



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION

2023 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Please note that you can see the most up to date CFPs by clicking through our [Program Units](#) on our submission website. Since this document has been published, some changes have been made and page numbers might not match.

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General Call for Proposals Instructions

Deadline

The deadline for the Call for Proposals is **Wednesday, March 1, 2023, 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time.**

Meeting Location

The 2023 AAR and SBL Annual Meetings will be held **November 18-21, in San Antonio, TX.** Registration and the Exhibit Hall will be located in the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center. Academic sessions will be held in the Convention Center and surrounding hotels. Registration and housing for the Annual Meeting will open in the spring.

Questions about the Call

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

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

Guidelines for Submitting Proposals

Step 1: Find a topic in a general Call for Proposals or Call of a specific Program Unit that interests you.

Step 2: Determine which type of proposal you wish to submit.

- **Paper proposal** – A paper written by you (and possibly a coauthor) that you will present in response to a theme within a Program Unit's Call.
- **Papers session proposal** – A proposal of a complete session of different papers on a theme, complete with its own description, abstract, a presider, paper presentations, and (optionally) a respondent. Presenters in a papers session must

submit their proposals to the papers session organizer, who in turn is responsible for inputting them into the PAPERS System.

- **Roundtable session proposal** – A proposal of a complete session, including a presider, list of panelists, and (optionally) a respondent; all of whom will speak (ex tempore) on a common theme.

Step 3: Write your 1000-word proposal and 150-word abstract. Paper sessions require a separate 1000-word proposal and 150-word abstract for each paper in the session. The abstracts will be listed in the Online Program Book.

Step 4: Submit your proposal via the method requested by the Program Unit no later than **Wednesday, March 1**. Most Program Units have elected to use the online PAPERS system only. Carefully note any audiovisual equipment you require before you submit your proposal.

- **PAPERS:** Submit your 1000-word proposal and 150-word abstract via the PAPERS system. **NB: Do not place your name or other identifying remarks in the body of the proposal field or abstract field in PAPERS; this may endanger the anonymous review process of the Unit and acceptance of your proposal may be jeopardized.** Your name and contact information is sent automatically with the proposal. For help using the PAPERS system, please consult the [PAPERS Instructions](#) or if you still require assistance, email papers_support@aarweb.org.
- **E-mail:** Submit your 1000-word proposal and 150-word abstract abstract within the BODY of ONE single e-mail to the contacts listed in the Program Unit's call (usually the Chairs). Attach the [Participant Form for E-Mail Submissions](#). Please be sure you use the exact same title on the Participant Form for E-mail Submission as you do on the e-mailed proposal. Proposals received without the participant forms will be disqualified. Participant forms received without proposals or abstracts will also be disqualified. If you are requested by the Program Unit to submit a copy to both co-Chairs or Steering Committee members, follow the instructions listed. If no one person is specified, send your complete proposal to either one of the co-chairs.
- **E-mail with Attachments:** Submit your 1000-word proposal and 150-word abstract, and Participant Form as attachments in one single e-mail to the contacts listed in the Program Unit's call (usually the Chairs). Attach the [Participant Form for E-Mail Submissions](#). Be sure you use the exact same title on the Participant Form for E-mail Submission as you do on the attached proposal you e-mail. Proposals received without the participant forms will be disqualified. Participant forms received without proposals or abstracts will also be disqualified.

Step 5: Notification of your proposal's acceptance status for the Annual Meeting program will be sent by **early April**.

Participation Requirements at the Annual Meeting

All participants accepted to the program must be registered for the Annual Meeting by July 31, 2023.

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

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

People can submit no more than two proposals in response to the Call for Proposals.

Special Sessions

A limited number of special sessions are approved by the Program Committee each year. These are intended to be experimental, creative, or timely sessions that address an area of interest that does not naturally fall within the purview of one or more existing Program Units OR that address a current issue/event of interest to multiple AAR constituencies. The Program Committee occasionally approves special sessions for sessions that would be one-time only or special to the year or location. Special Sessions may only be submitted through PAPERS by **March 1, 2023**. Under exceptional circumstances, special sessions may also be proposed to address a pressing issue that arises after the proposal deadline.

Guidelines for special sessions:

- Special sessions are accepted through PAPERS only.
- Special session proposals must provide a rationale based on the criteria above.
- Special sessions must use one of the prearranged session proposal formats (papers session or roundtable).
- Make sure the special session does not cover an area already covered by an existing program unit. If a proposal fits within an established program unit's mission, the proposal will be forwarded to that unit. If a proposal is submitted both as a special session and also to a program unit, it will be eliminated from consideration as a special session.

The Program Committee evaluates all Special Session proposals. Notification of program acceptance will be announced by early April.

Exploratory Sessions

All proposals for new Units must begin as Exploratory Sessions. An exploratory session is a complete prearranged session that provides a platform for a group of members to announce a line of inquiry new to the AAR program and to seek out others interested in pursuing it further. The proposal can be for a paper, panel, or other creative type of session format. Exploratory sessions are submitted through the PAPERS system and must be submitted before **March 1, 2023**. Notification of program acceptance will be announced in early April 2023.

To establish a new program unit, the unit proposers must normally be approved by the Program Committee to hold an exploratory session two years in a row. After the second exploratory session, the unit proposers may submit their proposal for a new unit, which the Program Committee can approve, deny, or – in very rare circumstances – return for revision and resubmission after a third, final exploratory session. More detailed information can be found on our webpage about Proposing a New Program Unit.

Annual Meeting Schedule

- 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (2 hours)
- 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM <Lunch break and Plenary Addresses>
- 12:30 PM - 2:30 PM (2 hours)
- 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM (90 minutes)
- 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM (90 minutes)

Tuesday morning

- 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM (90 minutes)
- 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (2 hours)
- 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM (90 minutes)

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

Audiovisual Requests

The AAR recognizes the importance of using digital equipment during presentations. A limited number of meeting rooms are supplied with LCD projectors for connecting to a personal laptop or tablet. Additionally, some rooms will have the capacity to amplify audio from a presenter's device. AAR encourages participants to bring or share a personal or departmental laptop or tablet to run any PowerPoint, CD, or DVD presentation.

Participants must submit a request for equipment with their proposal. If accepted, the request is forwarded to the AAR office and the session will be scheduled in an AV room set. **AV request must be received at the time of proposal submission. Late requests will not be honored.** The AAR office will make every effort to honor the AV requests received at the time of the proposal.

Consistent wifi is not guaranteed. Free, communal wifi access is provided by some properties, but will not be equipped to handle bandwidth-intensive tasks. Video calling is not recommended. There will be no wired internet for sessions. In order to ensure quality, video presentations should be downloaded to a native device and not streamed over the internet.

To check your audio-visual request at this year's Annual Meeting, log into your account in PAPERS and view your session information.

Questions about the Annual Meeting

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

Program Units

African Diaspora Religions Unit

Call Text:

Engaging Diaspora Religions Through Literature, Storytelling or Archival Narratives (Co-sponsorship between the African Diaspora Religions, Afro-American Religious History, Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit, African Religions, The Women and Religion Unit, the Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching and Activism) Our units propose a panel focused on literature, poetry, orality, and archival sources related to African, African Diaspora, or Afro-American religions. Iconic texts from authors such as Zora Neale Hurston, Toni Morrison, Gloria Anzaldua, and Gloria Naylor, among others, engage with faith, spirituality, embodiment, ancestrality, mourning, fellowship, borders/border crossings, and other issues, questions, and challenges. We invite papers that explore the power dynamics reflected in such texts, the provenance of the same, and the benefits and challenges of working with these kinds of sources. Do we understand and interpret faith differently depending on whether we rely on oral history or literature? Do archives permit access to faith?

Food, faith, Ritual, and Celebration at the Border [a Pre-arranged Panel, this panel will not accept submissions]

Co-sponsorship between the Religion and Food, African Diaspora Religions, African Religions, and Comparative Study of Religion units will internally select panelists for a panel theme on religion, food, agriculture, land, and those who work the land, including migrant, low-wage, child, injured, or enslaved workers.

For example, sabbatical and jubilee traditions structure restorative rest for bodies and land. Additionally, traditional ecological, embodied, and place based knowledge systems shape dynamic interactions between people, food, and lands. Such knowledge systems may be responsive to disruptions to local land, waterway, and climate.

For a co-sponsored session with the African Diaspora Religions, Religion and Food, and/or African Religions unit, papers considering the above themes with specific reference to the African and/or African Diasporic religious context. Recognizing our location in borderlands Texas, we invite papers considering geographically relevant topics such as:

- religion and food in Texas, Mexican, Latin American, Indigenous, Black, and borderlands Latinx communities
- meat, barbecue, meat-eating, and alternative meat

- religion and food in relation to land, water, agriculture, and those who work the land, often migrant workers
- the consumption of peyote, ayahuasca, and other ethnobotanical/entheogenic/psychedelic substances

More broadly, we welcome papers on topics such as religion and food in relation to healing and ethnomedicine; control, power, agency, and struggle; gender and sexuality; food and the spirit world.

Africana Religion, Queer and Trans Studies, and Mysticism: Creativity, Synthesis, Marginality and Embodiment

(Co-sponsorship between African Diaspora Religions, Mysticism, and Queer Studies in Religion Units)

In Africana religions, devotees/practitioners navigate visible and invisible worlds in ways that lead to mystical union/communion. What kinds of embodied practices or material technologies are used to facilitate mystical encounters? What role do creativity, story, and sound play in fostering mystical engagement? How do the fluid and hybrid nature of Africana religions enable marginalized and queer identities to experience mystical empowerment and transformation? We invite papers on Africana religion and mysticism including themes related to embodiment, movement, and gesture; queer identity; race, gender, and marginality; ritual, ceremony, and adornment; material culture and technologies; energy and performance; and sound, music, and rhythm.

Slippery Borderlands and Fluid Crossroads: African Diaspora Religions and Queer/Trans Identities

(Co-sponsorship between Queer Religions and African Diaspora Units)

Concretely defined by walls and guards; impeded by nature through mountains, deserts or bodies of water; or delineated by restrictive inchoate ideologies. Borders can have hard edges as well as amorphous boundaries. Borders are anchored in spatial mobility, situational identity, local contingency, and ambiguities of power. Historically borders have been political and ideological sites of economic exchange, cultural mixing, contestation of identity, empire, nation, and regional authority with the imposition of rules, edicts and restrictions. This co-sponsored panel proposes to explore the permeability of borders in light of the policies, politics and presentation of identity predicated on differing ideologies of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or systems of faith and spirituality.

Mission Statement:

Our unit explores broad geographies, histories, and cultures of people of African descent and the way they shape the religious landscape, not only in the Caribbean and the Americas, but also in Europe and Asia. We define “diaspora” as the spread and dispersal of people of African descent – both forced and voluntary – through the slave trade, imperial and colonial displacements, and postcolonial migrations. This Unit emphasizes the importance of an interdisciplinary approach which is central to its vision. The aim is

to engage a wide range of disciplines and a variety of scholars who work on different aspects of African diaspora religions. It considers the linguistic and cultural complexities of the African diaspora, the importance of African traditional religions, Afro-Christianity, Afro-Islam, and Afro-Judaism, the way they have and continue to inform an understanding of Africa, and also the way they have and continue to shape the religious landscape of the Americas, Europe, and Asia.

Chairs:

- Scott Barton, New York University
scott.barton@nyu.edu
- Carol Marie Webster,
webstercm@dancewithoutsurrender.com

African Religions Unit

Call Text:

Our Unit encourages critical inquiry about religions originating and/or practiced in Africa. Proposals should go beyond description; they should critically engage the conceptual tools and methods employed in analysis. The steering committee will evaluate the merit of each proposal based on the clarity of its thesis, the strength of the evidence referenced, and the quality of the conclusions drawn from it in terms of both style and substance. For the 2023 Annual Meeting, we particularly invite papers as well as panel proposals that respond to the following themes relevant to any region of the African continent and its diverse religious cultures:

With particular awareness of the AAR's presence in Texas, this session seeks to respond directly to the realities of a post-Dobbs America. We hope to bring together scholars who work in a range of regions and on different religious traditions in order to share their knowledge and comparative perspectives to deepen our understanding of the issues surrounding reproductive justice. In the planning phase, we seek to gather together scholars and activists who wish to think through and prepare some type of public program on the issue of Reproductive Justice for the annual meeting.

- Religion, Ethnonationalisms, Socio-Political Unrests, and Fragmentations in Africa
Often understood as a cause or catalyst for ethno-political tension or conflict in normative discourse on religion, "religious tolerance," and conflict, recent scholarship from African and African-descended scholars interrogates the role of religion in conflict and challenges assumptions that argue for a causal link between religion and ethnonationalism in Africa. This session welcomes papers that critically engage the role of religion in ways that expand the current discourse. Some questions to consider include: 1) does religion transcend ethnonationalism? 2) does religion lend itself to cooptation or complicity in conflict? 3) how do systems of belonging or community on the continent resist or contribute to conflict and ethnic fragmentation? Whether theorized as catalyst or counter-measure, religion is key to understanding many ethnic, socio-political unrests and fragmentations on the African continent. We seek papers that address and theorize the role and impact of religion on these issues on the African continent.

- Food, Faith, Ritual, and Celebration at the Border (a pre-formed panel)

Co-sponsoring units Religion and Food, African Diaspora Religions, African Religions, and Comparative Study of Religion units will internally select panelists for a panel theme on religion, food, agriculture, land, and those who work the land, including migrant, low-wage, child, injured, or enslaved workers.

For example, sabbatical and jubilee traditions structure restorative rest for bodies and land. Additionally, traditional ecological, embodied, and place based knowledge systems shape dynamic interactions between people, food, and lands. Such knowledge systems may be responsive to disruptions to local land, waterway, and climate.

- Religion, Afrofuturism and Afropessimism

Religion and Philosophy are often connected discursively in defining new contours to explain the human condition. The role of person and community, for example, has long been a way for African-descended people to consider their identity and community as a form of self-naming and charting a path towards self-direction. Afrofuturism and Afropessimism are two philosophical interventions shaping the discourse, critically engaging the ongoing effects of racism, colonialism, and other historical events influencing Black populations. We seek papers that explore, interrogate, and address how religion interacts, intersects, and informs Afrofuturist/Afropessimist theoretical and methodological engagements, particularly, the ways in which they construct and disrupt mainstream ideas about Black personhood, being, and community.

- Co-Sponsorship with the History of Christianity Unit Ancient Christianity in Africa We invite proposals that examine early African contributions to formative Christianity (1st-10th centuries C.E.). We particularly welcome proposals that consider ways in which ancient African expressions of Christianity can help decolonize monolithic eurocentric historical understandings of the history of Christianity."

- Engaging or Challenging Diaspora Religions Through Literature, Storytelling, or Archival Narratives (Co-sponsored panel between the African Diaspora Religions, Afro-American Religious History, Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit, African Religions, The Women and Religion Unit, the Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching and Activism)

Our units propose a panel focused on literature, poetry, orality, and archival sources related to African, African Diaspora, or Afro-American religions. Iconic texts from authors such as Zora Neale Hurston, Toni Morrison, Gloria Anzaldua, and Gloria Naylor, among others, engage with faith, spirituality, embodiment, ancestry, mourning, fellowship, borders/border crossings, and other issues, questions, and challenges. We invite papers that explore the power dynamics reflected in such texts, the provenance of the same, the benefits and challenges of working with these kinds of sources.

- African Religions Unit Film Screening

Film: Woman King

Join us for a free screening of the 2022 epic film about the all-female Agojie warriors. The screening will be followed by a discussion centered around gender, religion, the slave trade, etc.

Mission Statement:

The central aim of the African Religions Unit is to address and fulfill the Mission Statement of the American Academy of Religion with particular reference to the African continent as a vital part of our globalized, post-colonial world. The African Religions Unit aims to provide a forum within the American Academy of Religion for the discussion of research on the multiplicity of religious traditions in Africa, methodological issues in the study of the religions of Africa, and African religious responses to ethical and social issues affecting the continent. The Unit encourages the participation of African and non-African scholars in the leadership of the Unit and in participation in its programs. It further actively seeks collaboration with other Units in the AAR, as well as with the African Association for the Study of Religions, in order to promote the study and understanding of religions in Africa in the wider academy. The members of the African Religions Unit come to the subject from a variety of schools of thought and methodological approaches, including but not limited to anthropology, history, history of religions, literary studies, sociology, and theology. The three major religious traditions under investigation are indigenous religions, Christianity and Islam, and the Group's leadership strives to create some balance in the attention paid to these three major traditions. Website: <https://africanreligionsgroup.wordpress.com/>

Chairs:

- David Amponsah, University of Pennsylvania
amda@sas.upenn.edu
- Georgette Ledgister, Harvard University
georgette.ledgister@gmail.com

Afro-American Religious History Unit

Call Text:

The Afro-American Religious History Unit invites proposals that explore the religiosity of African-descended people within the geographical and geo-cultural boundaries of the United States. For our 2023 Annual Meeting in San Antonio, we are especially interested in proposals that engage one or more of the following topics:

In conjunction with the AAR 2023 theme, “La Labor de Nuestras Manos” we invite papers that retheorize methods and methodologies in the study of Black religion through sources, technologies, and in classes, specifically:

- New theories and methods in the study of African-American religious practices, experiences, interiority;
- Reconceptualizations of the “Black religious” and/or “Black church” paradigm;
- Digital Humanities’ impact on the study of Black religion;
- Scholar positionality and research in African-American religious history;
- New approaches to the idea of “respectabilities” in Black religious practices;
- Highlights and critiques of the archives of Black religion;
- Revisiting the legacy of the AARDOC (<https://aardoc.sites.amherst.edu/>), The North Star (<https://www.princeton.edu/~jweisenf/northstar/faq.html>), and other archived projects;

- The relationship and/or tensions between Black Studies and the Study of Black Religions;
- Potential roundtable on Graduate Training in Africana/African-American Religions;
- Teaching African-American religious history;

Engaging Diaspora Religions Through Literature, Storytelling or Archival Narratives (Co-sponsorship between the African Diaspora Religions, Afro-American Religious History, Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit, African Religions, The Women and Religion Unit, the Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching and Activism)

Our units propose a panel focused on literature, poetry, orality, and archival sources related to African, African Diaspora, or Afro-American religions. Iconic texts from authors such as Zora Neale Hurston, Toni Morrison, Gloria Anzaldua, and Gloria Naylor, among others, engage with faith, spirituality, embodiment, ancestry, mourning, fellowship, borders/border crossings, and other issues, questions, and challenges. We invite papers that explore the power dynamics reflected in such texts, the provenance of the same, and the benefits and challenges of working with these kinds of sources. Do we understand and interpret faith differently depending on whether we rely on oral history or literature? Do archives permit access to faith?

African-American Religion and climate catastrophe, broadly configured, particularly:

- Historical topics that elucidate contemporary environmental landscapes and futures, especially in light of climate catastrophe and its impact on Black communities;
- The legacies and impacts of migration patterns and how they have and continue to shape practitioners of African-American religions;
- African-American religions and the environment, nature, and the land.

African-American Religion and so called “illicit” practices, specifically:

- Black religious communities, carceral systems, and the (de)criminalization of recreational substance use;
- Histories of African-American religion and narcotic and/or alcohol use, broadly configured (ritual, entheogenic, recreational, medicinal, etc.);
- Black religious communities and religious activism in relation to the history of other practices criminalized or deemed illicit, especially queer sex, sex work, pornography, and other practices (**for a potential co-sponsored session with the Religion and Sexuality Unit**);
- In light of the 50th anniversary of *Roe*, the repeal of *Roe*, and our location in Texas, we welcome proposals on Black religious communities and reproductive justice, including abortion, reproductive ethics, womb ethics. (**for a potential co-sponsored session with the North American Religions Unit**)

“Reflecting on the Legacy: 50 years since the AAR Presidency of Charles H. Long” (a potential co-sponsored session with the Critical Theory and Discourse on Religion Unit)

Redressing the historiographical dearth of LGBTQI+ African American religious histories, specifically:

- The theoretical possibilities of “queering” African-American religion;
- The historical presence of gender nonconformity, gender fluidity, and a spectrum of sexualities and genders physically and conceptually within Black religious communities;
- The methodological and theoretical limitations of heteronormativity and gender normativity;
- The intersections of Black trans studies and African-American religions.

Rethorizations of the geographical and cultural boundaries of African-American Religion in relationship to the concept of the West and the Borderlands, specifically:

- Historic movement to, and practices of, African-American religions in the West and on the Borderlands of “America”;
- Interactions with and conversations about relationships with Indigenous communities and their religious practices in the West by Black religious practitioners;
- Afro-Spanish, Afro-Indigenous, and other intercultural religiosities;
- Concepts of space, the embodiment of space, and boundaries in African-American religion;
- Black religions among asylum seekers and within immigrant communities in America;
- The impact of immigration upon enactments and definitions of African-American religions.

Intellectual Trajectories in the Study of African-American Religion - Highlighting Graduate Student Work:

- Proposals for five to seven minute presentations of term papers, dissertation chapters drafts or other short pieces in development are especially welcome.
- The steering committee is open to configuring this session as a conversational space for works-in-progress with comments from a faculty member.

****Guidelines for successful/strong proposal submissions****

Successful proposals should:

- 1) respond directly to the call,
- 2) engage historical and interdisciplinary archival methods and name sources used or examined,
- 3) situate the intervention(s) in historiographical context by engaging relevant authors and key texts, but only as necessary, and
- 4) indicate time period and relevance to the field of African-American religious history.

We also invite creative proposals that are attentive to alternative methods of presenting, including but not limited to multimedia presentations, interviews, flash/micro talks, fireside chats, and facilitated discussions.

