of Youth Within World Christianity. Possible topics include:

how the youth population is transforming traditions, practices, structures, and network

new trends in religiosity among the youth population

changes within youth education and youth ministry

youth perspectives on sex and gender

While the concept of "Reverse Mission" has become popular in World Christianity discourse, Good Ethnographic Data and Theoretical Frameworks are often lacking. Proposals on ‘reverse mission’ are especially welcome that:

provide depth and context to cases of ‘reverse mission’

contest ‘reverse mission’ as a concept and explore alternative terminologies and concepts, and/or

explore how ‘reverse mission’ relates to theories of globalization, migration, and/or secularization.

Borderline Christian Spiritualities: Hybrid pieties in the borderlands (For a possible co-sponsored session with the Latino/a Critical and Comparative Studies Group and the Christian Spirituality Group) Ethnographic approaches are especially encouraged.

Mission Statement:
This Group seeks to explore the intercultural, interconfessional, and interreligious dynamics of Christianity as a world religion, bringing into conversation scholars in the disciplines of history, mission studies, ecumenical studies, theology, sociology of religion, anthropology of religion, and religious studies.

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

As a rule, we use anonymous submissions via PAPERS and adhere to this conscientiously. Exceptions include special sessions, e.g. author-meets-critics sessions and some co-sponsored panels.

Leadership:
Chair - Tan, Jonathan, Case Western Reserve University, jonathan@jonathantan.org

Chair – Williams, Corey, Leiden University, c.l.williams@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Yoga in Theory and Practice Group

Call Text:
This Group seeks individual paper, papers session, or roundtable proposals on the topic of yoga in theory and practice from a variety of perspectives, including sociology, anthropology, history of religions, philosophy and theology, and cultural studies. We prefer complete session submissions rather than individual paper proposals whenever possible. You are encouraged to contact the Co-Chairs for more information about the suggested topics and to suggest other possible topics.

Suggested topics include:

- Yoga Teacher Training/Dissemination of Yoga Knowledge
- Yoga of the Yoga Vasistha
- Sri Aurobindo and Contemporary Transmission
- Perspectives on Jim Mallinson and Mark Singleton's Roots of Yoga (Penguin, 2016)
- Yoga and Sacred Texts
- Pranayama
- Contemporary Yoga Globalizers
- Modern Buddhist Yogas
- Lineage, Tradition, and Sectarian Identity: Who Were the Practitioners of Pre-Modern Yoga?
- Material Culture of Yoga
- Yoga and God: Christian and Hindu Perspectives
- Contemplative dimensions of Yoga, including critical reflections on popular forms (for a possible cosponsored session with the Contemplative Studies Group)
Mission Statement:
This Group seeks to elucidate the religious and sectarian representations of yoga in South Asian history and the profoundly fascinating contemporary yoga culture that has emerged in the past century. Among other topics that are addressed in our Group is the emergence of modern yoga out of the encounter between Indian and European cultures in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In connection with this, it examines the relative pervasiveness of spiritual and religious ideologies in manifest or latent forms within the contemporary yoga scene, and the overarching sociological relevance of yoga within global culture. We also examine changing paradigms with respect to the nature and function of yoga in the larger South Asian religious context. Our goal is to provide a venue in which the body of scholars working in this area can collectively evaluate this extremely timely material. We actively pursue scholars from Europe, Asia, and other areas that have worked at length on these issues, so as to bring an important international component to the Group.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Jain, Andrea, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, andrjain@iupui.edu

Chair - Borkataky Varma, Sravana, Rice University, sb23@rice.edu

Yogācāra Studies Group

Call Text:
The Yogācāra Studies Group welcomes proposals for papers or panels for the 2016 Annual Meeting to be held in San Antonio. We plan to have a text discussion panel, as at previous meetings, and hope to have at least one co-sponsored panel with another group. This year AAR management announced that in future meetings groups like ours that are allotted one 2.5 hour session can also opt for two 90-minute sessions, and this gives us greater flexibility.

Text panel proposals put forward in Atlanta included:

- Dharma-dharmatā-vibhāga
- Daśa-bhūmika
- Santanāntana-siddhi

We also welcome proposals on other texts.

Proposals for topical panels are also welcomed. Topics proposed at the Business Meeting include:

- Yogācāra and embodiment
We also welcome proposals on other topics and suggestions for co-sponsorships.

Mission Statement:
The Yogācāra tradition within Buddhism provides the seminal basis for many forms of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Yogācāra was the preeminent Buddhist school for many centuries in India, East Asia, and Tibet. Even after its relative decline as a distinct tradition, its teachings continued to provide the basis for both the theory and practice of subsequent Buddhist Mahāyāna schools throughout Asia, and it has seen a resurgence in the 20th and 21st century in Asia, including in China, Hong Kong, Japan, and among Tibetans.

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

Method of submission:
PAPERS

Leadership:
Chair - Tzohar, Roy, Tel-Aviv University, roytzo@post.tau.ac.il

Chair - Powers, C. John, Australian National University, john.powers@anu.edu.au