Mission Statement:

The purpose of this Unit is to recover the sources and histories related to the religious experiences of African-descended people in the United States; challenge, nuance, and expand theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of African-American religions; and create forums for critical, creative, and collaborative engagement with new scholarship in the field. The Unit is committed to the historical investigation of the diversity of U.S. African-Americans' religious experiences across chronological periods.

Chairs:

- Vaughn Booker, Dartmouth College
vaughn.a.booker@dartmouth.edu
- Nicole Turner, Yale University
nicolemyersturner@icloud.com

Animals and Religion Unit

Call Text:

This Unit addresses the study of animals and religion and seeks to engage scholars of religion with the emergent field of animal studies. We welcome theoretically informed paper/panel proposals on all topics related to these themes. We value papers that attend to real animals alongside theoretical constructs, imagery, or representations pertaining to them, and papers that attend to intersectionality with race, gender, sexuality, disability and other matters of justice.

In addition to this open call for papers, the Animals and Religion Unit is interested in organizing sessions around the following topics, with an eye toward the 2023 Annual Meeting's presidential theme: "La Labor de Nuestros Manos."

- Animals and Labor, Animals as Laborers: religious perspectives on husbandry, agriculture, ethics of care, and food.
- Veterinarians, secondary trauma, compassion fatigue and suicide: Veterinarians have among the highest suicide rates of all professions. How might scholarship in religious studies and/or theology address this issue?
- Making animals visible and invisible: Religious perspectives on the display of animals (e.g. in zoos, activism, as moral/spiritual exemplars) and the concealment of animals (e.g. in factory farming operations, hierarchies).
- Borders and Boundaries: Animals crossing and complicating borders, whether those borders are national, conceptual, or disciplinary.
- Animal languages and inter-species communication, especially in light of emerging scientific knowledge
- Animals as individuals, animals as populations within ecosystems: How should we think about the value of animal lives? How should we think about animal lives in the context of extinction(s), diminishing populations, and the lives of "endlings" (the last of their kind).
- Potential co-sponsorship with the History of Christianity Unit: On the 800th anniversary of St. Francis and the first nativity scene to include live animals (1223 C.E.), we invite proposals that explore the various roles accorded to animals in imagining the Christian story. We particularly welcome proposals that complicate

and challenge the ways in which the term 'animal' is understood, both in nonhuman and human incarnations.

- Finally, we welcome paper proposals and panel proposals that advance scholarship in the area of Animals and Religion, even if they don't directly address the prompts above.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Chairs:

- Christopher Carter, University of San Diego
christophercarter@sandiego.edu
- Eric Meyer, Carroll College_
ericdaryl.meyer@gmail.com

Anthropology of Religion Unit

Call Text:

We invite proposals from the full range of ethnographic theories and methods exploring diverse traditions, regions, topics, periods, and standpoints from across the disciplines of Anthropology and Religious Studies.

The following areas are of particular interest for individual and panel submissions for the 2023 meetings in San Antonio, Texas:

- *Building Bodies of Knowledge*. How we negotiate knowledge production in research, with particular attention to community-engaged scholarship, collaboration, and diversifying expertise.
- *Critical Positionality*. How we engage with the ethical dimensions of research praxis, with particular attention to relationality, processes of ethical compromise and being compromised.
- *Failure*. How we experience failure as scholars, in seeking research opportunities, in fieldwork, in theorizing and analysis, in writing, and in responding to the reception of our scholarship.

- *Religion & Indigeneity*. Explorations of the ways in which “indigeneity” as a category is made and negotiated in religious life, with particular attention to nationalism, racialization, and kinship.
- *Teaching the Anthropology of Religion*. Best practices for doing the ethnography of religion in undergraduate and graduate contexts, including the conceptual, pragmatic, and ethical challenges of students conducting fieldwork.
- We also have a preplanned and co-sponsored author meets respondents session on Rebekka King’s *The New Heretics: Skepticism, Secularism, and Progressive Christianity* for which we are not seeking proposals.

Further, we encourage panel proposals that use creative and alternative formats that elevate critical dialogue and engage multiple senses, for example:

- *Flash Formats*. An increased number of presenters are allotted ~5 minutes, followed by a robust, guided discussion.
- *Sensory Props*. Presenters engage with a material form that bears fieldwork significance, such as physical objects, food(s), visual images, and/or sound recordings.
- *Author Meets Critics*. Traditional and creative arrangements, including single authors, books from multiple authors on a related or contested theme, and prominent writers of religion in the public sphere.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Eric Hoenes Del Pinal, University of North Carolina, Charlotte
ehoenes@uncc.edu
- Jennifer A. Selby, Memorial University of Newfoundland
jselby@mun.ca

Arts, Literature, and Religion Unit

Call Text:

The Arts, Literature and Religion Unit welcomes paper and panel proposals for the following themes. Please indicate to which of these themes you are responding. There will not be an open call for papers this year.

Arts and Poetics of Sacred Scriptures

This panel will focus on modern texts and works of art explicitly inspired by sacred scriptures. How and why do modern artists and writers recreate sacred scriptures? How do they reinstate, question, or renew the function of sacred scriptures? Are there specific imagery or motives from sacred scriptures that inspire artists and writers nowadays? We welcome papers examining all artistic and literary genres alongside sacred scriptures from all religious traditions.

Contact: Gloria Maité Hernández ghernandez@wcupa.edu

Climate Fiction

The rapid growth of “cli-fi” (climate fiction) in recent years represents an important literary effort to grapple with climate change and its many dimensions: social, political, religious, affective, etc. We invite papers that creatively explore intersections between religious studies and cli-fi. They might, for example, consider how religion, religious adaptation, and new religious movements are imagined in cli-fi. They might use categories from the study of religion (apocalypse, enlightenment, divine judgment, etc.) to critically analyze themes and narratives of cli-fi. They might also consider the ethical promises or perils of cli-fi.

Contact: Ryan Darr ryan.darr@yale.edu

Liberation Mysticism

“Liberation” has come to mean freedom from oppression or dispossession by having theological works focus on a “preferential option for the poor.” Mysticism, on the other, has been related to altered states or the supernatural, as seen by the initiated in theological mysteries; it may also signal direct access to the divine without religious institutional interference. This panel will explore the artistic and literary venues that investigate the notion of “Liberation Mysticism.”

Contact: María Mercedes Carrión mcarrio@emory.edu

Modern Poetry and Religion

Modern poetry does not sum up the world in a neat line, but it elevates the ordinary to bring into light what lies hidden, sometimes in plain sight. Religion, too, like modern poetry, moves us to consider the ordinary. Still, modern poetry and religion are imagined in different spaces. We are keen on papers that engage modern poetry and religion using, but not limited to, themes of ordinary experiences, refuge, and crises.

Contact: Akhil Thomas: akhilthomas@g.harvard.edu

Narratives and Landmarks: Truth, Terror, and Myth

Recent debates concerning the true story of the Alamo reveal divergences in narratives on architecture and land in relation to human bodies, racial and cultural dominance. Historical landmarks have long been symbols of myths, pride, dominance, war, terror, and identity. Inspired by (but not exclusively about) The Alamo building in San Antonio, this panel will include papers that examine spiritual and religious themes interacting with

oppression, land, architecture, nature, human bodies, gender, race, and sexuality. Papers

may examine non-fictional and fictional works of folklore, literature, and visual arts.
Contact: Olufemi Gonsalves jazdtildawn@gmail.com

New Approaches to Method and Theory in the Aesthetics of Religion

We are interested in paper or panel proposals that address intersections of the aesthetic approach to religion, art and ritual with actor-network-theory, material religion, and new ontology or discuss topical issues on simulation, disguise, and mimesis in play and ritual.
Contact: Jens.Kreinath@wichita.edu.

Religion, Music, and Text (cosponsored with the Music and Religion Unit)

Music plays an integral part in religious rituals and performances. It facilitates the religious experience of those performing and participating in the ritual. However, this music is written and composed based on religious texts and informs the music and/or performance. This panel will explore the theme of religion and music, musical texts and performance, and its representation in artistic and literary forms.

Contact: Arts, Literature, and Religion Chairs: Gloria Maité Hernández ghernandez@wcupa.edu, George Pati George.pati@valpo.edu

Religious Landscapes (cosponsored with the Space, Place, and Religion Unit)

Religious or sacred landscapes have historically signified specific ways of representing place. They serve as sources of cultural memory, ethical action, and social change. Religious landscapes are sustained or contested through rituals, pilgrimages, and festivals. Representations of these landscapes are preserved in museums, memorial sites, art, and literature. This panel will investigate the theme of religious landscapes in various artistic and literary forms from any time period and geographical location. Thematic approaches to this topic might include contested landscapes; pilgrimage and the movement of bodies through space; the sacralization and de-sacralization of the landscape; myth and imagined landscapes; or religious landscapes and environmental ethics.

Contact: Adam Newman anewman4@illinois.edu

Ritual and Theater

The connection between ritual and theatre has been studied by many, as well as denied by many. Yet, while not all theatre is derived from ritual, it can have ritual-like qualities, and ritual can be theatrical. This panel welcomes papers on any aspect of the relationship between ritual and theatre, including dance, pageants, and music, as well as scripted plays and liturgies. This panel seeks to engage mainly (not exclusively) those dealing with theater and dance performance. Contact: Cia Sautter cialuna13@gmail.com

Teach This Image (co-sponsored with the Religion in Premodern Europe and Mediterranean Unit)

This session will be oriented towards how we use images and material objects in pedagogy. Contributors would pick an image (or crafted piece of any kind - liturgical implement, garment, mask, sculpture, relief, amulet, architectural site or feature), that has been useful in teaching and examine or describe its pedagogical use and what the object

has been fruitful to illuminate. The images should be selected from things easily available since the session is envisioned as a way of sharing resources. To include more papers we request shorter talks (8-12 minutes). Contact: Claire L. Fanger claire@celestiscuria.org

The labor of four hands

The presidential theme for 2023 AAR is La Labor de Nuestras Mano (The work of our hands). Works of our hands can broadly mean works of scholars of religion and theologians and artists and writers whose labor embody religion and theology. We invite scholars and artists to submit papers or panel proposals that examine this theme from various perspectives.

Contact: George Pati george.pati@valpo.edu

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Gloria Maité Hernández, West Chester University
ghernandez@wcupa.edu
- George Pati, Valparaiso University
george.pati@valpo.edu

Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Unit

Call Text:

“The Changing Landscape of Black, Latinx, and Asian American Buddhisms”

We seek papers that work at the intersection of Black, Latinx, and Asian American Buddhisms, from a variety of methodological perspectives and ranging from topics such as: 1) the construction of interracial Buddhist solidarities, tensions, and dialogue; 2) the critique of white Buddhism and white Christianity; 3) the use of Buddhist practices to address racial, gendered, and sexualized trauma; 4) critical evaluations of the US state’s surveillance tactics at the intersection of religion and race; 5) empire and transnational connections between Buddhism in the US and abroad; 6) race, religion, and neoliberalism.

Embodied Pedagogies: Teaching Asian American Religions w/ Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogy Program Unit

The Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogy and Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society (ANARCS) units are seeking panel or roundtable proposals that

highlight creative pedagogies in teaching Asian American religions. What learning outcomes result when we step outside of the expected lecture format? How can active learning activities engage a diverse group of students or address specific challenges that might arise in teaching Asian American religions? Conversely, are there instances when embodied pedagogies may not be appropriate or effective? Moreover, how do we bridge the theoretical with the practical, the academic with the political through embodied pedagogies? We would especially welcome analyses and presentations that invite audience engagement and response as “students” in the classroom.

Rituals Across Asian American Religions w/ Ritual Studies Program Unit

In line with the 2023 Presidential Theme, “La Labor de Los Manos,” the Ritual Studies and Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society (ANARCS) program units are seeking papers or panel sessions focused on analyses of rituals in Asian American religions, or Asian American communities. We invite papers dealing with rituals in Asian American diasporic communities from a variety of possible perspectives, such as the ways certain religious rituals have been adapted for non-religious settings, the processes whereby rituals reinforce or challenge gender, class, generational, sexual, or racial hierarchies, the potentially divisive qualities of certain ceremonial practices, etc.

Asian Religions in North America w/ Religion and Migration Program Unit

Focusing on communities that have been historically underrepresented, including South Asian, Southeast Asian, East Asian, Pacific Islander, and non-Christian communities. How or in which ways have religious traditions been constructed, reconstructed or represented in North America by immigrant/migrant/refugee communities? What emphases, innovations, or concerns do we see in Asian-American diaspora communities? What if anything has been lost or gained in transition? Engagement with recent publications, such as Melissa Borja’s [Follow the New Way: American Refugee Resettlement Policy and Hmong Religious Change](#) are also welcome.

Possible co-sponsorship with the Buddhism in the West Unit

19th Century Chinese Buddhism in North America

Mission Statement:

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

theoretical, philosophical, and theological concepts, such as aesthetics, beauty, and love.

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

Chairs:

- Helen Jin Kim, Emory University
helenjkim@emory.edu
- SueJeanne Koh, University of California, Irvine
sj.koh@uci.edu

Augustine and Augustinianisms Unit

Call Text:

Confessions of the Flesh: Foucault's Augustine and Augustine's Foucault

Augustine in Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* is a monument in "the history of the subjectification of sex." According to Foucault, Augustine complicates human sexuality by introducing a spiritualizing internalization that not only sets ethical norms and expectations, but also "opens up a field of analysis" whereby sex is governed "on a completely different basis" for many centuries to come. For a joint session with the Foucault and the Study of Religion Seminar, papers are invited that examine Foucault's Augustine in light of the many new developments in Augustinian studies, Foucault studies, or any other field using all available methodologies. Papers may principally address Augustine, readers of Augustine, Foucault and his development, or any of the problematics Foucault argues that Augustine introduced into our reflection on these topics.

Augustine and His Readers on Nature and the Environment

Augustine's contribution to religious thought is commonly characterized as profoundly inward-looking and so preoccupied with human psychology that it shows relatively little interest in the natural world. Furthermore, Augustine's pronounced eschatology has been interpreted as devaluing earthly goods. Given Augustine's vast influence, especially in the West, judgments about this topic have come to have an outsized importance. Papers are invited employing methods from any and all disciplines examining the meaning and role of "nature" in Augustine's own writings or that of any of his subsequent readers. Papers are welcome that are critical of Augustine and later Augustinians as well as ones that call into question previous scholarly characterizations of this aspect of Augustine's legacy and propose new perspectives based on fresh reading and new scholarship. If there are resources in Augustine for our current crisis, what are they and what are their practical effects? If there are not, what precisely should be challenged and changed in the legacy we inherit and pass on?

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a forum for the historical and constructive study of issues relating to the life and thought of Augustine of Hippo, including how it was received in various eras and how it might be a resource for religious thought today. We work collaboratively with other units and constituencies of AAR to promote scholarly conversations across fields

and methodologies. We are committed to providing an inclusive scholarly environment where new voices are heard and critical analyses advanced. Calls for papers, new publications, and other updates in the field of Augustinian Studies can be found on our "AAR Augustine & Augustinianisms Unit" [Facebook](#) page.

Chairs:

- Paul R. Kolbet, Yale University
kolbet@aya.yale.edu
- Sarah Stewart-Kroeker, University of Geneva
sarah.stewartkroeker@gmail.com

Baha'i Studies Unit

Call Text:

All papers are welcome that deal in any way with the history, theology, texts or practices of the Baha'i community. The unit also is interested in papers on the Baha'i Faith and methods in the study of religion. What are the characteristic ways that Baha'is study religion – their own and others? How have Baha'is attempted to integrate Baha'i theological perspectives into their work, and how (and to what extent) have academic perspectives informed Baha'i belief, practice and community life?

Mission Statement:

The Baha'i Studies Unit explores the study of Baha'i history, theology and spiritual practices as well as how Baha'i social teachings can be applied to contemporary social problems. The Unit welcomes research about the history of the Baha'i Faith, its primary figures and texts and Baha'i communities around the world. We are also interested more broadly in the role of religion and social reform in the modern world, particularly issues relevant to Baha'i teachings concerning racial justice, gender equality, science and religion, inequality, nonviolent social change, and human interconnectedness across the globe. The Unit seeks to bring together a diversity of perspectives and traditions, and all are welcome to participate.

Chairs:

- Julia Berger, Montclair State University
juliaberger@gmail.com
- Christopher Glen White, Vassar College
chwhite@vassar.edu

Bioethics and Religion Unit

Call Text:

The Bioethics and Religion Unit welcomes paper and/or panel proposals that examine how religious and spiritual traditions and practices affect the field of bioethics. We are particularly interested in the following themes, but we also welcome any proposals that address any proposals in bioethics and religions:

In consideration of the AAR Presidential Theme for the 2023 Annual Meeting, “the work of our hands,” the Bioethics and Religion Unit welcomes proposals that interpret the theme as relates to “Spiritual Care for Healthcare Providers, Caregivers, and Patients in the Post-pandemic Era.” Healthcare providers and caregivers have expressed their physical, emotional, psychological, moral, and spiritual exhaustion during the pandemic and the presumptive post-pandemic era. We welcome proposals that address issues of burnout, exhaustion, and revival among healthcare providers and caregivers in healthcare in the context of the pandemic. We are interested in various narratives, analyses, and/or suggestions on spiritual care for them, and how they add to bioethical considerations. We also welcome papers/panels that address the need of spiritual care for healthcare providers and patients in reproductive care after the Dobbs decision as a matter of bioethics.

- Co-sponsored session with Bioethics and Religion and the Social Sciences: "Religion in the Post-Dobbs Era": We invite papers/panels to address post-Dobbs abortion issues as ethical matters, reproductive justice, or other religious perspectives. This broad call can include consequences of the Dobbs decision on different religious and non-religious communities (e.g. patients of color, healthcare providers, religious communities), influences of religious communities on the Dobbs decision, responses to this decision by religious communities, and spiritual care for patients and healthcare providers who have experienced religious or other forms of marginalization from abortion experiences and abortion practices. The committee particularly welcomes papers/panels with social scientific approaches to these topics.
- Co-sponsored session with Human Enhancement and Transhumanism Unit: "Data Justice, and Healthcare": We are seeking papers or a proposed panel looking at the intersection of data justice and healthcare in religious communities or perspectives.
- We welcome any proposals that address any aspects of the relationship between bioethics and religion.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Terri Laws, University of Michigan, Dearborn
terrlaws@umich.edu
- Hajung Lee, University of Puget Sound

hjlee@pugetsound.edu

Black Theology Unit

Call Text:

The Black Theology Unit invites individual papers and panel submissions on the topics identified below and proposals on additional topics of interest that advance the discipline of Black theology. In accordance with the 2023 theme: "La Labor de Nuestros Manos (The Work of Our Hands)," we invite submissions that explore black theological discourse through topics such as:

- Black theology and the borderlands; liminal Black identities; Black/Brown political relationality; Brown anti-Blackness
- The response of Black theology to social death
- Black theology, "Black aliveness," and the politics of Black joy
- Black theology and capitalist economy; the relationship between economic democracy and racial justice
- Black theology and Black nationalism
- Black theology and grassroots re/sources
- Black theology, critical race theory, and censorship
- Black ecotheologies, Black geographies and climate catastrophe
- Black theology and embodied pneumatologies
- Black theology and the recovery of non-Christian theisms

We also invite papers on:

- new directions and methods in the field of Black Theology
- The distinctiveness of Black Liberation Theology - What does liberation mean? How has "liberation" evolved since the emergence of Black theology?
- Black theology and the Black literary imagination
- Black theology, Black bodies, and the problem of the non/human
- Possible co-sponsorship with the Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop and Religion Unit discussing the intersections of overlap between Black Theology and Hip-Hop.

Co-sponsorship between Black Theology and Martin Luther King Jr. Units

Women and the Movement

We invite papers or organized paper sessions that take up the question of women and gender in the civil rights movement. Without question, women were essential in the life of Martin King Jr. and the wider civil rights movement. This session is interested in various methodological approaches toward an investigation of gender and the civil rights movement. What might an engagement between Black and womanist theologies, as well as Black studies, yield toward new ways of reading King and the wider campaign. What new insights, from women authors, can we gain about gender, class, and sexual identities that provide fresh ways of reading the civil rights movement, especially MLK. We are especially interested in papers that:

- Explore the women around King.
- Investigate the influence of women thinkers, activists, and preachers on King.
- Engage King from the standpoint of critical theory using women theorists.

- Employ a womanist theological lens to interrogate King's theology.

Sisters in the Wilderness – Honoring the life and scholarly legacy of womanist theologian Delores Williams and the 30th Anniversary of *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist Godtalk* (Orbis, 1993)

Our unit is arranging a co-sponsored panel with the Black Theology unit and Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions, honoring the scholarly legacy of the late Delores Williams, a trailblazing womanist theologian. We recognize the significance of Williams' works and particularly highlight the 30th Anniversary of the publication of *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist Godtalk*. This is an invited panel with closed submissions.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Jawanza Eric Clark, Manhattan College
jawanza.clark@manhattan.edu
- Eboni Marshall Turman, Yale University
eboni.marshallturman@yale.edu

Body and Religion Unit

Call Text:

The Body and Religion Unit aims to provide a forum for multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary conversations that theorize the contribution of the body and embodiment to religions.

This year, we are focusing on two different types of panels: roundtables and papers.

- *Roundtables:* We invite roundtable proposals on diverse methodologies and understandings of the body within various religious contexts. For roundtable proposals, we would like to see a focus on discussion rather than presentation of prepared papers (e.g. each panelist is given five-seven minutes at the beginning to discuss their work and then the rest of the time is devoted to discussion).
- *Papers:* We also invite paper panels and individual papers. When reviewing your paper proposals, we particularly appreciate proposals that do not simply discuss bodily activities but also explicitly reflect on the difference this focus makes to the academic study of religions.
- This year we are interested in proposals on body/bodies and religion in relation to the following themes: play, connection/reconnection, and fluidity.

Please note that this year we are issuing an open call for roundtables but not an open call for papers. Papers must focus on the themes outlined above.

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

Mission Statement:

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

Journal

The Body and Religion Unit launched the peer-reviewed journal, *Body and Religion*, through *Equinox*, in 2017. We invite papers for submission on a rolling basis, including papers presented on panels hosted by, but not limited to, the Body and Religion Unit.

Journal Homepage: <https://journal.equinoxpub.com/BAR>

Steering Committee Membership

Those who take on the responsibilities of being steering committee members will participate in decision-making processes for the annual call for papers, respond to unit communication, and read, rank, and comment on submitted proposals in March. If a steering committee member finds that they are not able to fulfill these tasks in a given year, they should communicate with the co-chairs. If a steering committee member cannot participate in this work, the co-chairs may replace them.

Chairs:

- Wesley Barker, Mercer University
barker_wn@mercer.edu
- Gwendolyn Gillson, Illinois College
gwendolyn.gillson@ic.edu

Bonhoeffer: Theology and Social Analysis Unit

Call Text:

The Bonhoeffer: Theology and Social Analysis Unit invites paper proposals on themes related to Dietrich Bonhoeffer's life, theology, and legacy.

In light of 2023 AAR President Amir Hussain's conference theme, *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*, we welcome proposals that offer constructive explorations of Bonhoeffer's theological, practical, and ethical legacy as it pertains to the multifaceted work of our hands – as scholars, practitioners, and educators of religion and theology. The influences of and insights afforded by Bonhoeffer's travels and "experiences abroad" in Rome, Barcelona, Harlem, the American South, Cuba, and London (while working as a student, scholar, and pastor) have been of increasing interest to scholars in recent years. Our

conference in San Antonio affords a welcome opportunity to consider what light might

be shed by Bonhoeffer's border-crossing experiences on such topics as La Frontera / borderlands, the maintenance and transgression of various boundaries – geographical, religious, ethical, etc. – and other moral and political borderline cases.

On the 80th anniversary of Bonhoeffer's arrest (April 5, 1943), we also invite proposals addressing "Bonhoeffer and Incarceration." We especially welcome proposals that engage Bonhoeffer's prison writings in conversation with contemporary discourses on criminality, culpability, complicity, mass incarceration, prison abolition, prison chaplaincy, social sin, structural evil, teaching in prisons, etc.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Karen V. Guth, College of the Holy Cross
kguth@holycross.edu
- Matthew Puffer, Valparaiso University
matthew.puffer@valpo.edu

Buddhism in the West Unit

Call Text:

The Buddhism in the West Unit is seeking to fill two 90-minute sessions and strongly encourages proposals for fully developed panels, roundtable discussions, or other formats focused on a single theme, question, or recent publication. The Unit is happy to support co-sponsorships with other Units including, but not limited to: the Buddhism Unit; the Buddhist Critical-Constructive Reflection Unit; the Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Unit; the Space, Place, and Religion Unit; and the Class, Religion, and Theology Unit.

The Unit is particularly interested in responding to the 2023 Presidential Theme: La Labor de Nuestras Manos (The Work of Our Hands) which is concerned not only with religious labor but the labor we do as scholars of religion. In particular, Scott Mitchell and Courtney Bruntz are interested in organizing a roundtable discussion on labor in the academy and the various ways Buddhist studies scholars may contribute to the field beyond the tenure track.

Other topics that have been suggested include:

- Buddhist studies academic labor (contact Scott Mitchell and Courtney Bruntz, scott@shin-ibs.edu, cbruntz@southeast.edu)
- Relief efforts by Buddhist groups in the West in response to disaster and social issues

- The establishment of temples and Buddhist centers in the Tibetan diaspora (co-sponsored with Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Unit)
- Buddhism, food, and foodways
- 19th Century Chinese Buddhism in North America (co-sponsored by the Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Unit)
- Author-meets-critics or roundtable discussion of Scott Mitchell's forthcoming *The Making of American Buddhism* (Oxford, 2023)
- Digital space, Virtual Sangha and Globally Networked Asian (Chinese) American Buddhist Communities. (Contact: Xiao Han, Han.Xiao@courrier.uqam.ca) - Potential co-sponsorship with the Buddhism Unit
- The Changing Landscape of Black, Latinx, and Asian American Buddhisms, co-sponsored with the Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society. (Contact: Jesse Lee jjlee@fsu.edu)

AAR membership is not required to submit a proposal for the 2023 meeting. Please contact the unit co-chairs with questions.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Scott Mitchell, Institute of Buddhist Studies
scott@shin-ibs.edu
- Caroline Starkey, University of Leeds
c.starkey@leeds.ac.uk

Buddhism Unit

Call Text:

The Buddhism Unit welcomes proposals for Papers Sessions, Roundtables, and Individual Papers in all areas of the study of Buddhism. To encourage greater exchange among the various subfields within Buddhist Studies, we are particularly interested in sessions that confront enduring problems in the study of Buddhism, raise important theoretical or methodological issues, and/or bring fresh materials or perspectives to bear on themes of broad interest, especially those that address multiple regions and/or time periods. All proposals should demonstrate their coherence and significance in language accessible to the Steering Committee, which includes individuals working on diverse aspects of Buddhism. We are also committed to diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, rank, institutions, etc. WISAR (<http://libblogs.luc.edu/wisar/>) is an excellent resource for ensuring gender balance.

For Individual Papers this year, although everyone is welcome to submit a proposal, we are prioritizing contributions by graduate students and/or postdocs. Four Individual

Papers will be chosen for an omnibus session entitled “New Work in Buddhist Studies.” Please do not submit a paper as both an Individual Paper Proposal and as part of a Papers Session Proposal.

All AAR sessions are now 90 minutes or 2 hours in length. If you wish, you may indicate which time-length you have in mind for a session, but we cannot guarantee it.

We welcome proposals on this year’s Presidential Theme, “La Labor de Nuestras Manos” (focusing on the work that scholars do beyond the production of scholarly monographs read by a small audience of people), or proposals that relate in some way to the location of the Annual Meeting (San Antonio, Texas).

Below are some of the themes that our members have proposed for the 2023 meeting, but please also feel free to submit a proposal on topics not represented on this list. If you are interested in contributing to a proposal on one of these topics, please contact the organizer directly.

Buddhism as a Category (Oliver Freiburger, University of Texas at Austin, of@austin.utexas.edu) – Considering that many scholars of religion question the “traditions approach” that often reifies and essentializes religions, this panel asks: What kind of work do the terms “Buddhism” and “Buddhist” do for us – both in our research and our teaching? Which problems, if any, might the plural “Buddhisms” solve? How do scholars of religion draw boundaries between “Buddhism” and “non-Buddhism”? How does Buddhist Studies position itself in relation to Religious Studies? Might these two (overlapping) scholarly discourses have different answers to any or all of these questions?

Digital Space, Virtual Sangha, and Globally Networked Asian (Chinese) American Buddhist Communities (Xiao Han, Université du Québec à Montréal, Xiao@courrier.uqam.ca) – Potential co-sponsorship with Buddhism in the West Unit

Until recently, most scholarship on Buddhism in North America privileged the study of institutionalized Buddhist organizations. Few attempts have been made to study the lived experiences of ordinary North American Chinese Buddhists and, more importantly, their lived religious practices in digital environments. Scholars have highlighted the idea of “global Buddhism” in the past decade, arguing that Buddhism in the West must be viewed as part of a worldwide transformational process. With the exponential development of digital technology, a global Buddhism approach has expanded and now encompasses the digital world, along with many issues such as digital Buddhist community and identity formation, digital rituals, digital Buddhist education, and the authenticity of digital Buddhist practices. Was the digital Buddhist community just a short-lived necessity, or is this the general direction of the future of Buddhist communities in North America? What does it mean to be globally networked Chinese Buddhist communities in a digital world?

Crafting Efficacy in Buddhist Ritual Worlds (James Gentry, Stanford University, jdgentry@stanford.edu) – This panel considers the hands-on work of what makes for a felt sense of ritual efficacy and potency across the Buddhist world by

examining the roles of materials and the skilled practices of craftspeople and ritual

experts who work with them. Drawing on Timothy Ingold's call to go beyond the abstract category of "materiality" to focus instead on concrete physical practices with specific materials and their idiosyncratic properties and situated histories, this panel seeks scholars of any Buddhist tradition, region, and time period interested in discussing together the tangible material ways in which Buddhist rituals are felt to bring about their outcomes, and how and why rituals sometimes fail to do so—case studies can be based on historical, ethnographic, art historical, or any other methodological approach, and can pertain to research areas as diverse as Buddhist art, medicine, ritual, contemplative practice, literature, or doctrine.

Preaching Buddhism: Ideals, Figures, and Practices (Xiaoming Hou, U.C. Berkeley, xiaoming.hou@berkeley.edu or Sinae Kim, Princeton

University, sinae@princeton.edu)—What are the roles of preaching and preachers in Buddhism? What do different genres of Buddhist literature tell us about the ideals and practices of Buddhist preaching culture? How might investigating Buddhist preaching inspire us to reexamine some of the dichotomies that have structured our field (lay/monastic, theory/practice, oral/written, canonical/non-canonical, etc.)? This panel seeks to address these questions across different cultures of Buddhist preaching, both temporally and geographically.

Storytelling in Buddhist Studies (Vanessa Sasson, Marianopolis

College, v.sasson@marianopolis.edu; Kristin Scheible, Reed College, scheiblk@reed.edu)

—Telling the Buddha's story—be it through narrative, performance, ritual, or art—is a key feature of the tradition. Connecting to this year's presidential theme, which invites us to think of new ways of engaging the public, this roundtable invites scholars to discuss the role storytelling plays in the field, and how we might tell Buddhist stories as a means of engaging a wider conversation.

Buddhism and Caste, Past and Present (Adeana McNicholl, Vanderbilt

University, adeana.mcnicholl@vanderbilt.edu; Nicholas Witkowski, University of San

Diego, nwitkowski@sandiego.edu)—How have Buddhists in the past and present engaged with caste socially, discursively, ritually, and politically? What does a focus on caste illuminate about the development of Buddhism in South Asia and its interpretation in the contemporary context? How does caste intersect with gender, sexuality, class, and race? We seek to bring together approaches from a variety of historical (premodern and modern), geographic (South Asia and beyond), and methodological contexts.

Children and Childhood in Buddhism (Kelly Carlton, Princeton

University, kcarlton@princeton.edu)—This panel seeks to explore children and childhood in

Buddhist traditions across temporal, geographic, and cultural contexts. Paper topics may include, but are not limited to, the following: Buddhist definitions of "child" or "childhood"; representations of children in Buddhist texts; approaches to children in Buddhist ethics, medicine, and ritual; and children as religious actors.

Ethical Responses Across the Buddhist World (Patrick Lambelet, University of California, Santa Barbara, pglambelet@ucsb.edu) – Buddhist traditions vary widely in their conceptualization of ethical doctrines, from the austerity of the Theravāda to the altruistic aims of the Mahāyāna and the antinomianism of Vajrayāna. What are some of the ways in which these ethical frameworks offer responses to pressing moral issues, both in traditional and modern contexts; how do these responses sometimes diverge, if not directly contradict each other; and how do Buddhists attempt to resolve such apparent discrepancies? This panel especially seeks to explore these questions in relation to issues such as sexuality and gender, ethnic and sectarian violence, climate, animal welfare, and so forth.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Bryan Lowe, Princeton University
bdlowe@princeton.edu
- Amy P. Langenberg, Eckerd College
langenap@eckerd.edu

Buddhist Critical-Constructive Reflection Unit

Call Text:

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

Theology, Sociology, Economics, etc.). We invite paper or panel proposals on any topic pertaining to our mission to engage in Buddhist critical and constructive reflection, but particularly on the following:

- Buddhist futures—visions of cosmological and existential transformation and resilience (Christina Kilby, kilbyca@jmu.edu)
- Buddhism and racial justice in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic (Rachel Pang, rhfang@davidson.edu)
- Buddhist feminisms
- Buddhist responses to populism, nationalism, xenophobia
- Defining the scope of Engaged Buddhism—debates in the field
- Eco-Buddhism and Buddhist resources for an ethic of the more-than-human world (Colin Simonds, 11cs77@queensu.ca)
- Transnational Buddhist networks
- White House-US Buddhist Leadership Conference, eight years later

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Barbra R. Clayton, Mount Allison University
bclayton@mta.ca
- Melissa Anne-Marie Curley, Ohio State University
curley.32@osu.edu

Buddhist Philosophy Unit

Call Text:

Members are encouraged to submit papers on any topic that fits under the purview of the unit. Due to the number of high quality proposals we receive, it is generally best to gather several presenters and submit a proposal for a panel on a topic. Panels can be organized in a variety of formats --with shorter or longer presentations, one or several or no respondents. Please feel free to reach out to the co-chairs (Karin Meyers, karin.L.meyers@gmail.com) and Connie Kassor, constance.e.kassor@lawrence.edu) with any questions about organizing a paper or submitting a panel. So far, this year the following panel topics have been suggested. If you are interested in one of these topics please contact the point person listed:

- Productive Uses of Imagination (Davey Tomlinson
- david.tomlinson@villanova.edu)
- Comparative Approaches to Buddhist Ethics (Patrick Lambelet
- pglambelet@gmail.com)

- Buddhism and Abortion (Charles Goodman - cgoodman@binghamton.edu)
- Buddhist Political Thought and Buddhist Civil Resistance (Pierre-Julien Harter - pjharter@unm.edu)
- New Voices in Black Buddhist Thought (Rima Vesely-Flad - rimavesely@gmail.com)
- Buddhist Philosophy and Structural/Systemic Injustice (Connie Kassor - kassorc@lawrence.edu)
- Responses to Tsongkhapa's *Illuminating the Intent* (*dbumadgongsparabgsal*) (Pierre-Julien Harter pjharter@unm.edu)

We especially welcome panels that represent diverse voices. In assembling your panels, please consider the demographic and professional diversity of potential participants. In an effort to encourage more graduate students and early-career faculty to participate in our unit, please forward this call for proposals widely.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a forum for the scholarly study of Buddhist philosophical thought in its various forms across all regions and traditions of the Buddhist world. We seek to develop tightly organized sessions that deal not only with intra-Buddhist philosophical issues – such as those involving major philosophical traditions and major thinkers and texts – but also with topics involving the relationship between Buddhist philosophy and other traditions of philosophical thought, both ancient and modern. The Unit likewise provides a venue to examine the relationship between Buddhist thought and Buddhist practice. We encourage work on the full range of Buddhist philosophy, including but not limited to metaphysics, epistemology, soteriology, ethics, social philosophy, political philosophy, philosophy of language, process philosophy, philosophy of mind, and cross-cultural philosophy, etc. The Buddhist Philosophy Unit is committed to promoting greater diversity and inclusion within the Unit and in the field at large.

Chairs:

- Constance Kassor, Lawrence University
constance.e.kassor@lawrence.edu
- Karin Meyers, Mangalam Research Center
karin.l.meyers@gmail.com

Catholic Studies Unit

Call Text:

The Catholic Studies Unit invites submissions on diverse subjects in the study of Catholics and Catholicism across time and place. We are interested in proposals that are attentive to the ways in which history and theory relate to one another within the field of Catholic Studies. Co-chairs are happy to consult with those who are developing individual papers, paper sessions, roundtable proposals, or other creative formats. The Unit encourages proposals on the following topics for the 2023 meeting in San Antonio, Texas:

- *Critical Catholic Studies*--How has the term Critical Catholic Studies been deployed and how might its meanings shift, sharpen, and be refined? What does it mean to be "critical" in the context of the study of Catholics and Catholicism? Looking at the wider landscape of the study of religion, what's next for Catholic Studies?
- *African Catholicisms*--Africa has the fastest-growing Catholic population in the world. Already, nearly 20% of the global population of Catholics reside in Africa. The Catholic Studies Unit seeks proposals that not only document Catholicism in African nations, but also consider the ways Catholicisms in Africa challenge the key categories, frameworks, and theories that have dominated the study of Catholics in other parts of the world.
- *Muscular Catholics in Popular Culture*--What kind of leverage or insight does Catholic studies offer for understanding the rise of fitness-oriented hyper-masculine Catholics as part of U.S. popular culture?
- *Otherwise Transnational Catholicisms*--The study of transnational Catholicism has often been routed through North America and Europe. What happens if Catholic transnationalism circumvents that pathway in favor of relations among Catholics in the Global South (Asia, South Asia, the South Pacific, South and Central America, Africa, and/or the Middle East)?
- *Medieval Catholic Theology and the Environment*--We look to scholars of the premodern Catholic world to share research about medieval thought on the interconnections between theology and the environment. How were such connections conceptualized, debated and/or embodied in the medieval Catholic world?
- *South Asian Catholicisms*--The Catholic Studies Unit seeks proposals that not only document Catholicism in South Asia, but also consider the ways Catholicisms in the region challenge the key categories, frameworks, and theories that have dominated the study of Catholics in other parts of the world.
- *Catholicism, Abortion, and Human Rights in Texas*--Some observers have called for a boycott of the State of Texas as a result of recent changes in the laws surrounding abortion. The controversy has raised questions about human rights and the role of Catholicism in politics and protest in Texas and the wider U.S. We seek proposals that offer perspective on these issues from the realms of Catholic history, anthropology of Catholicism, and/or Catholic theology.

Structure

We urge all paper and panel proposals actively to address questions of format and timing. It is the Catholic Studies Unit's preference to have individual papers never exceed 12 minutes in length and for every panel to include a well-planned allotment of time for audience involvement. We strongly encourage proposals that include innovative, interactive, and dynamic formats.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a scholarly forum to study the global Catholic community. 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.

Chairs:

- J. Michelle Molina, Northwestern University
molina@northwestern.edu
- John Seitz, Fordham University
jseitz@fordham.edu

Childhood Studies and Religion Unit**Call Text:**

The Childhood Studies and Religion Unit welcomes proposals for individual papers and sessions that engage the intersection of religion and childhood or children, broadly construed. We are especially interested in proposals from non-Euro-American and non-Christian perspectives, and we welcome a range of methodologies from across the humanities and the social sciences.

For the 2023 AAR Annual Meeting, we hope to organize sessions around one or more of the following topics:

- children in the archives: the challenges of finding and representing children and their experiences, across different methodologies and different types of archives.
- childhood and place/region: How is the experience of childhood affected by region and place? How does the concept of childhood shift between different regions? What happens to children in (geographical or conceptual) borderlands? (Proposals engaging with the Annual Meeting theme, La Labor de Nuestras Manos, are welcome everywhere, but especially here.)
- Black girlhood studies: new directions and intersections with religion and religious studies (please email kking@crcds.edu if you are interested in a roundtable)
- children, childhood, and disability: how are disabled children represented across different times, places, and traditions? How do they appear (or disappear) in religious spaces? Is it possible to separate the study of children and disability from the long history of infantilizing people with disabilities?

For session proposals, please indicate the type of session you are proposing (panel or roundtable); innovative and interactive sessions are especially welcome, and our co-chairs are happy to discuss what category might best fit any given proposal. In keeping with our commitment to presenting diverse perspectives and voices in each of our sessions, we also urge you to indicate what types of diversity your proposal or participants might represent.

Mission Statement:

This Unit's overall aim is to investigate the complex and multifaceted relation between religion and childhood. The specific goals of the Unit are as follows: • Provide a forum for focused interdisciplinary and interreligious dialogue about the diverse relations of children and religion • Heighten academic interest in this topic in all fields represented in the AAR • Prepare scholars in religious studies to contribute to wider academic discussions about children and childhoods • Lend the voice of the academy to current questions of public policy and child advocacy The focus of the Unit is both timely and

significant given the present concern for children across the globe and the rising interdisciplinary academic interest in childhood studies. The Unit functions as a forum at the AAR for advancing childhood studies as a line of scholarly inquiry; we also welcome collaborations with other AAR program units for which childhood studies represents a "new" intervention.

Chairs:

- Wendy Love Anderson, Washington University, Saint Louis
andersonwl@wustl.edu
- Kishundra King, Colgate Rochester Crozier Divinity School
kking@crcds.edu

Chinese Christianities Unit

Call Text:

The Chinese Christianities Unit at the American Academy of Religion invites papers for the 2023 Annual Meeting that speak to themes that expand the breadth of what can be covered in the field of Chinese Christianities.

The Chinese Christianities Unit began as a seminar in 2015. From 2015-2019, the seminar explored various ways in which Chinese Christianities cross boundaries in regional, social, religious, and ecclesiological ways. In so doing, scholars in Chinese Christianities have developed understandings of the field that challenge the consistency of both the terms 'Chinese' and 'Christianities,' as both may refer to a range of phenomena in our burgeoning field of study. As a unit, the Chinese Christianities Unit has explored how terms like 'Bible' and 'Sinophone' are also germane to the expansion of what the field could entail, opening up multiple worlds that Chinese Christianities may inhabit.

As we continue to expand the scope of what Chinese Christianities could cover while being attentive to the AAR theme of 'the work of our hands,' we welcome papers that address the following topics:

- Chinese Christianities and war, especially with the upcoming anniversaries around Sino-Japanese wars
- Materiality in Chinese Christianities
- Comparative theology
- Comparing the ideological diversity in Chinese Christianities with other field signifiers, such as 'Asian American'
- The emergence of Global China for Chinese Christianities
- Chinese Christianities and emergent ecological urgencies on the planet

Mission Statement:

This Unit 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, 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 unit 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.

Chairs:

- Stephanie Wong, Villanova University
stephanie.wong@villanova.edu
- Justin Tse, Singapore Management University
justintse@smu.edu.sg

Chinese Religions Unit

Call Text:

All proposals for both panels and papers are welcome and will be given careful consideration. We encourage panel organizers to take various forms of diversity into account, including race, gender, rank, kind of institution, region, etc., especially for presenters and respondents. For gender diversity, you can look for participants in the database Women in the Study of Asian Religions (<http://libblogs.luc.edu/wisar/>). Please feel free to direct any general questions about panel and paper submissions to the co-chairs.

If you wish to contribute to the following topics, please get in touch with the contact person listed:

- Religions and Cities, Tyler Feezell (tyler.feezell@asu.edu)
- Chinese Religious Spaces and Landscapes, Courtney Bruntz (courtney.bruntz@gmail.com)
- Body, Medicine, and Health in Chinese Religions, Dixuan Chen (chenyuji@grinnell.edu)
- Spiritual seekers and anxieties around authenticity in contemporary China, Gareth Fisher (gfisher@syr.edu)
- Activism in Chinese Religions, Ting Guo (tg.guo@utoronto.ca)

Mission Statement:

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

of linguistic, cultural, historical, and social-scientific understanding to the study of religion in China.

Chairs:

- Susan Andrews, Mount Allison University
sandrews@mta.ca
- Rongdao Lai, McGill University
rongdao.lai@mcgill.ca

Christian Spirituality Unit

Call Text:

The Christian Spirituality Program Unit is seeking proposals for papers on the topics listed below. Proposals which include some visual component and/or audio component to increase interest, accessibility and participant engagement will be rated higher in the selection process.

- Deepening and Expanding on the Work of the Recently Published, *The Varieties of Spiritual Experience: 21st Century Research & Experience* (OUP, 2022)
- Spiritualities of Death and Dying: Mortality and Finitude
- Spirituality, Pedagogy and Response to Student Indifference in the Classroom
- Spirituality and the Erotic: Resources Within the Christian Traditions to Frame the Erotic as a Positive Life-giving Influence
- Exploring the Divide between Christian Spirituality and Psychology/Human Sciences
- A Critical Analysis of how the Lives and Experiences of Persons with Disabilities and/or their Communities Express Spirituality in Distinctive, Constructive, or Liberative ways.
- Orthodox Christianity and Mysticism

Mission Statement:

This Unit serves as a forum for scholars working in the interdisciplinary field of Christian spirituality. It is committed to the following: • Developing, refining, and demonstrating appropriate methodologies for the academic study of spirituality. • Exploring models for describing and facilitating interdisciplinary conversation on the nature of spirituality among religion scholars of all perspectives and religions. • Initiating discussion in the field of global spirituality, both religious and secular. • Articulating the connections between scholarship and spiritual practice. • Ensuring diversity in denominational affiliation, gender, race, and ethnic backgrounds.

Chairs:

- David B. Perrin, University of Waterloo
dperrin@uwaterloo.ca
- Beringia Zen, Saint Agnes Medical Center
beringia.zen@avera.org

Christian Systematic Theology Unit

Call Text:

The Christian Systematic Theology Section invites proposals for individual papers or complete panels related to our theme of Creation and Creativity. Papers should be constructive rather than merely historical in nature, but grounding the arguments in pre-existing texts from various traditions and discussions is desired. We especially invite proposals related to the following sub-themes:

- God the creator and the materiality of creation
- Creation and incarnation, embodiment, and enfleshment
- Bodies as created and creating: birthing, growing, dying
- Divine and human makers: art, design, technology
- Human labor, work, and care as participation in God's work
- Creation and providence
- Creation and history
- Nature and grace
- The body of Christ, the hands of Christ: being the church
- Creation and the Holy Spirit
- Creation and disability/disablement
- Creation as space, place, and land: belonging, dispossession, and migration
- Endangered creation: climate catastrophe
- Creation and eschatology
- Paul Dafydd Jones' *Patience*. Possible co-sponsorship with the Reformed Theology and History Unit

We also are planning a pre-arranged session on the academic and ecclesiological legacy of +Kallistos Ware (1935-2022). This session will be co-sponsored by the Ecclesiological Investigations unit and the Eastern Orthodox Studies Unit.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Natalia Marandiuc, United Lutheran Seminary
nmarandiuc@uls.edu
- Hanna Reichel, Princeton Theological Seminary
hanna.reichel@ptsem.edu

Class, Religion, and Theology Unit

Call Text:

Proposals in response to the calls below should clearly indicate how consideration of class inequalities and dynamics shapes the paper's analysis or conclusions and/or how the paper foregrounds issues of class, labor, or workers (while recognizing their intersections with other dimensions of inequality).

- General Call We invite paper or panel proposals that explore the role of class, labor, and/or worker issues in religious communities and traditions or the significance of class, labor, and worker issues in the study of religion and theology or address major questions in the study of class, labor, or workers.
- Particular Emphases While open to any proposals relevant to the general call, this year we especially welcome paper or panel proposals addressing the following:
 - Teaching against the grain of capitalism or contesting capitalist imperatives in the classroom.
 - How capitalism/worker exploitation and White supremacy/anti-Blackness reinforce and sustain each other. (Or, more generally, the intersection of class with race, gender, sexuality, nationality, or other apparatus of inequality.)
 - Coops, cooperative movements (contemporary and/or historical), or cooperative economy.
 - Links between the exploitation of paid workers and the destruction of ecosystems or/and the exploitation of unpaid caregivers.
- Co-Sponsored Session with the Liberation Theologies unit, Religion and Economy unit, and Class, Religion, and Theology unit call for proposals regarding labor issues and worker organizing in general, in San Antonio or Texas, and/or in the hotel/convention center/hospitality industry. We hope to organize both a pre-conference workshop and a panel on these topics, so we encourage submissions from labor organizers, activists, and scholars. We note that for a number of years it was a priority of the AAR to take into account the labor situation on the ground in its host cities. This session and possible pre-conference workshop, therefore, offer an opportunity to reflect on that commitment, understand the labor situation in our host city, and hopefully re-energize the AAR's commitment to solidarity with all those the labor of whose hands makes the annual meeting possible at all.
- Co-Sponsored Session with Disability Studies & Religion and Religion & Healing: Care and healing as "the work of our hands": How might caregiving, care work, and healing be best represented in religious studies scholarship? What current pitfalls or potential surround care and healing as both concrete practices and academic subjects? How has care been politicized or depoliticized in academic discourse pertaining to disability specifically? Who does care labor (paid and unpaid), who pays for its paid forms? How does this economic organization of care labor affect both the receivers and the providers of care labor — and how does this all relate to religious practices or thought, especially in regards to disability and/or healing?

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to study class as a relational concept that needs to be explored in its complex manifestations, which will yield more complex understandings of religion and

theology in turn. Avoiding reductionist definitions that occur when studying each class in itself or viewing class only according to stratified income levels or particular historical

and sociological markers, this Unit will investigate how classes shape up in relation and tension with each other and with religion and theology. This Unit's investigations of class, religion, and theology also include intersections with gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and ecology.

Chairs:

- Jeremy Posadas, Stetson University
prof.posadas@gmail.com
- Rosetta E. Ross, Spelman College
rross@spelman.edu

Cognitive Science of Religion Unit

Call Text:

Current Theories and Applications of the Cognitive Science of Religion

This call is intentionally broad in scope. We invite scholars who are using current cognitive theories and/or applied research in the study of religion, religions, or religious-related phenomena to submit a proposal for a paper or panel session for inclusion in the 2023 AAR-CSR Unit's sessions.

Terror Management Theory and Religion

This panel will explore religion from the perspective of Terror Management Theory. Please contact Kendra Holt Moore (kendraholtmoore@gmail.com) with questions.

COSPONSORED: Psychedelics and the Cognitive Science of Religion

We invite proposals addressing psychedelic substances and spirit medicines in relation to contemplative practices and the neuropsychology of altered brain states, for co-sponsorship between the Cognitive Science of Religion Unit, Contemplative Studies Unit, and Indigenous Religious Traditions Unit.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Jed Forman, University of California, Berkeley

jed.forman@gmail.com

- Paul Robertson, University of New Hampshire
paul.robertson@unh.edu

Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Unit

Call Text:

Religious Studies Research: Haunted by the Spectre of Violence?

In response to this year's Presidential theme, CARV seeks to foment a generative dialogue about how the "work of our hands" as religion scholars is descended from, complicit with, or otherwise being appropriated to amplify any form of violence:

- CARV invites proposals that bring together scholars, policymakers, and professionals—including journalists—whose work demonstrates how historical legacies of violence; the fear of violence; active campaigns of violence; and/or the desire to use scholarship as a vehicle to either incite or resist violent actors has effectively "haunted" the field of religious studies. The purpose of this panel is to nurture a dialogue that assists religion scholars in reckoning with the ways in which their work knowingly or unknowingly contributes to discursive iterations of myriad species of violence (physical, psychological, sexual, cultural, socio-political, emotional, environmental, bureaucratic, spiritual, etc.). Our hope is to explore questions like: how should religion scholars respond when the knowledge they produce is being harnessed by bad-faith actors for malicious ends? Is fear of violence ever an appropriate reason to withhold knowledge from policymakers or refuse to further pursue a particular research agenda? How do the oppressive structures that uphold racist, sexist, classist, colonialist, and imperialist powers poison religion scholars' ability to freely pursue and publish their work—or even to accurately perceive, comprehend, question, or model the phenomenological realities they seek to study? Likewise, how are these structures being replicated (perhaps unintentionally) in and by the ideas of otherwise well-meaning academics? How can scholars of religion work intentionally to discontinue entrenched patterns of violence; disengage from violent epistemologies, research methods, and/or social systems; and ultimately become allies of peace? What responsibilities do scholars have to "speak up" publicly for victims of religious violence, especially if they themselves are from communities which regularly endure discrimination and violation (e.g., people of color, LGBTQIA+ individuals, the undocumented, women, the precariously employed, etc.). What, if anything, is the American higher education industry doing to empower diverse scholars to research religious violence—and protect them from angry members of the public should the need arise? Conversely, how are corporate and donor influences engaging in bureaucratic violence to silence such research before it comes to fruition (when it is considered "controversial") or to disingenuously capitalize on it (when it is considered "trendy" or "likely to attract funding")? In short, if religious studies research is haunted by the spectre of violence, then what positive steps can researchers take to exorcize this dark ghou and ultimately guard against its corrupting return? Our unit's focus is international and interdisciplinary, and we

particularly welcome research that works from the margins to disrupt traditional systems of authority and ways of learning, knowing, and being in the world. We also encourage retrospective or historical case studies pertinent to the topic at hand.

Rethorizing Religious Sacrifice

Over the last two years, CARV has invested considerable time and effort in refining and, where necessary, reformulating academic theories of religious violence. At the 2023 meeting, it hopes to continue that work specifically as it concerns religious sacrifice. To this end, CARV seeks proposals that unpack the polysemic concept of "sacrifice" and use diverse methodological approaches to address the diversity of religious thought and practice surrounding it. Questions we hope to discuss include but are not limited to:

- Does "religion" require "sacrifice"? If so, how and why must the codependence between these phenomena be theorized?
- If we accept that violence occurs along a diverse spectrum of manifestation (physical, emotional, sexual, spiritual, cultural, bureaucratic, etc.), must we also accept that "sacrifice" occurs along an inherently violent spectrum too? In other words, is it possible to have a completely peaceful act of religious sacrifice?
- What is the difference between "blood sacrifice" and "modern sacrifice"? How can the interconnections and slippages between these divergent notions of sacrifice be properly theorized?
- What limits does the concept of sacrifice impose upon those scholars who employ it to analyze religious phenomena? Are there ways that scholars could reframe the paradigm of sacrifice to better address the conceptual blind spots they incur while working with it?
- How and why do certain religious expressions target specific groups (e.g., the enslaved, the unhoused, the mentally ill, people of color, injured veterans, women, children, the undocumented, lower-caste individuals, the LGBTQIA+ community, the impoverished, non-human animals, etc.) and particular contexts (e.g., the global south, vulnerable ecosystems, sacred waterways, etc.) for "sacrifice"? Why are these modern sacrifices considered justified in, by, and for religions that otherwise emphasize their peacefulness; profess to value life; and claim to have moved past the idea of human sacrifice? In other words, how is religion used to render these acts of sacrificial violence morally licit or even obligatory for members of particular faiths? How is religion used to obscure the true extent of human sacrifice that is actually occurring?
- How and why are supposedly "secular" laws and policies weaponized to fulfill religious voters' desire for certain bodies to be sacrificed (e.g., women's bodies are sacrificed as a result of anti-abortion laws; trans people's bodies are sacrificed as a result of anti-trans-healthcare laws; the earth's "body" and the bodies of countless non-human animals are sacrificed as a result of anti-environmental deregulation and pro-corporate-profit policies)? Is the sacrifice of these bodies occurring in response to religious narratives that promise material or spiritual reward(s) in exchange for, or as a reward for, this violence?

- How are ideas of religious martyrdom and spiritual self-sacrifice weaponized in the modern world? For instance, it is currently *en vogue* for far-right commentators to portray religious individuals deplatformed by social media giants (often for spreading dangerous conspiracy theories, engaging in hate speech, issuing violent threats towards others, etc.) as "martyrs." Are such "digital martyrdom narratives" callbacks to the much-hallowed accounts of religious martyrdom preserved in religions like Christianity and Islam? In what ways, if any, should this phenomenon extend the scholarly concept of religious martyrdom? (Can you really be "culturally cancelled" into martyrdom?)
- Given recent advances in the scientific understanding of secondary traumatic stress, are those who witness or otherwise deal with the longterm impact of violence against others engaged in acts of sacred self-sacrifice? More broadly, when and why do such witnesses invoke religion to describe and add meaning to their traumatic recollections?
- How are cultures of unjust religious sacrifice fomented and protected by religious cultures that encourage shunning, learned ignorance, denialism, disavowal, and discrediting of victims in the face of prophetic calls for restorative and transformative justice?
- Is there a meaningful way to retrieve and/or develop the concept of redemptive religious sacrifice? Would doing so allow scholars to more accurately analyze or better describe any contemporary conflicts?

Proposals related to the retheorization of religious sacrifice may be featured in a joint session cosponsored with the Society of Biblical Literature.

Religion and Cold Civil Wars

It is becoming popular to describe bitter, intractable divisions between domestic political factions as "slow civil wars" and/or "cold civil wars." But while the heuristic appeal of these terms is obvious, they remain undertheorized, particularly when they are applied to conflicts involving religion. With this in mind, CARV invites proposals that analyze and interpret the role of spirituality in "cold" or "slow" civil wars (CARV employs these terms interchangeably here). Papers may address questions including but not limited to:

- How do existing theories of civil warfare intersect with existing theories of religious violence? Are there constructive examples of integration between these two bodies of theoretical framing?
- Does religion play a catalytic function in slow civil wars? Are periodic eruptions of religious or parareligious violence necessary in cold civil wars to create and/or reshape the spectrum of political possibilities available to populations riven by intractable policy conflicts? If so, then to what extent can non-violent religious resistance be considered an effective tool in slow civil conflicts?
- Great powers often try to distract and unify domestic populations locked in cold civil wars by engaging in hot proxy wars elsewhere. Recent examples of this include the involvement of Russia and the United States in Ukraine; Saudi Arabia and Iran in Yemen; and Russia, the United States, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, and Iran in Syria (among many others). But how, specifically, are the leaders of such states

invoking religious or parareligious language to "sell" foreign proxy wars to their

internally divided citizens or subjects? Simultaneously, how are these leaders wielding religion as a "wedge issue" to "otherize" vulnerable innocents abroad, and to exacerbate inter- and intra-religious divisions between their domestic populace and those foreign people(s) targeted in their proxy wars?

- How have reactions to the January 6th Capitol riot, as well as the subsequent revelations generated by the January 6th Committee, influenced the course of rightwing religious rage? Has the combined failure of the Capitol Riot, Pizzagate, the original QAnon "prophecies," the cryptocurrency meltdown, etc., produced any phenomena which parallel the Millerite movement's Great Disappointment and the subsequent birth of Seventh-day Adventism? If so, how is that shaping the US' cold civil war?
- How are conservative women around the world using populist interpretations of traditional religious texts, rituals, discourses, and practices to justify their participation in cold civil wars, particularly when they rise to positions of authority historically held by men?
- To what extent has religion created political cultures that are ripe for slow civil wars by actively encouraging and/or passively inuring the population to ongoing crises of violence, e.g., police brutality, "forever wars," mass incarceration, global ecocide, systemic racial discrimination, etc.?
- How is religion shaping artistic responses to cold civil wars throughout the world?

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Flagg Miller, University of California, Davis fmiller@ucdavis.edu
- Chase L. Way, Independent Scholar

chase.laurelle.way@gmail.com

Comparative Studies in Religion Unit

Call Text:

We invite papers on the topics below. Submissions for panels or roundtables not listed here are also welcome.

Food, Faith, Ritual, and Celebration at the Border (a pre-arranged panel; this panel will not accept submissions)

Co-sponsoring units Religion and Food, African Diaspora Religions, African Religions, and Comparative Study of Religion units will internally select panelists for a panel theme on religion, food, agriculture, land, and those who work the land, including migrant, low-wage, child, injured, or enslaved workers.

For example, sabbatical and jubilee traditions structure restorative rest for bodies and land. Additionally, traditional ecological, embodied, and place based knowledge systems shape dynamic interactions between people, food, and lands. Such knowledge systems may be responsive to disruptions to local land, waterway, and climate. Contact: Roberta Sabbath (roberta.sabbath@unlv.edu); Yudit Greenberg (YGREENBERG@rollins.edu); or Ruqayya Khan (Ruqayya.khan@cgu.edu).

Memorializing Massacres

Questions to consider include, but are not limited to, the various ways in which memories of massacres have been shaped over time, the uses – political, economic, social, religious, and so on – to which these efforts have been put, and their effects (consider the Alamo). Papers with individual case studies should highlight their potential for a comparative discussion. Contact: Gregory Alles (galles@mcdaniel.edu).

Religion and Cultural Adaptability

Through migration, social media, conversion, and sundry other means, religions continue to encounter new cultures. Cultures also change, not least through the formation of new sub-cultures. How do religious systems adapt to changing cultural settings? Under what conditions are religious systems “translated” into cultures, and under what circumstances might they “resist” change or attempt to transform cultures? This call seeks proposals for comparisons regarding how religions adapt to or otherwise confront new cultural settings. If you are interested in proposing a paper, please contact Thomas Seat at thomas.seat@ptsem.edu.

Poison & Poisoners in Religion III

This panel seeks to compare the religious valences of poison and poisoners, as variously manifest, via various methodologies, and across diverse religio-cultural contexts and communities. This panel aims to be a “round three,” following 2021 and 2022 panels on the same topic. This panel surrounds a central holistic query: in what ways can poison and poisoners be best understood as comparative categories in the study of religion? Contact: Eric Mortensen (emortens@guilford.edu).

New Directions in Comparative Oneirology

Existing as they do at the intersection of embodied (/embrained) experience and cultural mediation, dreams provide religious studies researchers with a superlative opportunity to engage in focused, robust comparison. This panel aims to provide a venue for such an endeavour. Adopting a collaborative, round-table format, this panel will invite scholars to circulate material from their own oneirological research ahead of the conference. Drawing upon these submissions, the panel itself will consist of an active process of *rectification/theory formation* related to "religious" dreams, dreamers, and dreaming (with the scare quotes here recognizing the second-order nature of the term "religion"). Contact: Christopher Jensen (ChristopherJensen@cunet.carleton.ca).

Non-Human Animals, Religion, and the Environmental Crisis

In the natural environment, animals have often detected an environmental crisis before it happens. In cases of impending floods even before technology detects them, elephants have gone for higher ground, birds have abandoned nesting areas, and dogs have refused to go outdoors. In February 2022, in the coastal village of Bang Koeay in Thailand, a herd of buffalo by the beach suddenly pricked their ears, gazed out to sea, then stampeded to the top of a nearby hill a few minutes before a tsunami struck. Analogously, animals have been closely aligned with the natural environment and ecology in religious texts and contexts. For example, in Tibetan Buddhist and Bon texts (as well as believed by modern Tibetans), serpent spirits known as *nagas*, who inhabit trees and water sources, are described as warning against the pollution or disturbance of their natural environment, and in addition, often react by inflicting disease requiring Buddhist and Bon appeasement rituals to help restore the natural balance. This panel will explore comparatively the role of animals that predict, warn and are revered in an environmental crisis across diverse religious traditions. Contact: Ivette Vargas-O'Bryan (ivargas@austincollege.edu).

Reptilian Matters and Religion in India, Tibet and China

This panel explores the presence of serpents/snakes as agents, collaborators and/or demons in the development of Asian religious traditions of India, Tibet and China. The discussions in this panel draw from literary and visual representations, medical contexts, and ritual. Contact: Ivette Vargas-O'Bryan (ivargas@austincollege.edu), Eric Mortensen (emortens@guilford.edu), or GerritLange (langeg@staff.uni-marburg.de).

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides the opportunity for significant cross-traditional and cross-cultural inquiry. We traditionally solicit paper sessions that provide occasions for comparative inquiry seriously engaging two or more religious traditions around a common topic and we ensure that critical reflection is given to the conceptual tools therein employed. We welcome co-sponsorship opportunities with other AAR units. This Unit has a listserv (CompRel), which is used primarily for announcements, calls for papers, and discussions about panel proposals. If you wish to subscribe, please send a request to of@austin.utexas.edu.

Method of Submission:

PAPERS

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

Chairs:

- Oliver Freiberger, University of Texas
of@austin.utexas.edu
- Ivette Vargas-O'Bryan, Austin College
ivargas@austincollege.edu

Comparative Theology Unit

Call Text:

The Comparative Theology Unit of the AAR seeks proposals on the following topics for its session at the 2023 Annual Meeting.

We encourage panel or paper proposals on the following themes that were offered at the business meeting. Interested scholars should feel free to avail themselves of the contact person when provided below, if needed:

- Comparative theology from a Muslim perspective, contact: Pim Valkenberg, Valkenberg@cua.edu
- Contextual theology and comparative theology, contact: Catherine Cornille, cornille@bc.edu
- Comparative theology at the borders: a theology of immigration, contact: Axel Marc Oaks Takacs, Takacsax@shu.edu
- Method: What does “comparison” mean? Helmut Zander, zander@unifr.ch
- A comparative theology of oral traditions
- Hybridity and comparative theology, James Farwell, Jfarwell@vts.edu
- Civic engagement and comparative theology, contact Alexander Massad, massad@wheaton.edu

These are proposed themes, but one need not feel restricted by them, so long as the proposal concerns comparative theology. Proposal descriptions must be written in such a way as to allow for **anonymity** during the selection process.

Panel proposals consisting of three to five presenters treating a single theme are preferable to individual papers. Panel proposals **must include** a diversity statement wherein the conveyor explains in what ways the panel is diverse or the rationale for a lack of diversity.

Process:

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

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Axel Marc Oaks Takacs, Seton Hall University
takacsax@shu.edu
- Catherine Cornille, Boston College
cornille@bc.edu

Confucian Traditions Unit**Call Text:**

We especially welcome full panel proposals, as well as individual paper submissions, on the following themes for 2023.

- assessments of John Berthrong's work on Confucianism in relation to comparative theology
- women in transnational Confucianism, e.g., in Korea, Indonesia, and other areas beyond China
- Confucian approaches to law and/or human rights
- how best to teach Confucianism
- Different methodological approaches to Confucianism; how religious studies relates to other common approaches to Confucianism
- the unity and/or disunity of virtues in Confucianism
- Confucian approaches to grief, death, and/or dying

Other topics are also welcome, as are co-sponsored sessions with other Units.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is committed to the study of the diversity of religious traditions associated with Confucius and his followers, including areas where Confucian thought and practice

intersect with those of other traditions. The Unit embraces historical, philosophical, and dialogical approaches, and is not located in any single country or discipline.

Chairs:

- Michael Ing, Indiana University
ming@indiana.edu
- Bin Song, Washington College
bsong2@washcoll.edu

Contemplative Studies Unit

Call Text:

This year, the Contemplative Studies Unit especially invites proposals addressing the role of different epistemologies relative to Contemplative Studies, comparative or otherwise. Individual papers could find a home in currently listed panels, especially, comparatively, with Microphenomenology, Imagination, Interrogating gender, or the Anne Klein panel.

- A panel in honor of Anne Klein's scholarly career contributions to Contemplative Studies, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, and Women's Studies. Discussion will foreground the multiple epistemologies at work in Klein's publications from Geluk discourse between Sautantrika and Madhyamaka in *Knowledge and Liberation* (1987) and *Knowing, Naming, and Negation* (1997) to the situatedness of gender in *Meeting the Great Bliss Queen* (2008) to the logic of the nonconceptual in *Unbounded Wholeness* (2006) to epistemologies of perfection in her forthcoming, *Being Human and a Buddha Too* (2023). Contact Michael Sheehy – sheehy@virginia.edu
- Proposals addressing Spirit Medicines (aka psychedelic substances) in relation to contemplative practices both contemporary and traditional and the neuropsychology of altered brain states, for potential co-sponsorship between the Cognitive Science of Religion Unit, Contemplative Studies Unit and Indigenous Religious Traditions Unit. Contact Yuria Celidwen.
- Exploring microphenomenology and contemplative inquiry—fresh contemplative methods that scientifically and rigorously explore first-person experience. Contact Anne Klein or Niki Clements.
- Technology, society, and contemplative traditions. Contact Jacob Sherman.
- Contemplative practices based on the elements across traditions. Contact Loriliai Biernacki, Yuria Celidwen, or Michael Sheehy.
- Imagination and imaginal capacities and practices. Contact Loriliai Biernacki or Michael Sheehy.
- Interrogating gender in contemplative practices—those that reify gender concepts vs. those that recontextualize and question gender. Contact Paula Arai or Yuria Celidwen.
- Contributions from traditions underrepresented in our previous work: Eastern Orthodox, Sikh, and Jain tradition practices.

- Scholars and Practitioners, continued. Possible co-sponsorship with the Tantric Studies unit. Sundari Hurwitt Johansen sjohansen@ciis.edu

Mission Statement:

This program unit aims to strengthen and develop contemplative studies as an academic field of inquiry, especially in the context of religious studies and the AAR. Our Unit provides a forum for: ● The investigation of contemplative practice and experience, considered inclusively and comprehensively ● Critical discussions on the field itself, including theoretical and interpretive issues ● The application of contemplative practice to academic life and university culture, including the possible contribution of “contemplative pedagogy” to teaching and learning The Unit thus aims to gather together currently diffused groups as well as dislocated, marginalized, and underrepresented individuals in the academy. To this end, we encourage research that is topical, tradition-specific, comparative, and cross-cultural. We also invite scholars to investigate contemplative practice and experience in ways that traverse and transcend the boundaries of traditions, disciplines, and research methodologies.

Chairs:

- John Dunne, University of Wisconsin
jddunne@wisc.edu

Contemporary Islam Unit

Call Text:

The Contemporary Islam Unit is soliciting proposals for the 2023 AAR annual meeting on any topics related to the study of Islam in the contemporary period. This year we have particular interests in the following topics:

- Labor and racial capitalism including:
 - The roles and experiences of contingent faculty and graduate student workers in Islamic Studies
 - Muslims and chattel slavery in the Americas
 - Forcible labor and patterns of migration in the 21st century
 - Instances of hyper-capitalism in the Muslim world, on display, for example, in the World Cup in Doha
- Social justice movements in Asia and Africa and global solidarity
- Climate change and environmentalism, such as the 2022 UN Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Egypt and the 2023 UN Climate Change Conference (COP28) in the UAE
- Muslim engagement with arts and aesthetic discourses
- Prearranged author-meets-critics style panels on a recently published books

Pre-arranged panels should reflect gender and racial/ethnic diversity as well as diversity of field, method, and scholarly rank as appropriate. We also encourage pre-arranged panels to take a broad and inclusive approach to what counts as “Islam,” recognizing the

theological diversity within Islam and among Muslims; this includes but is not limited to Shi'a, Ahmadiyya, and the Nation of Islam.

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

Mission Statement:

The mission of this unit is to provide a venue for discussing emerging issues and developments within contemporary Muslim societies and Islamic Studies.

Chairs:

- Noah Salomon, University of Virginia
nsalomon@virginia.edu
- Kayla Renee Wheeler, Xavier University
krw18@case.edu

Contemporary Pagan Studies Unit

Call Text:

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

“Stealing My Religion” : What are ontological, epistemological, and ethical questions for divine and human agency and appropriation in, among, and between different cultural, ethnic, and gender divides?

Art and Divination : What relationships exist between art, artists, artifacts and divination?

Chaplaincy: As Pagan religions become more institutional and normalized, how does chaplaincy change (and how it is changed by) its places, practices and context of operation?

For a Co-Sponsored Panel with the Greco-Roman Religions Unit (SBL), we are seeking proposals in the following areas:

- Divine Epiphany: the question of how, when, where, why, and to whom do the gods appear in the mortal world. How is contact between the divine and human brought about and what are its effects?
- Differential reception and interaction of gods and goddesses in ancient and contemporary settings.

Please refer to the Greco-Roman Religions Unit (SBL) for the full text of this call for papers.

For a Co-Sponsored Panel with the Religion in Europe Unit (AAR), we are seeking proposals in the following areas:

- Connections between contemporary religious nationalisms and pre-Christian Paganisms
- Representations and conflicts involving religious folk ideologies and nationalisms in Europe

Please, refer to the Religion in Europe Unit (AAR) for the full text of this call for papers.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Christopher Chase, Iowa State University
cwc@iastate.edu
- Giovanna Parmigiani, Harvard University
giovanna.parmigiani@gmail.com

Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop and Religion Unit

Call Text:

Brenda's Got A Baby/A Retrospect for Life

The Critical Approaches to Hip Hop and Religion section invites papers on the intersection of Hip Hop, religion and reproductive rights. Given the most current ruling of the Supreme Court (*Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, 2022) on federal abortion protections/access and given larger concerns related to reproductive health/access to reproductive health and rights as it affects communities of color, we invite papers that seek to address these concerns through the lenses of Hip Hop and religion and/or Hip Hop AS religion. Hip Hop has a pronounced history of addressing reproductive rights (*Brenda's Got a Baby* [1991] - Tupac; *La Femme Fetal* [1993] - Digable Planets in which Roe V. Wade is overturned AND Clarence Thomas votes to overturn it; *A Retrospect for Life* [1997] - Common f. Lauryn Hill; and *Autobiography* [2009] - Nikki Manaj, to list a few instances), and given the current context in the US, this intersectional discussion is all the more urgent.

Bring Em' Out, Bring Em' Out! It's hard to Yell When the Barrels In Your Mouth!

The Critical Approaches to Hip Hop and Religion section invites papers on the intersection of Hip Hop, religion, and violence. Some attention could be paid to the intersections between Hip Hop and religious violence specifically.

Afro-Pessimism & A Theology of Nihilism in Hip Hop

The recent comments from Ye (aka Kanye West) and others have drudged up a complex conversation within the Afro-American community regarding race, oppression, human sexuality, & socioeconomic status. We invite papers addressing these areas and also invite non-traditional forms of presentations such as spoken word, MCing, and/ or visual art. This area could also connect with conspiracy theories in and of Hip Hop culture and even a nuance with Black fundamentalists within Christian spaces who view all of Hip Hop as “demonic.”

Religion and Popular Culture/CAHHR Co-Sponsored Panel

For a potential co-sponsorship with the Religion and Popular Culture Unit, we invite proposals on the intersection of hip-hop cultures, Black Apocalypticism, and the politics of conspiracies. Proposals might touch on, but are not limited to, original analyses of Ye or the Black Hebrew Israelites.

Black Theology and CAHHR Co-Sponsored Panel

We invite papers for a possible co-sponsorship with Black Theology; there are countless intersections of overlap between Black Theology and Hip Hop that can provide a rich discussion. Intersections such as the Nation of Islam & Black hope in Hip Hop culture, the development of Black Millennials & Gen Z within Black religious spaces and the post-soul Hip Hop generation, and Afro-futurism within the lexicon of Kendrick Lamar—to name a few.

Co-sponsorship with Religion Film & Visual Culture

We also seek proposals, panels, & roundtables with a co-sponsorship with Religion, Film, & Visual Culture with the overlap of Hip Hop and visual culture. In particular, areas dealing with Kyrie Erving, Afro-pessimism, & visualizations of race; Killer Mike’s series on Netflix, *Trigger Warning* and the rise in Black Preppers, Ye (aka Kanye West) & paranormal psychosis within Hip Hop visual art, Ye & MAGA, or any other topics relating to said themes.

Possible co-sponsorship Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture

We seek paper proposals for a cosponsored panel on the contemporary cultural and artistic scene's disclosure of intersections between Paul Tillich and religious sensibilities expressed within Hip-hop. The music of Kendrick Lamar would be a case in point. We invite papers exploring new cartographies in Tillichian thought that center a scholarly use of Hip-hop as a cultural resource for thinking and rethinking through Tillichian theological and methodological approaches in the study of religion. We are especially interested in papers that address the following issues: Hip-hop, culture, and correlation; theology of culture and embodiment; theology and aesthetics; complex subjectivity,

estrangement, and the “New Being”; Christian existentialism and the Black radical tradition; racial narcissism and Black existentialism.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Justin Smith, Azusa Pacific University
jmsmith@apu.edu
- Daniel White Hodge, North Park University
dan@whitehodge.com

Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Unit

Call Text:

In the 2023 call for papers, the Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Unit is seeking proposals on the following topics:

- With the presidential theme (La Labor de Nuestras Manos) in mind, we propose a roundtable to continue work begun in the Theory and Method 2.0 offerings from AAR 2019 (Reimagining the Canon, Decolonizing the Field, Reconceiving Shared Space). (Dis)embodied Work: How might theory change by considering the embodied, often uncomfortable, relational labor in ethnographic research that does not make it into published work? What does our work rely on (resources? care?) and how does that shape how we theorize?
- Reflecting on the Legacy: 50 years since the AAR Presidency of Charles H. Long (possible co-sponsorship with the Afro-American Religious History Unit)
- 50 years after *God is Red: Contemporary Assessments of Vine Deloria, Jr.*
- A Buddhist Prosperity Gospel? Buddhism and Economy
- A preplanned and co-sponsored session with Anthropology of Religion) author meets respondents session on Rebekka King’s *The New Heretics: Skepticism, Secularism, and Progressive Christianity* (2023) for which we are not seeking proposals.

Mission Statement:

The Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion (CTDR) Unit offers an interdisciplinary and international forum for analytical scholars of religion to engage the intersection of critical theory and methodology with a focus on concrete ethnographic and historical case studies. Critical theory draws on methods employed in the fields of sociology, anthropology, history, literary criticism, and political theory in order to bring into scrutiny all kinds of discourses on religion, spanning from academic to nonacademic and from religious to nonreligious. This Unit seeks to provide a forum in which scholars of religion from a wide range of disciplines can examine and question their disciplinary presuppositions. The work of this Unit can be placed under three main rubrics: • Critical investigation of the categories generated and employed by the discourses on religion, such as experience, the sacred, ritual, and the various 'isms' that can be found in classic and contemporary studies of religion • Analysis of new and neglected theorists and works central to the critical study of religion, including those produced in cognate fields such as anthropology, political science, or literary theory • Theoretically-informed examination of elided and often neglected themes in religious studies, including class, race, gender, violence, legitimation, and the material basis of religion

Chairs:

- Katja Rakow, Utrecht University
k.rakow@uu.nl
- Kristin Scheible, Reed College
scheiblk@reed.edu

Cultural History of the Study of Religion Unit

Call Text:

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

For the 2023 Annual Meeting, we particularly welcome proposals on the following topics:

Cultural Constructions of "Energy"—Ideas about, practices related to, and mechanisms for conducting and converting energy have steadily increased since 19th c. advances in electricity. Nonetheless, viewed expansively, notions and cosmologies of energy's forms have long histories, varied cultural contexts, and religious resonances. We invite scholars to consider the relative absence of this term from the study of religion, to delineate these varied histories and contexts, or to trace its emergent scholarly significance in the context of climate change.

Formations of the Secular—To mark the 30th anniversary of Talal Asad's *Genealogies of Religion* and the 20th anniversary of his *Formations of the Secular*, we invite scholars of religion to critically reflect on the impact of these influential works on the study of religion, to reengage with them in light of subsequent works addressing the secular or post-secular, or to delineate new lines of inquiry in studies of the secular.

Catholic Secularities—Although the vanguard of secularity studies tended to forefront secularism’s intimate genealogical links to Protestant forms of Christianity, Catholicisms have also flourished in the secular age, while Catholic institutions also played a crucial role in the global colonial process. Hoping to capture the breadth of energies within Catholic studies broadly conceived, we ask scholars to figure Catholicism’s concurrent relation to secularity.

Lived Religion Retrospective—From its appearance in the late 1990s, “lived religion” has become a widely accepted and broadly applied modality of the study of religion, bringing an ethnographic corrective to the textual and institutional bias of the field. We invite a wide range of critical perspectives on the origins, application, and legacy of the lived religions movement, with special attention to how this term has been mobilized in different subfields of religious studies.

Crises in the Study of Religion—Scholars of religion face a number of contemporary challenges that pose grave threats to the field. In addition to the decline in humanities majors and the closure of departments of religion are the increasing numbers of contingent faculty and the rise in state-sponsored censorship of intellectual speech and debate in public universities. We invite our colleagues—especially those on the front lines of these developments—to share reports from the field, to elaborate on the political, economic, and cultural forces fomenting these changes, to delineate their explicit and insidious effects on the production of knowledge, and, in light of the theme of the 2023 meeting, to reflect on the nature and demands of our collective work.

Pedagogy Unbound—What would a politically engaged and interdisciplinary pedagogy in the study of religion look like? What futures are made possible by a sustained engagement with reparation in a scholarly field marked by sexist, racist, classist, and colonialist exclusion, exploitation, and violence? How might we fashion a normativity that moved past the impasse of the purported opposition of the study of religion and theology? Taking cues from Ruth Levitas’ *Utopia Unbound*--in which utopia is method and not place--we invite colleagues to envision possibilities for the future of the study of religion.

Revisiting Kinship—The category of “kinship” has a long and complicated history in the study of religion. We invite reexaminations of the claims (and obfuscations) associated with notions (and types) of kinship—particularly having to do with delineating modernity and industrialized, Western societies. What, if anything, remains explanatory or illuminating about the category, particular with regard to sedimented formations of relationality and affiliation, e.g., race, ethnicity, religion, and heritage?

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

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Marko Geslani, University of South Carolina
Geslani@mailbox.sc.edu
- Lucia Hulsether, Skidmore College
lhulseth@skidmore.edu

Daoist Studies Unit**Call Text:**

The Daoist Studies Unit invites proposals for the AAR Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas (November 18–21, 2023). We welcome proposals for individual papers, paper sessions, and roundtables concerning any aspects of Daoism regardless of the time period, geographical area, or methodological and theoretical approach. The proposals could be either individual papers, 90-minute paper sessions (consisting of 3 papers, a presider, and a respondent), or roundtables (which consist of a presider and 4–6 panelists). All topics for presentations are welcome. Below are the ideas proposed at the business meeting for 2023.

- Daoism and technology (James Benn)
- Neiman and daoixue (Stephen Eskildsen)
- State of Daoist Studies
- Daoism in the culture and realpolitik of Ming China (Michael Naparstek)
- Hagiography and lineage creation
- History of Daoist Studies (Tobias Zürn)

Please contact the point person if you wish to participate in formulating these panels. Proposals on topics not listed here are more than welcome.

We look forward to receiving proposals that are multi-disciplinary and border-crossing. As we continue to reach out to other program units and promote dialogue between different fields, we strongly encourage applicants to submit their proposals to Daoist Studies and one additional program unit. A complete list of AAR program Units can be found at (<https://papers.aarweb.org/program-units>)

The Daoist Studies Unit steadfastly supports diversity and inclusivity. We require all pre-arranged panels to incorporate a diversity of gender, ethnicity, seniority, sub-field, and/or methodology.

Please feel free to contact the co-chairs for additional information.

Mission Statement:

The Daoist Studies Unit organizes the most consistent venue in North America for sharing research on the Daoist religion. We are guided by a vision with three main goals: to reach into the vast recesses of the largely understudied Daoist tradition; to reach out in conversation with the broader American Academy of Religion, and to promote the

Annual Meeting of the AAR as an international venue for sharing and vetting research by all levels of Daoism scholars. Since early 2021, the Daoist Studies Unit has also been

hosting regular online presentations and workshops throughout the year under the rubric of the Global Daoist Studies Forum.

Chairs:

- Jessey Choo, Rutgers University
j.choo@rutgers.edu
- Tobias Zuern, Reed College
tzuern@reed.edu

Death, Dying, and Beyond Unit

Call Text:

We are proposing one regular session and one workshop. The Death, Dying, and Beyond Unit invites papers on the topic of “Death and Disability.” Our primary session will be a selection of papers on the intersection of death and disability, ranging from thinking about how disability shapes the dying narrative, the ways in which disability is or isn’t accounted for in the dying experience, an examination of the dominant able-bodied narrative on disability and death as one of decline rather than gain, alongside topics interrogating the understanding of death and disability from an intersectional and layered lens.

In line with the presidential theme in 2023, the Death, Dying and Beyond Unit invites participants to a workshop on the theme of “Laboring to be Legal.” This workshop invites creative and academic explorations of different intersections of labor, death, and legality broadly interpreted and defined, including what it means to labor, live, and die as legal or illegal and the religious frameworks through which we ask these questions. Presentations should be accessible, between five to ten minutes long, and should encourage audience engagement.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Candi K. Cann, Baylor University
candi_cann@baylor.edu
- John Borchert, University of North Carolina At Greensboro
Jwborchert@uncg.edu

Drugs and Religion Unit

Call Text:

The relationship between drugs and religious life is complicated, and never as obvious as it appears. This is true throughout human history, but especially the case in the so called "world religions." What does Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam have to say about the consumption of drugs? Are they prohibited, considered dangerous and counterproductive, spiritually speaking? Or are they embraced if not prescribed, with consumption of psychoactive substances deemed spiritually healthy? Does it depend on the drug? Is there dissonance between teachings about drugs and ritual activity? For this year's conference, we are calling for submissions from scholars who work within these traditions to join in a roundtable conversation that is comparative, critical, and creative. The following year we hope to have call focused on global religious cultures beyond these five. The paper presented on this panel will be considered for publication in a edited volume (edited by J. Christian Greer) on psychedelics and religion, which will be published as part of Routledge Taylor & Francis Group's series on religion and anthropology.

Chairs:

- J. Christian Greer, Harvard University
jchristiang@gmail.com
- Gary M. Laderman, Emory University
gladerm@emory.edu

Eastern Orthodox Studies Unit

Call Text:

For 2023 we welcome proposals on the following topics:

Scripture and Mysticism in Orthodox Christianity

For this session we invite both paper and panel proposals that analyze any aspect of the relationship between Orthodox mysticism and scripture. We are open to a wide range of possible areas of focus that includes but is not limited to the relationship between mystical theology and biblical/patristic hermeneutics; the uses of scripture in the liturgical context and mystical practices, affect, and embodied experiences; the historical study of Orthodox mystical practice and spirituality in the past and present; and the uses of art, music, and creative expression as it relates Orthodox mysticism.

This session will be co-sponsored by the SBL Biblical Exegesis from Eastern Orthodox Perspectives unit.

Orthodox Dissent (co-sponsored by the Ethics unit)

Often thought of as a stalwart pillar of the status quo, Orthodox Christianity has also served as a vehicle for oppositional politics and theologies in a variety of historical and social contexts. We invite both paper and panel proposals that analyze how Orthodox Christian thought and practice have manifested as principled opposition to prevailing modes of injustice, either political or ecclesiastical. Examples of this ethical approach include but are not limited to: Sts. Maria Skobtsova and Alexander Schmorell, who were martyred by the Nazis; Fr. Alexander Men, a prominent dissident in the Soviet Union; Ukrainian Orthodox resisting Russian invasion and occupation; Belarusian Orthodox

resisting the Lukashenko regime; Russian Orthodox resisting Putin's regime within Russia; and Orthodox human rights activists and thinkers concerned with gender justice and/or the rights of sexual or religious minorities in Orthodox contexts. We also welcome proposals addressing this topic from an historical perspective, including examples from Christian tradition, such as martyrdom and hagiography. This session is interested in, and open to, a wide range of methodological and disciplinary perspectives, including but not limited to ethics, theology and religious thought, sociology and anthropology, history, political science, and international relations.

Queer Studies, LGBTQI+ Lives, and Orthodox Christianity (co-sponsored by the Queer Studies in Religion unit and the Gay Men and Religion unit)

Orthodox-majority contexts, communities, and leaders often cause terrible harm to LGBTQ+ persons through homophobic violence, discourse, and policy. Sexual diversity is perhaps the most polarizing issue facing the modern Orthodox world—from the ecclesial discourse surrounding Pride parades and the conflict in Ukraine, to the Orthodox Church in America's statement against discussing sexuality—and its real-life effects cannot be understated. Yet, international initiatives over the past decade as well as recent publications (*Orthodox Tradition and Human Sexuality* (Fordham, 2022) and *Gender Essentialism and Orthodoxy: Beyond Male and Female* (Fordham, 2023)) have argued Orthodox tradition has resources within it to address issues of gender and sexuality with greater openness and theological consistency. This session will ask: what would a queering of Orthodoxy and an Orthodox engagement with Queer Studies look like? We welcome paper and pre-arranged panel proposals that accurately elucidate or constructively address any aspect of LGBTQ+ identity and Orthodox Christianity and its related topics (asceticism, celibacy, eunuchs, same-sex marriage, sexual ethics, queer theology, bodily agency, etc.) from any discipline (sociology, anthropology, history, theology, etc.).

We also are planning a pre-arranged session on the academic and ecclesiological legacy of +Kallistos Ware (1935-2022). This session will be co-sponsored by the Ecclesiological Investigations unit and the Christian Systematic Theology unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit focuses on the critical study of the theology, culture, history, and practices of the many different Eastern Christian churches, including but not limited to Orthodox, Oriental, and Eastern Rite Catholic (numbering some 260-300 million worldwide), including their mutual interaction and engagement with Western Christian and non-Christian groups.

Chairs:

- Philip Dorroll, Wofford
College dorrollpc@wofford.edu
- Ashley Purpura, Purdue University
apurpur@purdue.edu

Ecclesial Practices Unit

Call Text:

Theme: Making Space as Ecclesial Practice

Central to the work of many religious communities is the creation of sacred space. From majestic stained-glass covered medieval Cathedrals to intimate living room ofrendas adorned with the images and the favorite foods of loved ones, the spaces that Christians construct to serve as sites of ecclesial practice are powerful symbols that embody the unique identities and values of those communities. So much so that the work of making spaces sacred can itself be considered a constitutive ecclesial practice.

We invite papers that employ qualitative research as a resource for reflection on the theological significance of the work that church communities do to build, cultivate, transform, and/or designate spaces as sites of sacred encounter. This work can refer to the physical labor of manipulating material space or the imaginative and ritual work of invoking/identifying sacredness within physical places. The theological implications of the ways in which ecclesial communities relate to space are especially significant and revelatory during times of change or transition. What are the ethical issues involved in churches meeting in formerly “secular” spaces or, conversely, empty church edifices being converted into high-priced condominiums? What responsibility do churches bear while inhabiting land stolen from Indigenous peoples? How are ecclesial communities redefining the nature and contours of sacred space? Papers reflecting on these and any other related questions are welcome.

Mission Statement:

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

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

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

Chairs:

- Theodore Hickman-Maynard, Harvard University
thickmanmaynard@hds.harvard.edu
- Rebecca Spurrier, Columbia Theological Seminary
spurrierr@ctsnet.edu

Ecclesiological Investigations Unit

Call Text:

The EI Unit invites papers on the topic of "The Ecclesial Work of Unacknowledged Hands." We would welcome papers that discuss how many whose labor contributes to the life of the church often go unknown, unappreciated or underappreciated, and unacknowledged. We would hope for papers that discuss the relations between centers and peripheries in the churches; papers that address the contributions of women, indigenous peoples, young people, historically marginalized communities, LGBTQ+ persons, and non-elites/non-experts to the life of the church; and papers that address broadly how the work of church building, so often assumed to be dependent upon the work of its leaders, is more often a creative bricolage that is the work of many hands, using many different means at hand.

We also are planning a pre-arranged session on the academic and ecclesiological legacy of +Kallistos Ware (1935-2022). This session will be co-sponsored by the Eastern Orthodox Studies Unit and the Christian Systematic Theology Unit.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Dennis Doyle, University of Dayton
ddoyle1@udayton.edu
- Brian Flanagan, Marymount University
brianflanagan1@gmail.com

Esotericism Unit

Call Text:

For all proposals, we especially encourage papers that employ innovative theoretical or methodological approaches and that consider cross-cultural perspectives.

In addition, we will consider proposals for pre-arranged panels on a specific topic. We encourage panel organizers to consider the composition of panels which reflect diversity, which can include gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, and academic rank.

This year we invite proposals for the following themes:

Esotericism and Popular Culture

We invite papers that consider the intersections between Esotericism and Popular Culture. Possible themes could include the (mis)representation of esoteric traditions in popular culture; esotericism in digital or social media; genealogies or transmissions of specific esoteric ideas in popular culture.

Esotericism and Ecology

Esoteric traditions have consistently engaged environmental and ecological ideas and ways of thinking in their beliefs and practices. From Hermetic ideas of cosmos to modern esoteric attitudes towards ecology, landscape, and climate change, the clear connections between esotericism and ecology warrant closer analysis. We welcome papers that consider the ways that esoteric traditions have engaged with and responded to the natural environment.

Mission Statement:

The purpose of this unit is to promote, expand, and constructively critique the academic study of esotericism. “Esotericism” is now conventionally seen as an umbrella term covering a range of historical currents associated with notions of “hidden knowledge” that have been conceived of – by historical actors or by later scholars – as “alternative” to or “rejected” by established religious institutions in Europe and beyond. In this sense it typically includes a wide range of currents such as Gnosticism, Hermetism, and theurgy, occult sciences and ritual magical traditions, Paracelsism and Rosicrucianism, Mesmerism, spiritualism, and Theosophy, and various forms of “alternative” spirituality.

The unit continues to support new work on all aspects of such currents, from antiquity to the present day. However, it specifically encourages work that 1) challenges the cultural and geographic demarcations of the field by looking at esotericism in e.g. Islamic and Jewish contexts, colonial and post-colonial societies (e.g. India, South America, Africa, the Pacific); 2) seeks new ways to engage in cross-cultural comparisons of esoteric practices and discourses; and 3) explores innovative theoretical and

methodological approaches to esotericism and interrogates key terms in the field (e.g. esotericism, gnosis, secrecy, initiation, marginality and rejectedness). By encouraging such work, the unit is committed to refining “esotericism” as a critical concept in the study of religion, and opening up and expanding the field through an engagement with other disciplines and theoretical perspectives.

Chairs:

- Timothy Grieve-Carlson, Rice University
tgriev Carlson@gmail.com
- Christa Shusko, Linnaeus University
christa.shusko@gmail.com

Ethics Unit

Call Text:

This year the Ethics Unit welcomes proposals on the following themes:

Aesthetics and Religious Ethics

Although aesthetics and ethics both centrally involve value, their relationship remains diverse and disputed. This session invites paper and paper session proposals concerning the relationships between aesthetics and religious ethics. We are particularly interested in proposals that explore how aesthetics may inform, promote, or contravene religious ethics and / or how religious ethics may affect aesthetic perception or production.

Climate Change and Religious Ethics

Among its many challenges, climate change poses a range of ethical and religious questions. This session invites paper or paper session proposals examining how religious ethics may address climate change and / or how climate change may affect religious ethics.

Unpaid Labor and Religious Ethics

Unpaid labor is a prominent feature of many economic sectors: agriculture, hospitality and entertainment, dependent care, the creative industries, religious work, and even academia. The effects of unpaid labor in these contexts differ, but they are especially pernicious in situations of economic vulnerability. This session invites paper or paper session proposals on various dimensions of unpaid labor. We welcome proposals that discuss these dimensions in an array of industries and cases, and that employ a range of ethical methods and religious traditions.

Orthodox Dissent (co-sponsored with Eastern Orthodox Studies Unit)

Often thought of as a stalwart pillar of the status quo, Orthodox Christianity has also served as

a vehicle for oppositional politics and theologies in a variety of historical and social contexts.

We invite both paper and panel proposals that analyze how Orthodox Christian thought and

practice have manifested as principled opposition to prevailing modes of injustice, either political or ecclesiastical. Examples of this ethical approach include but are not limited to: Sts.

Maria Skobtsova and Alexander Schmorell, who were martyred by the Nazis; Fr. Alexander

Men, a prominent dissident in the Soviet Union; Ukrainian Orthodox resisting Russian invasion

and occupation; Belarusian Orthodox resisting the Lukashenko regime; Russian Orthodox resisting Putin's regime within Russia; and Orthodox human rights activists and thinkers concerned with gender justice and/or the rights of sexual or religious minorities in Orthodox

contexts. We also welcome proposals addressing this topic from an historical perspective,

including examples from Christian tradition, such as martyrdom and hagiography. This session is interested in, and open to, a wide range of methodological and disciplinary perspectives, including but not limited to ethics, theology and religious thought, sociology and

anthropology, history, political science, and international relations.

Social Scientific Research on Religion as Ethical Practice (co-sponsored with Religion and Social Sciences Unit)

We invite papers that explore intersections between social scientific research on religion and activism, solidarity, and social ethics. We are particularly interested in papers that analyze or use methods that challenge the researcher/subject relational frame, disrupt knowledge hierarchies, center the agency and epistemologies of communities outside of the academy, and/or explore how ethnographic methods influence ethical inquiry pursued in normative and/or descriptive modes. Examples of methods examined might include, but are not limited to, collaborative ethnography, participatory action research, and community-based participatory research.

Labor Union Organizing in San Antonio and Beyond (co-sponsored with Liberation Theologies, Class, Religion, and Theology, Religion and Economy, and Ethics Units)

The Liberation Theologies; Class, Religion, and Theology; Ethics; and Religion and Economy units call for proposals regarding labor issues and worker organizing in general, in San Antonio or Texas, and/or in the hotel/convention center/hospitality industry. We hope to convene both a pre-conference workshop and a panel on these topics, and encourage submissions from labor organizers, activists, and scholars. For a number of years it was a priority of the AAR to take into account the labor situation on the ground in its host cities. This session and possible pre-conference workshop, therefore, offer an opportunity to reflect on that commitment, understand the labor situation in our host city, and hopefully re-energize the AAR's commitment to solidarity with all those the labor of whose hands makes the annual meeting possible at all.

Mission Statement:

The Ethics Unit seeks to serve the AAR by providing a forum for scholarly engagement with the ethical dimensions, interests, and implications of religious traditions.

Chairs:

- Nichole Flores, University of Virginia
nichole.flores@virginia.edu
- Frederick Simmons, Princeton Theological Seminary
frederick.simmons@ptsem.edu

Evangelical Studies Unit

Call Text:

Theme for 2023: Evangelicals and the Work of Their Hands

The Evangelical Studies Unit invites proposals for individual papers or complete panels related to the presidential theme, the Work of Our Hands. We welcome papers exploring how this theme manifests within evangelical theology, history, culture, politics, practice, activism, and/or social vision, and are particularly interested in projects that offer constructive and synthetic approaches to suggest new directions for the study of evangelicalism.

Possible framing questions include: How does the spiritual emphasis of evangelical theology navigate the materiality of the world (e.g., poverty, embodiment, social justice, race, labor, land, money, etc.)? How have evangelicals negotiated the tensions of their desire to be in but not of their cultures? And how have they distinguished the boundaries of cultural engagement, stewardship, and appropriation?

We welcome research related to evangelicals and various ways of defining “work” using a wide array of spiritual, physical, cultural, and technological resources. Examples of sub-themes include:

- Distinctions between Spiritual & Material, Public & Private
- Mission & Evangelism
- Social Justice Work
- The Social Gospel Movement
- Labor
- Land & Immigration
- Capitalism
- Embodiment
- Race
- Sexuality
- Art

Lastly, the Evangelical Studies Unit and the Korean Religions Unit welcome proposals for a joint session on Christianity in South Korea that explores the anthropological, historical, and sociological dimensions of evangelical megachurches, and also studies that use a transpacific lens.

Mission Statement:

The Evangelical Studies Unit promotes critical analysis and innovative thinking around the study of Evangelicalism through multifaceted approaches by fostering dialogue across disciplines and diverse social locations. Unlike many groups aimed at the study of Evangelicalism, there is no confessional expectation or requirement for membership or participation within this Unit.

Chairs:

- Peter Choi, Graduate Theological Union
pchoi@gtu.edu
- Jessica Wong, Azusa Pacific University
jessicawong@apu.edu

Exploratory Session

Call Text:

All proposals for new Units must begin as Exploratory Sessions. An exploratory session is a complete prearranged session that provides a platform for a group of members to announce a line of inquiry new to the AAR program and to seek out others interested in pursuing it further. The proposal can be for a paper, panel, or other creative type of session format. Exploratory sessions are submitted through the PAPERS system and must be submitted before **March 1, 2023**. Notification of program acceptance will be announced in early April 2023.

To establish a new program unit, the unit proposers must normally be approved by the Program Committee to hold an exploratory session two years in a row. After the second exploratory session, the unit proposers may submit their proposal for a new unit, which the Program Committee can approve, deny, or – in very rare circumstances – return for revision and resubmission after a third, final exploratory session. More detailed information can be found on our webpage about Proposing a New Program Unit.

Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Unit

Call Text:

For the 2023 meeting, we seek proposals related to the purpose of our unit with attention to four specific themes:

- For a potential co-sponsored session with Lesbian-Feminisms and Religion, The units seek proposals for a retrospective on Lauren Berlant's work with a focus on their later work, namely *On the Inconvenience of Other People*.
- We seek proposals for a potential panel on fat studies in religion in conversation with the following questions: what possibilities does fat theorizing hold for our imaginations of intersections between feminisms and disability?; what do fat bodies teach us about human relations with the more-than-human environment?; how does fatness help us theorize subjectivity with more depth and complexity? We are especially interested in proposals in conversations with religious traditions beyond Christianity.

- In conversation with AAR's 2023 presidential theme, *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*, we seek proposals related to care work in medical contexts. We are particularly interested in proposals that consider the impact of normative assumptions on care work in medical contexts and proposals that consider the harms that are often done in the name of care.
- Also in conversation with AAR's 2023 presidential theme, we seek proposals related to ecological care work and indigenous epistemologies, especially as efforts to redress extractive capitalism and settler coloniallogics.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Annie Blazer, College of William and Mary
annie.blazer@gmail.com
- M. Cooper Minister, Shenandoah University
mministe@su.edu

Films

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.

Chairs:

- Whitney Bauman, Florida International University
whitneybauman@mac.com

- Amy Defibaugh, American Academy of Religion
adehibaugh@aarweb.org

Gay Men and Religion Unit

Call Text:

The Gay Men and Religion Program Unit invite papers for the 2023 annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in San Antonio, Texas; November 18-23. The following two panel options represent lines of inquiry identified by committee members and attendees of the 202w annual meeting. That said, we will consider all paper proposals. We encourage those submitting papers to read our revised program unit description. So, too, we are very interested in papers that represent a wide variety of religious and geographic locations.

Texas, Religious Opposition to Sexual Autonomy, and Gay Men

State and national electoral politics have been significantly influenced by political and religious attitudes emerging from Texas, and usually of the kind that oppose sexual autonomy and liberty for men who have sex with men. As the 2023 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion meets in San Antonio, Texas, the Gay Men and Religion Program Unit is mindful of how our geographic location not only warrants academic interrogation at the intersection of religion, public policy, and gay men, but also raises important matters of safety and our feelings of vulnerability. We invite papers, for this panel, to explore: 1. Anti-gay political rhetoric and policies grounded in religious rhetoric, and responses to those; 2. Ways in which abortion restriction bears on people who identify as gay men, and/or gay men who participate in religious traditions or political systems that seek to restrict reproductive choice; 3. Histories of seemingly opposing gay male religious experiments being shaped by and in Texas (e.g., Exodus and MCC in 1970s Dallas); 4. Christian nationalism and gay men and/or gay men and Texas nationalism; 5. Reflections on Lawrence v. Texas: liberation from sodomy codes or codifying religion-based homonormativities.

The Working of Our Hands: The Insights and Lived Experiences of Gay Men and/in Religion. In this panel we seek to engage the lived experiences of gay men and religion, inclusive of, but not restricted to: 1. Theological responses to gay men and sex work (notions of radical hospitality, sacred prostitution, etc.); 2. Interreligious gay male experiences, including mixed religious gay households 3. Nonreligious gay male experiences in relation to religious persons and traditions; 4. New horizons in gay male ritual and liturgy - beyond cishet models; 5. Proposals around recent books relevant to the lived religious experiences of gay men, 6. Papers in conversation with the book, *Queer God De Amor* by Miguel Diaz.

Queer Studies, LGBTQI+ Lives, and Orthodox Christianity (co-sponsored by the Queer Studies in Religion unit and the Gay Men and Religion unit)

Orthodox-majority contexts, communities, and leaders often cause terrible harm to LGBTQ+ persons through homophobic violence, discourse, and policy. Sexual diversity is perhaps the most polarizing issue facing the modern Orthodox world—from the ecclesial discourse surrounding Pride parades and the conflict in Ukraine, to the Orthodox Church in America’s statement against discussing sexuality—and its real-life effects cannot be understated. Yet, international initiatives over the past decade as well as recent publications (*Orthodox Tradition and Human Sexuality* (Fordham, 2022) and *Gender Essentialism and Orthodoxy: Beyond Male and Female* (Fordham, 2023)) have argued Orthodox tradition has resources within it to address issues of gender and sexuality with greater openness and theological consistency. This session will ask: what would a queering of Orthodoxy and an Orthodox engagement with Queer Studies look like? We welcome paper and pre-arranged panel proposals that accurately elucidate or constructively address any aspect of LGBTQ+ identity and Orthodox Christianity and its related topics (asceticism, celibacy, eunuchs, same-sex marriage, sexual ethics, queer theology, bodily agency, etc.) from any discipline (sociology, anthropology, history, theology, etc.).

Mission Statement:

The Gay Men and Religion Unit: Provides scholarly reflection and writing on the intersections of gay male experience, including sexual experiences, with religious traditions and spiritual practices. Fosters ongoing contributions by (or about) gay men—or men who have sex with men—to religious scholarship in all its forms; we are especially interested in gay men’s experiences across a range of religious traditions and in a wide variety of geographical contexts. Critically challenges homophobic scholarship and religious teaching, on the one hand, and aspects of the LGBTQI equality movement that promote assimilation and normalization of hegemonic patriarchy and heterosexism, on the other. Engages a variety of theoretical and political discourses, which fosters vigorous dialogue between essentialist and constructionist notions of gay male identity; this includes recognizing the insights and limitations of any theoretical and methodological approach to the study of religion and sexuality.

Chairs:

- Richard McCarty, Mercyhurst University
rmccarty@mercyhurst.edu
- Michael Pettinger, New York University
mfpettinger@gmail.com

Global-Critical Philosophy of Religion Unit

Call Text:

Session 1 (Categories) • The Problem of Evil Pollution/Contamination in Global-Critical Philosophies of Religion • The “problem of evil” is one among many staple topics of inquiry in “western,” Euro-/Christo-centric philosophy of religion. “Evil,” however, is arguably not a stable category for cross-cultural philosophizing about religion. This panel examines the viability of the alternative category pollution/contamination by inviting

papers that explore analogue concepts and “problems” in diverse religio-philosophies (ideally only one tradition per paper), drawing on them to reflect critically on the traditional problem of evil. To what extent might a “global-critical philosophy of religion” displace the problem of evil with that of pollution/contamination? • We encourage and invite papers that individually represent neglected religio-philosophies and collectively represent diverse religio-philosophies. • Concretely, we invite submissions that present such discursive explorations and, at the same time, interact with each other. For this purpose, the papers will be distributed among the panelists one month before the coming annual meeting.

Session 2 (Method) • Decentralizing the Philosophical Inquiry into Religion • The etymology of the term “philosophy” has been used to justify Eurocentric and Anglophonocentric approaches to philosophy of religion. This panel proposes to decenter the field by globalizing the method/s used in philosophy of religion and by envisioning a global-critical philosophy of religion beyond and across boundaries. The panel will engage discursive explorations of that which grounds/sustains/transcends human existence from around the world and encourage their interaction. Concretely, we invite submissions that present such discursive explorations and, at the same time, interact with each other. For this purpose, the papers will be distributed among the panelists one month before the coming annual meeting.

Mission Statement:

The Global-Critical Philosophy of Religion (GCPR) Unit seeks to globalize and otherwise diversify the contents, categories, and methods of philosophy of religion, by critically reflecting on current practices of the field, by developing conceptual frameworks for cross-cultural philosophizing, and by exploring innovative methods for cross-pollination between religio-philosophical traditions.

GCPR is “global” and “critical” in distinctive ways—global, in facilitating panels and sessions that are always populated by scholars representing different religio-philosophical traditions; critical, in interrogating the vocabularies and methodologies used to carry out such cross-cultural, inter-religious philosophizing. Our two key goals follow from this mission: first, to offer and reflect on new categories of inquiry for cross-cultural, inter-religious philosophy of religion; second, to explore and implement new methods for philosophizing about religion cross-culturally and inter-religiously. This, in turn, involves experimenting with session formats that are designed to foster conversations that go beyond “description” or “presentation” to interactive philosophizing about religion, including the pre-circulation of papers, designing sessions that cultivate engagement between panelists, and empowering moderators to lead conversations into “deeper” hermeneutic, phenomenological, comparative, and evaluative topics and issues.

Chairs:

- [Marie-Helene Gorisse, University of Birmingham](mailto:mhgorisse@gmail.com)
mhgorisse@gmail.com
- [Gereon Kopf, Luther College](mailto:kopfg@luther.edu)
kopfg@luther.edu

Hindu Philosophy Unit

Call Text:

The Hindu Philosophy unit of the American Academy of Religion is pleased to invite proposals for the following sessions to be held at this year's Annual Meeting: *Philosophical Roundtable*. This year's roundtable will focus on the nature of poetic language. Ānandavardhana famously held that in addition to the literal and implicative functions of language, poetry expresses meaning through a third, distinctive function: suggestion (*dhvani, vyañjanā*). Mukula Bhaṭṭa, in his *Abhidhāvr̥ttamātrkā*, holds that there is no need to posit a third semantic function; implication (*lakṣaṇā*) suffices to explain the communicative power of poetry. Note that the goal of this format is not to have traditional presentations but to create a space for lively and rigorous debate. In lieu of traditional paper proposals, therefore, we instead invite prospective participants to offer a brief critical analysis of the debate. One might, for example, assess the strengths and weaknesses of each position, or defend Ānandavardhana's position against Mukula's arguments, or consider alternative explanations of poetic suggestion by later theorists such as Mahima Bhaṭṭa, or reflect on the debate in light of contemporary philosophy of language.

Traditional Papers Session. For this session we are looking for individual paper proposals (rather than full panel proposals). We are open to a wide range of topics and approaches.

Possible topics include but are by no means limited to: Arguments for and against God's Existence, Subjectivity and Selfhood, Epistemology, Novelty in Navya-Nyāya (or other schools), "Hindu Philosophy" as a Category, Philosophy of Materiality, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy and Literature, and Philosophy in Vernacular Texts.

Co-sponsored Sessions. We also seek papers for two possible co-sponsored sessions: one on comparative Hindu and Islamic philosophy (for co-sponsorship with Islamic Mysticism or The Study of Islam), the other on theories of knowledge in lesser known schools (for co-sponsorship with Indian and Chinese Religions in Dialogue Unit).

Mission Statement:

This unit aims to bring together scholars working on Hindu philosophy broadly construed, including not only the classical schools of Nyāya, Mīmāṃsā, Vedānta, etc., but a wide range of intellectual traditions from the Vedic period to the present day. These traditions are vast and varied, engaging with questions of epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of language, aesthetics, theodicy, ritual theory, ethics, and political philosophy, not to mention areas that have, arguably, no direct parallel in Western thought. Our goals are (1) to advance research in Hindu philosophical traditions, encouraging new approaches and new topics within the field; (2) to explore interactions and influences between Hindu philosophy and other traditions of South Asian philosophy (Buddhist, Jain, Sikh, Islamic, etc.); and (3) to contribute to the study of cross-cultural philosophy at the AAR.

Chairs:

- Michael Allen, University of Virginia

msa2b@virginia.edu

- Parimal G. Patil, Harvard University
ppatil@fas.harvard.edu

Hinduism Unit

Call Text:

The Hinduism Unit invites contributions on the following topics suggested at the 2022 Annual Meeting as well as on other topics consistent with the Unit's Statement of Purpose. Proposals of complete papers sessions and roundtable sessions are especially welcome, as are proposals that specify creative and efficient uses of the 90-minute and 120-minute sessions that will make up the entirety of the Unit's programming for the 2023 Annual Meeting. For further information about potential sessions on the topics already suggested, please e-mail the points of contact for each topic listed below:

New Books in Hindu Studies

Sohini Pillai, sohini.pillai@kzoo.edu

This panel features first monographs in Hindu studies with the aim of both exposing scholars in the field to new theoretical interventions, and of providing concrete ideas about how to incorporate those interventions into scholars' own pedagogies. Given the range of new books in Hindu studies, preference will be given to first monographs. To

nominate a book for consideration (either your own or someone else's), please fill out this brief survey: <https://forms.gle/NGb7w8WSV8FidX1Q6>.

Diasporic Dimensions of Hindu Traditions

Bhakti Mamtara, bmamtora@wooster.edu

Possible co-sponsorship with the North American Hinduism Unit

This panel invites papers that analyze the making of modern Hindu diasporas. In particular, the panel welcomes papers that investigate (1) trans-generational conceptions of and relationships with "homelands" and (2) the role of networks in shaping multi-directional flows of religious ideas.

Digital Humanities and the Study of Hinduism

Ute Huesken, huesken@uni-heidelberg.de

Possible co-sponsorship with the South Asian Religions Unit

The methods and techniques of Digital Humanities are increasingly reshaping the manner in which established areas of research are carried out. Use of digital applications and electronic equipments is ushering a new era for the study of Hinduism as well. These rapid advancements necessitate a careful and thorough assessment of the desirability, as also possible concerns, of employing them and call for a judicious integration of the new techniques in the workflow of the study of Hinduism, including, for example, the editing of manuscripts. The main aim of this session is to review and revise the study of Hinduism and of South Asian manuscripts in the context of the fast-evolving discipline of Digital Humanities.

Fieldwork and Ethnography in Modi's India

Emilia Bachrach, ebachrac@oberlin.edu

This roundtable invites ethnographers working in India to reflect on recent shifts they have experienced in the research process, especially vis-a-vis increased efforts by the BJP government (esp. since 2014) to quiet voices in (seeming) opposition to Hindu Nationalist narratives about India's history and religious landscapes. Questions we invite potential panelists to consider include, but are not limited to, how ethnographers' social positions (e.g., perceived caste, national, and gender identities) have been received differently in recent years by interlocutors (and / or state officials involved in granting visas and research permissions) and how researchers had to rethink methodologies in order to protect ethnographers themselves, but also their conservation partners, particularly those in marginalized positions.

Harnessing Our Scholarly Privilege and Power for Public Good: Reproductive Justice and Religion

Shana Sippy (shana.sippy@centre.edu) and Michal Raucher (michal.raucher@rutgers.edu) With particular awareness of the AAR's presence in Texas (or wherever we may be), this call for proposals seeks to respond directly to the realities of a post-Dobbs America. We hope to bring together scholars who work in a range of regions and on different religious traditions in order to share their knowledge and comparative perspectives that will deepen our understanding of the issues surrounding reproductive justice. In the planning

phase, we seek to gather together scholars and activists who wish to think through and prepare some type of public program on the issue of Reproductive Justice for the annual meeting. We anticipate this session will be jointly sponsored by a number of different units and, depending on the response, may involve multiple sessions or additional programming.

Hinduism and Climate

Vijaya Nagarajan, nagarajan@usfca.edu

This panel wishes to explore the many interlinkages between Hinduism as a field of study and the current climate chaos. Are there worldviews from within the long history of what we have come to understand as Hinduism that could be repurposed to help conceptualize, reframe, resolve, and solve the current carbon dilemmas in the atmosphere and elsewhere? Are there understandings that could serve to do the opposite—to accelerate and worsen the current climate crisis? How do Hindu notions of caste, race, sexuality, gender, and the natural world influence multiple rivers of contemporary Hindu communities' responses to the collapsing environment in India and elsewhere? Hoping to bridge the phenomenon of melting Himalayan glaciers, and the increasing floods and drought throughout India and the world, this panel wishes to illuminate possible bridges between various research areas of Hinduism and the increasingly chaotic warming world.

Hinduism and Disability

Nicole Karapanagiotis, nicole.karapanagiotis@rutgers.edu

In this panel, we invite papers that critically reflect on discourses of disability within the Hindu traditions. We particularly welcome papers that examine issues of marginalization and stigma as well as papers that reflect on discourses of normalcy and ableism, and the religio-social factors involved in their production. Papers that examine conceptions of the body more broadly within the Hindu traditions are also welcome.

Leader Succession Practices in Hinduism

Contact: Avni Chag, ac158@soas.ac.uk

Seldom is an institution as fragile as when the founder or leader has died, especially if there is uncertainty and disagreement over succession. Histories of religious succession are, in particular, riddled with controversy, scandal, and dispute. If a deceased founder or leader has not arranged for his succession, and in some cases even if he has, what determines who is next in line to lead?

This panel invites papers that address the topic of leader succession within Hindu communities both historically and within contemporary institutions. How is succession determined within Hindu religious discourses? What models of leader succession exist and how are these enacted? How have disputes been resolved and how have disputes effected the future direction, values, and identity of a given religious tradition?

Textual Authority in Hindu Traditions

John Nemec, nemec@virginia.edu

It is well known that Hindu traditions array a vast assortment of authoritative textual works and formally count them as authoritative by differing measures and with disparate ranges of applicability. This panel asks the questions, "how are religious texts imbued with normative authority in Hindu traditions, and how does Hinduism understand textual authority in a textually pluralistic context?" Panelists may wish to examine types of scriptural (or other forms of textual) authority in Hindu traditions; the role of genre therein; the positioning of oral traditions in textual production and use; arguments for divine and/or human sanction in the formation of textual authority; the role of textual authority in shaping movements of protest within Hinduism; the role of gender in shaping models of textual authority; caste-status and textual authority; philosophical claims for scriptural legitimacy; or other concerns. Please be in touch if the proposed panel's theme, broadly conceived, is of interest and if you would like to contribute to its formation, which is ongoing.

Harnessing Our Scholarly Privilege and Power for Public Good: Reproductive Justice and Religion
Shana Sippy (shana.sippy@centre.edu)

With particular awareness of the AAR's presence in Texas, this session seeks to respond directly to the realities of a post-Dobbs America. We hope to bring together scholars who work in a range of regions and on different religious traditions in order to share their knowledge and comparative perspectives to deepen our understanding of the issues surrounding reproductive justice. In the planning phase, we seek to gather together scholars and activists who wish to think through and prepare some type of public program on the issue of Reproductive Justice for the annual meeting. We anticipate this session will be jointly sponsored by a number of different units and, depending on the response, may involve multiple sessions or additional programming.

"Trads": Masculinity Hate Politics in Transnational South Asian Contexts

Potential co-sponsorship between North American Hinduism, Men, Masculinities, and Religions, Hinduism, and South Asian Religions Units

This panel explores the hate politics, purity discourses, and identitarian grounding of groups that describe themselves as "Trads" or Traditionalists which operate in transnational contexts. While members of this group reject the Indian Constitution as a Western construct, many of its symbols are imported from the West—the white supremacist Alt-Right in the United States.

Mission Statement:

This Unit was established in 1997 with the mission of providing a forum within the AAR for the academic study of Hinduism. The Unit seeks to foster research on all periods, geographies, and registers of Hindu texts and practices through the presentation of critical analysis and interpretative strategies based on textual, sociohistorical, ethnographic, philosophical, theological, and theoretical frameworks. We are particularly interested in forging connections between Hindu studies and other areas of religious studies, and we welcome proposals from scholars in the field that can provide such connections.

If you would like to nominate a book to be featured in our annual "New Books in Hindu Studies" panel, please use the following link. Note that selected books should be single-authored monographs that are the author's first book:

<https://forms.gle/NGb7w8WSV8FidX1Q6>

Chairs:

- Harshita Kamath, Emory University
harshita.kamath@emory.edu
- Varun Khanna, Swarthmore College
vrkhanna@gmail.com

History of Christianity Unit

Call Text:

The History of Christianity Unit invites papers that offer new interpretations of and findings in Christian history. We especially welcome chronological diversity with a special call to pre-modern issues. We stay open to full panel proposals on new approaches (e.g., material culture) and locations for pre-modern Christianities. While we are open to other panel proposals and roundtable sessions, we are especially interested in the following:

Roe v. Wade: On the 50th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* and in light of the landmark decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* to overturn it, we invite proposals that contextualize abortion within the History of Christianity. We especially welcome proposals that complicate reductionist partisan framings of abortion within historical Christian tradition and teachings.

Early Christianity in Africa: We invite proposals that examine early African contributions to formative Christianity (1st-10th centuries C.E.). We particularly welcome proposals that consider ways in which ancient African expressions of Christianity can help decolonize monolithic eurocentric historical understandings of the history of Christianity. [potential format: 3 papers each for 15 minutes followed by discussion]. This panel may result in a co-sponsored session with the African Religions Unit

African Church in Global Dialogue: We invite proposals that examine important historical intersections (including conflict) between African and other expressions of global Christianity. We welcome proposals that consider ways in which African expressions of Christianity have historically and continue to shape the face of global Christianity. In acknowledgment of Africa's continuous historic voice in the History of Christianity, we envision this panel including topics from a range of time periods, from ancient to contemporary times. [Potential format: a roundtable taking up 4-5 key historical examples (8-10 mins max for each) at the intersection of

African Christianity and Global Christianity

Christianity and its Monsters: We invite proposals for a roundtable discussion of the role of monsters in Christian discourse. We particularly welcome a mix of proposals that

illuminate the diverse role monsters and the monstrous have played in the history of Christianity (the good, the bad, the other).

Christianity and animals (for a possible co-sponsorship with the Animals and Religion Unit) On the 800th anniversary of St. Francis and the first nativity scene to include live animals (1223 C.E.), we invite proposals that explore the various roles accorded to animals in imagining the Christian story. We particularly welcome proposals that complicate and challenge the ways in which the term 'animal' is understood, both in nonhuman and human incarnations.

100 Years of Disney and Warner: On the centennial of the founding of Disney and Warner Bros, we invite proposals that examine the telling or narration of Christian history through film and popular culture. This panel may result in a co-sponsored session with the Religion, Film, and Visual Cultures Unit

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Lloyd Barba, Amherst College
lbarba@amherst.edu
- Roy Fisher, Loyola Marymount University
roy.fisher@lmu.edu

Human Enhancement and Transhumanism Unit

Call Text:

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

human capacities or extend the human lifespan. Our Unit also welcomes proposals on: Religious transhumanisms and transhumanisms in relation to: global South perspectives, surveillance technologies, ethnographic and anthropological methods, climate change, animal liberation.

Additionally, we welcome proposals for papers or panels on the following topics:

Disability and Impairment: Politicizing and weaponizing of disability, H+ and ableism, Therapy vs. Enhancement

Reproduction and Reproductive Technologies: Control of human reproduction and esp. women's rights, Transgenics and xenotransplantation, Reviving extinct species

The Cyborg: Contemporary reflection on the figure of the cyborg, Critique of past articulations of the cyborg

Transhumanism and ritual in communities such as biohacking subcultures;

Transhumanism, exercise and dieting; Commodification of human data and persons, including bioprospecting; Revisiting the various goals and trajectories of trans- and posthumanism

Data Justice, and Healthcare (co-sponsored with the Bioethics and Religion Unit)

We are seeking papers or a proposed panel looking at the intersection of data justice and healthcare in religious communities or perspectives.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Amy Michelle DeBaets, Hackensack University Medical Center
Amy.debaets@gmail.com
- Stephen Garner, Laidlaw College
sgarner@laidlaw.ac.nz

Indian and Chinese Religions in Dialogue Unit

Call Text:

Naga and Dragon Mythology in India and China
contact Gerrit Lange, langeg@staff.uni-marburg.de

Indigenous Feminism between India and China
contact Ting Guo and Jingjing Li, tg.guo@utoronto.ca

Funerary Rites in India and China
contact Allan Yi Ding, allan.ding@depaul.edu

Spirit Mediums in India and China
contact Allan Yi Ding, allan.ding@depaul.edu

Memory and Cultural Landscape and memorial sites in India and China
contact Leena Taneja, leena.taneja@zu.ac.ae

Theories of Knowledge in India and China
contact Eyal Aviv aviv@gwu.edu

Breath, theory and practice, in India and China
contact Karen O'Brien-Kop karen.obrien-kop@kcl.ac.uk

Theories of knowledge in lesser known schools (for co-sponsorship with the Hindu Philosophy Unit)

Mission Statement:

This Unit draws together scholars who study the religions of India and China in discrete or comparative frames. Given the increasing global importance of China and India in the contemporary world, this unit serves as an important forum for sustained discussion of their religio-cultural relationship in historical and modern contexts. Our panels 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) email list by contacting the co-chairs.

Chairs:

- Eyal Aviv, George Washington University
aviv@gwu.edu
- Karen O'Brien-Kop, University of Roehampton
karen.obrien-kop@roehampton.ac.uk

Indigenous Religious Traditions Unit

Call Text:

- Global and Comparative Indigenous Transborder Nations

Given the location near the international border for our upcoming meeting in San Antonio, we invite papers for a session highlighting transborder indigeneity across geographical regions in both the past and the present.

- Circumpolar Indigenous Peoples and Religious Traditions

We invite papers focused on circumpolar Indigenous perspectives, globally, and across a variety of scales and disciplinary perspectives. Possible co-sponsorship with the Space, Place, and Religion Unit.

- Indigenous Spirit Medicine (aka Psychedelics)

Proposals exploring Indigenous Spirit medicine and their appropriation in Western psychedelic research and praxis. We welcome proposals addressing concerns such as patent registration, research methodologies, and ethical approaches to Indigenous traditional medicine. For possible co-sponsorship with the Contemplative Studies Unit and the Cognitive Science of Religion Unit.

- New Directions in Indigenous Religious Traditions

We invite provocative and cutting-edge scholarship from anywhere in this subfield, including, but not limited to, theoretical, methodological, and conceptual innovations in the study of Indigenous religious traditions and reflective studies on disciplinary histories.

- For a possible co-sponsored session with the Native Traditions in the Americas Unit

a panel on pedagogy and the newly published volume, *Indigenous Religious Traditions in 5 Minutes*.

Mission Statement:

The Indigenous Religious Traditions Unit welcomes any theoretical, methodological, and conceptual proposals in the study of Indigenous religious traditions the world over. We are 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. 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. We also emphasize Indigenous Methodologies among other Humanities and Social Sciences approaches. We strive for increasingly global perspectives with representation of Indigenous Peoples and traditions from all continents. Similarly, we aspire to include other, more-innovative and less conventional modes of scholarship enhancing our inclusion of creative, embodied, virtual, digital, and public-facing work.

Chairs:

- Yuria Celidwen, University of California, Berkeley
celidwen@hotmail.com
- Seth Schermerhorn, Hamilton College
jscherme@hamilton.edu

Innovations in Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care Unit

Call Text:

For the 2023 Annual Meeting, Innovations in Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care will host two sessions: an open call for all research related to chaplaincy and spiritual care and a co-hosted session with Religions, Medicines, and Healing.

Session One: Innovations in Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care

We welcome papers on any topic related to chaplaincy and spiritual care including but not limited to: training and educational pathways for work in these fields, the interfaith aspects of chaplaincy and spiritual care, models for interfaith spiritual care that emerge out of a specific religious, theological, or historical tradition, research on chaplaincy and spiritual care in a variety of settings including prisons, hospitals, the military, universities, and businesses but expanding to political movements and other growing sectors for chaplaincy, navigating difference in spiritual care along lines of race, sexuality, gender identity, class, religious tradition, and experience. The above topics are simply a glimpse at the wide breadth of possible topics. Our unit is interested in all cutting-edge research and critical reflection on the fields of chaplaincy and spiritual care from both scholars and practitioners.

Session Two: Chaplains and “Spiritual Care” in Healthcare Settings - (co-sponsored with the Religions, Medicines, and Healing Unit)

Wendy Cadge’s *Spiritual Care: The Everyday Work of Chaplains* (OUP 2022) adds to a growing body of studies about chaplaincy from scholars of religion. Her work examines chaplains as “America’s hidden religious leaders,” contextualizing the spiritual care of chaplains within their diverse religious and workplace ecologies. For this session, we are particularly interested in her contributions regarding chaplaincy in its multiple relations to healthcare settings. We are seeking engagements with this book from a wide range of perspectives—from various scholarly disciplines to direct engagements with embedded practices—as well as from a wide range of voices, including scholars and practitioners, a diversity of religious backgrounds and identities, and multiple viewpoints on the nature of healing and of spiritual care. We are also interested in some panelists addressing how we teach Cadge’s work or train future healthcare professionals about religion and the role of chaplains in light of her contributions.

Mission Statement:

Chaplaincy is becoming more and more central to the religious/spiritual experiences of individuals and communities in the world. Shifts in religious leadership, religious/spiritual affiliation, and theological education are all occurring at a rapid pace; this unit helps shape AAR as the primary academic home of these discussions. This unit is not only academic in nature; its work is consonant with the AAR’s commitment to the public application of scholarship taking place within the Academy. This unit gathers researchers, educators, and broad-minded practitioners to break down the barriers between these siloed communities and draws them into a common conversation on how best to meet individuals’ and communities’ spiritual needs today. Doing so requires: ● translating the research needed to support the work of accompanying individuals

through growth, change, and struggle; • investigating how chaplaincy provision is shaped

by the people it is offered to and the institutions within which it is provided; • asking how chaplains can be more effectively present in settings currently lacking spiritual care providers for those in need and how those chaplains can respond most effectively to the increasingly diverse religious landscape. The mission of Innovations in Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care is to improve how chaplains are trained, how they work with diverse individuals (including those with no religious or spiritual backgrounds), and how chaplaincy and spiritual care coheres as a professional field.

Chairs:

- Sarah Jobe, Duke University
sarah.job@duke.edu
- Aaron Klink, Duke University
aaron.klink@duke.edu

International Development and Religion Unit

Call Text:

Panel 1: State of the Evidence in Religions and Development Roundtable

It is now over 20 years since religions and development-specific publications, conferences, and research projects started emerging and collating into a research area. The Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities recently published its State of the Evidence in Religions and Development report, a flagship publication set to be published every two years to review the state of the art in our field. The report aims to act as a bridge from research to practice by acting as a go-to document that briefly summarize the state of the evidence in areas relevant for religions and development. This roundtable asks scholars to debate the state of our field as a whole and interrogate where we should consolidate work or branch into new territory:

- What is the state-of-the-art in our field? What is the most cutting edge research?
- What topics in Religions and Development have seen the most significant growth and improvement over the last five years?
- What topics in Religions and Development are underdeveloped and need more research in the next five years?
- Does Religions and Development have enough research and researchers working in the area to count as its own field or discipline?
- How do we represent the “evidence base” in religions and development to policy makers and practitioners? Where have people got the “right” message about the evidence and where do inconsistencies and misconceptions lie?
- In a future version of the State of the Evidence in Religions and Development report, which other topics should be included?

We welcome proposals from scholars at any stage in their careers, as well as practitioners, who would like to contribute to this discussion. Participants will have 10 minutes to present their work in this area relevant to the theme of the roundtable, and we will then have a discussion based on the questions outlined above.

Panel 2: Faith Actors Working Climate Change to Achieve Development Goals: focussing on emissions

Faith actors are ramping up their efforts on climate change. Likewise, more secular institutions are increasingly interested in the influence and outreach of faith in combatting climate change, such as the UN's Faith for Earth Initiative or World Resource Institute's Faith and Sustainability Initiative. As climate change will have the greatest impact on development goals now and in coming years, faith-based organisations are increasingly including climate-sensitive work in their projects or developing climate-specific work. The collaborations occurring are worth consideration and examination to better understand how faith actors contribute to climate change efforts. Additionally, the broad range of entities that constitute "faith actors" oversee a significant number of assets around the world that both contribute to and are part of trying to reduce carbon emissions. Recognising the potential of reducing carbon emissions among faith communities, organisations, such as Interfaith Power and Light and their Cool Congregations Calculator, have created tools to help faith communities understand their emissions. This panel is interested in gathering experiences and learning more about the range of faith-secular and emissions focused collaborations that are ongoing among faith actors in their climate work. We encourage paperperson:

- Understanding and measuring the emissions of faith actors
- Examining faith-secular collaborations on climate
- Case studies of faith actors' climate change projects
- Analysis of faith actor advocacy, especially in secular public spaces, on climate change

Panel 3: Religion, Secularity, and Humanitarianism (co-sponsored with Religion and the Social Sciences Unit and the Political Theology Unit)

In his 2012 book *Humanitarian Reason*, Didier Fassin argues that the lasting presence of religion, specifically Christianity, can be seen in the ascendancy of humanitarian values in Western democratic societies. The primacy of "humanitarian reason," Fassin contends, elevates the redemptive work of individual and state humanitarian actors and virtues of compassion and charity over the political actions, historical struggles, and subjectivities of those Howard Thurman calls the "disinherited." This form of response to an unequal world order all too often reifies victimhood and dominant power relations, and commodifies/valorizes the suffering of "others." Inspired by and in dialogue with Fassin's work, we seek paper proposals that explore:

- Religious and/or secular (moral) logics of humanitarianism, including but not exclusive to Christianity
- How humanitarian discourse, ideals, and practices have been mobilized in specific contexts or within international development across space and time
- Contemporary faith-based or religiously-informed humanitarian movements and responses
- Relationship between humanitarianism and liberation/decolonial movements (and critiques)
- How humanitarian reason (and the valorization of suffering) gets taken up or contested in international development work

- Affective links between compassion and moral action
- Political theologies of humanitarianism

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

Mission Statement:

Since its establishment as an academic discipline in the 1960's the field of International Development Studies (IDS) has evolved from a fragmented topic, contained within the many silos of different academic departments, into an interdisciplinary field that draws on knowledge from across the humanities and social sciences. Despite this growing trend, until recently, religious and theological studies have found it a challenge to contribute to this growing conversation. The International Development and Religion Unit was established at the AAR in 2009 as one avenue through which religious and theological studies could engage in this emerging constructive dialogue with development studies. The primary objective of our Unit is to use the AAR's interdisciplinary and international reach as a focal point to gather scholars from across the humanities and social sciences, including those outside the AAR, who are engaged in the study of the space and place of religion in the context of economic, political and socio-cultural development in the global south. We wish to support theoretically robust and practically oriented research that interrogates the post/de/colonial, theological, religious and missionary assumptions and mentalities of the global confluence of international development and religion in the developing world, including, but not limited to the investigations of current faith-based NGO's and their projects in the field, practitioner-based research and reflection from the field and the encounter between private and public religion(s) in the developing world.

Chairs:

- Olivia Wilkinson, Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities
olivia@jliflc.com
- Emma Tomalin, University of Leeds
e.tomalin@leeds.ac.uk

Interreligious and Interfaith Studies Unit

Call Text:

Law and Politics through an Interfaith Lens (co-sponsored with Religion and Politics) Recent rulings by the U.S. Supreme Court again demonstrate the extent to which Christianity is woven into American law and politics. For example, debates rooted in Christian intellectual history dominate public discourse and manifest in attempts to regulate women's bodies through limiting access to reproductive health care such as abortion and contraceptives. Such debates also spur the weaponization of religious freedom claims to justify discrimination based on religion, gender, and sexuality.

We invite paper, panel, or roundtable proposals that address these intersections of religion and politics through an interfaith lens, confronting the impact of Christian dominance in our multifaith society.

We encourage deep excavation of public discourse. Some media pundits characterized overturning *Roe v. Wade* as “Christian Sharia,” for example, demonstrating the ease with which Islamophobic tropes are embedded—and revealing deep-seated ignorance regarding the nuanced perspectives of non-Christian traditions on reproductive justice. Debates about immigration and gun control in the U.S. have also become correlated with the camps of Christian liberals and Christian conservatives. How might inter- and multi-religious perspectives challenge these polarized frames by providing alternative cognitive paradigms through which religion and politics can be viewed? What is the impact on non-Christian Americans who find themselves forced to align with categories, factions, and contentions that are rooted in the history of American Christian thought and practice?

Interreligious Dialogue: Borders and Transgressions

There is a tendency to present interreligious dialogue as an inclusive project that seeks to dismantle patterns of exclusion and to establish a sense of community between people who orient around religion differently. Dialogue, thus understood, is about both respecting and transgressing boundaries. Those committed to interreligious engagement tend to position themselves on the ‘right side of history,’ i.e. on the side of emancipation from religious bias and oppression. Does the tendency to think about dialogue in terms of inclusion, openness, and solidarity across difference, however, limit the critical potential of the so-called “interfaith movement?” Does it occlude self-examination of mutual elitisms that may arise among dialogue partners?

We invite paper, panel, or roundtable proposals that address key questions regarding this tension, including:

- How is dialogue functioning as a new hegemonic normative discourse which establishes imaginary boundaries between dialoguers and non-dialoguers?
- To what extent do normative assumptions which underpin interreligious dialogue limit its inclusive potential?
- How do we deepen critical capacities, since the dialogical turn is expressive of our (post-)modern and (post)secular *Zeitgeist*, with its dominant perspectives on religion and religious diversity?
- Looking back on more than six decades of interfaith dialogue, how does the idea(l) of dialogue in itself establish boundaries in terms of gender, race, class and religion?

Interactive Workshop

Based on the success of our previous interactive workshops, we invite brief presentations (10 minutes) designed to stimulate substantive conversation on critical issues in Interreligious and Interfaith Studies and engagement. Please submit it as a paper proposal and indicate in your text that you intend it for the workshop.

We will address 4-5 of the following topics:

- Pedagogy, Syllabus Design and Exchange: *Share your own syllabus and/or those of others teaching in the field to examine various approaches.*
- Recent Publications in the Field: *Discuss your own work or review significant new contributions*
- Latinx Perspectives and Experience in the Interfaith World
- Teaching to the Context: *What is it like to teach Interreligious Studies at a secular university, or a Christian institution, or a campus/region with little religious diversity? How does our teaching change, depending on context?*
- Bridging the Worlds of the Academy and Activism
- Religious Difference and the Law

Presentations unfold simultaneously at separate tables, with attendees selecting the conversations in which they would like to participate.

We will also build in some time to gather for substantive conversation in “affinity” groups (e.g., PhD students, people working outside the academy, etc.). Feel free to reach out directly to the co-chairs with any ideas you would like to see included. You can also reach out if you want to pitch a cohort-based project or edited volume.

Mission Statement:

This Unit creates space for critical interdisciplinary engagement with interfaith and interreligious studies, examining the many modes of response to the reality of religious pluralism (theological, philosophical, historical, scriptural, ethical, praxiological, and institutional). We seek to: ● Foster rigorous analysis to establish the contours of this emerging field. ● Explore connections with diverse disciplines as they grapple with encounter of persons and traditions in our multi-faith contexts. ● Advance cutting-edge institutional and pedagogical innovation at the intersection of the academy and civic engagement.

Underrepresented scholars, practitioners, and activists are especially encouraged to submit proposals. The unit is committed to equity and inclusion; panel proposals should reflect religious, racial, and gender diversity to be considered.

Chairs:

- Rachel Mikva, Chicago Theological Seminary
rmikva@ctschicago.edu
- Feryal Salem, American Islamic College
fsalem@aicusa.edu

Islam, Gender, Women Unit

Call Text:

Muslim Feminism, Decoloniality, and Tradition

The 2023 IGW session will be a non-traditional position paper and poster session that aims to engender a conversation about the current state of the field of women and gender in Islamic studies.

We envision a discussion of the interactions and connections between the following three themes:

- the study and practice of Muslim and Islamic feminisms,
- decolonial approaches as they intersect with Islam and gender,
- the role of “tradition” and authority in the study of Islam and gender

We invite proposals for (short) position papers (up to 1500 word) that offer formulations of and reflections on one or more of the three themes above. These position papers should not present new research or summaries of existing work, but rather focus on patterns, developments, challenges and questions to facilitate discussion.

We seek position papers that address any of the intersections of Muslim feminism, decoloniality, the study of Islam, tradition, history, and interpretive possibilities.

Some questions that may assist in developing the focus of your position paper are: How do decoloniality and Critical Muslim Studies include considerations of gender? What is the relation between tradition and decoloniality? How are notions of Islamic tradition constructed, challenged, or deconstructed in the work of contemporary Muslim scholars in different contexts and in other decolonial scholarship? How does the critique of the tradition in Muslim feminist studies relate to decoloniality? How does a decolonial turn toward ‘tradition’ also privilege patriarchy?

In keeping with our commitment to non-traditional programming, those selected for this session will be asked to offer a short (max. 10 minute) presentation of their position paper (which will be pre-circulated) AND to create a poster to be displayed at the session. The position paper presentations will be followed by a ‘walk about’ to chat to presenters alongside their posters, and followed thereafter by a larger roundtable discussion amongst all attendees of the session. IGW is not accepting proposals for standard conference papers or for prearranged paper panels. Rather, we solicit position papers on the themes of the CFP that will serve as a basis for a discussion and reflection on the current state of the field.

Please be aware of timeline:

October 1: Panelists will be asked to submit full-draft of position papers

October 15: Position papers will be posted on the AAR website (accessible for registered participants)

Mission Statement:

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

IGW brings together scholars at all career stages, including those working outside the academy. It supports scholarly reflexivity in a collaborative and collegial setting, discussing methods/approaches and the professional dimensions of research and

teaching in the field. It fosters collective consideration of the aims, evolution, and lacunae of the field as a way to nurture new lines of inquiry. Our non-traditional

programming, such as workshops and mentoring/networking sessions, aims to strengthen rather than compete with the work of related program units, prevent the segregation of scholarship on gender and women into one unit, encourage sustained “mainstream” engagement with questions of gender and women, and expand opportunities for collaboration and conversation with and among other units.

Chairs:

- Juliane Hammer, University of North Carolina
jhammer@email.unc.edu
- Saadia Yacoob, Williams College
saadia.yacoob@williams.edu

Islamic Mysticism Unit

Call Text:

The Islamic Mysticism Group solicits paper and panel proposals for the 2023 AAR Annual Meeting. All proposals related to Islamic mysticism, as described in the Mission Statement are welcome. This Unit encourages proposals for individual papers, paper sessions, and roundtable discussions in all areas related to Islamic Mysticism, including but not limited to contemporary and classical Sufism, Isma‘ili and broader Shi‘i mysticism, the esoteric and occult arts, aspects of Islamic philosophy and mystical hermeneutics. Proposals must engage with existing scholarship, show theoretical sophistication, and offer original research.

Pre-arranged sessions are encouraged. Remember that pre-arranged sessions must show diversity of gender to be considered. We also greatly encourage other forms of diversity, especially race, ethnicity, theoretical method, and rank. Authors of accepted proposals are expected to attend the annual meeting and will be barred from future programs if they fail to show, special and emergency circumstances aside.

This year we are encouraging papers related to magic and the occult, as well as literary expressions of love, devotion, or piety. Still, all papers related to Islamic Mysticism as defined above are welcome.

We also seek papers for a possible co-sponsored session on comparative Hindu and Islamic philosophy (for co-sponsorship with Hindu Philosophy or Study of Islam units).

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.

Chairs:

- M. Shobhana Xavier, Queens University, Kingston
merin.shobhana@gmail.com

- Cyrus Zargar, University of Central Florida
cyzargar@gmail.com

Jain Studies Unit

Call Text:

The Jain Studies Unit welcomes suggestions for panel ideas to be included in the AAR 2023 Call for Papers. If you would like to add your idea to the CFP, or if you have any questions, please send a short provisional title of your topic to one (or both) of the Jain Studies co-chairs, Gregory Clines (gclines@trinity.edu) and/or Whitney Kelting (m.kelting@northeastern.edu). We especially welcome suggestions for panels to be co-sponsored with other units. Please note that the Jain Studies Unit only accepts proposals for full papers sessions, roundtables, book discussions, etc. and does not accept individual papers.

The following are proposed panel titles as of Dec. 26, 2022. Additional panel proposals are welcomed. The Jain Studies unit exclusively uses the AAR PAPERS system for all submissions.

Proposed panel titles with contact information. If interested, please contact the listed person(s) directly:

- "Recent Books in Jain Studies: Authors and Respondents," Steven Vose, steven.vose@ucdenver.edu
- "Lay-Authored Jain Literature," Venu Mehta, venumehta1982@gmail.com
- "Jain Yoga in Theory and Practice," Christopher Miller, christopher.miller@arihanta-academy.com
- "Pedagogical Strategies for Teaching Jain Religion," Christopher Chapple, cchapple@lmu.edu

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Gregory Clines, Trinity University
gclines@trinity.edu
- M. Whitney Kelting, Northeastern University
m.kelting@northeastern.edu

Japanese Religions Unit

Call Text:

We invite papers sessions, individual papers, and roundtables that address all aspects of Japanese religious practice and thought. All time periods are welcome. To facilitate maximal exchange within and beyond Japanese religions, we prefer proposals that include explicit reflection on the study of religion more broadly. Creative formats are encouraged (film, organized discussion, pre-circulated papers/texts, workshop, etc.), as are co-sponsored programs with other units of the AAR or associated societies.

This year's presidential theme is "The Work of Our Hands." Proposals need not be limited to this theme, but they should reflect a robust engagement with scholarship on religion beyond the Japanese context.

Below are possible topics proposed by our members this year. We welcome proposals on other topics as well. Please contact the co-chairs if you are interested in participating in these proposals:

- Religion in the aftermath of Shinzo Abe's Assassination
- Employment of Natural Elements, Ritual and Landscape
- Sacred Mountains
- Religious Space
- Heretical Practices
- Religious Experimentalism
- Religious "Waste" and Reuse
- Tokugawa Religions
- Unorthodox/unauthorized/unwelcomed practices at religious sites

Our Unit is allotted two two-hour sessions. Co-sponsorship adds an additional two-hour session.

In submitting proposals, please follow the AAR guidelines carefully. First-timers are encouraged to contact the co-chairs for additional advice (Jessica Starling at jstarling@lclark.edu and Takashi Miura at tmiura@arizona.edu).

Our Unit is committed to diversity and inclusion. We strongly encourage considering balance in terms of gender, areas of specialization, and time periods, as well as balance between graduate students, junior scholars, and senior scholars. Showing little or no regard for such diversity will have an adverse effect on the likelihood that your proposal will be accepted.

We would like to remind you about the Women in the Study of Asian Religions website (<http://libblogs.luc.edu/wisar/find-scholars/>). This website was created to facilitate greater representation of women in scholarly activities by providing a crowdsourced list of female scholars working in Asian Religions. We encourage everyone to go beyond old networks to seek new ones, and to help us further strengthen our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is a forum for scholars of different disciplines – including textual, historical, anthropological, sociological, ritual, artistic, and other areas of study using different

approaches – to present their research findings on various theories and forms of Japanese religious life in the past and in the contemporary setting, within Japan and other areas of the world.

Chairs:

- Jessica Starling, Lewis and Clark College
jessie.starling@gmail.com
- Takashi Miura, University of Arizona
tmiura@email.arizona.edu

Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture Unit

Call Text:

Kierkegaard and Spirituality

Much of Kierkegaard's authorship was explicitly aimed at "upbuilding" the reader, trying to enlarge, modify, deepen, and catalyze an individual's capacities for an earnest engagement with life, the neighbor, and with God. In this sense Kierkegaard was a "spiritual" writer, often borrowing themes from his Pietist heritage, medieval mysticism, and Roman Catholic devotional literature. We invite papers on Kierkegaard and spirituality in its many dimensions, including prayer, worship, and the experience of the sacred more generally. Papers exploring the connection between spirituality and love for the neighbor (including social action) will be welcome.

Kierkegaard and Global Religions

Although Kierkegaard devoted much of his authorship to explicating the specific pathos of Christianity, he also discussed religion more generally and made observations about particular religions. We welcome papers concerning Kierkegaard's understanding of religion in general specific global religions. Papers on Kierkegaard and Judaism, Islam, the religions of India, etc., would be appropriate. Papers could explore Kierkegaard's understanding of the relation of Christianity to particular global religions.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Lee Barrett, Lancaster Theological Seminary
lbarrett@lancasterseminary.edu
- Nigel Hatton, University of California, Merced
nhatton@ucmerced.edu

Korean Religions Unit

Call Text:

The Korean Religions Unit welcomes proposals for papers sessions, roundtable sessions, and individual papers. Proposals in all areas of Korean Religions will be considered. This year, we especially invite submissions to the subtopics proposed by interested AAR members, as listed below. If you would like to contribute to one of the panel proposals below, please contact the organizer(s) directly, and submit your proposal at least two weeks prior to the AAR submission deadline which will be on February 27, 2023, 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time.

Megachurches in South Korea: anthropological, historical, and sociological exploration

Organizer: Timothy Lee (t.lee@tcu.edu)

South Korea is home to five of the twenty largest megachurches in the world, including the largest, Yoido Full Gospel Church, which has for decades been the poster child of the megachurch phenomenon. Korean megachurches have attracted admiration from church growth devotees and criticisms from detractors of the phenomenon. Yet they have rarely received sustained dispassionate exploration. Engaging in such exploration is the aim of this panel. We seek proposals that aim to explore Korean megachurches through historical, anthropological, sociological, or other disciplinary lenses. Proposals may treat the phenomenon as a whole as it is manifested in Korea or particular instances of it on specific issues. Also welcome are proposals that seek to compare Korean megachurches with megachurches in other countries.

The Varieties of Korean Exceptionalism: Religion and Ethno-Nationalism

Organizer: Minjung Noh (minjung.noh@temple.edu)

A sense of exceptionalism, or superiority, often appears among the religious groups in Korea. Korean Buddhists, Confucians, Christians, and New Religions' leaders have often stated that they have exceptional quality in their religious doctrine, practice, and identity. This can involve a sense of national pride, philosophical developments, or unique practices. For example, some Chosun dynasty academics claimed that they preserved the orthodoxy of neo-Confucianism, Korean/Korean American evangelical Christians have argued that they are the new Chosen People, and a number of Korean new religious leaders—including Unification Church, Jeungsangyo, Shincheonji, and many others—have argued their messianic status as the source of religious authority. In addition, the explosive global popularity of Korean popular culture created a Hallyu (Korean Wave) phenomenon that accompanies the religious transnational fandom. In such a backdrop of religious and cultural history, what distinguishes religious phenomena of Korea from others? What constitutes Korean exceptionalism and what are the consequences in domestic and transnational spheres? What are the roles of politics, ethno-nationalist ideology, race, and gender therein? In this panel, we seek critical engagement with broadly construed Korean exceptionalism in religion on various levels, both historically and methodologically. We welcome paper proposals that address the connections between Korean religious diaspora and global culture as well as explorations on the concepts of Korean locality and indigeneity.

Veneration of the Dead in Korean Religions

Organizer: Liora Safarti (lsarfati@tauex.tau.ac.il)

Ancestors are an integral part of Korean vernacular religious practices, be it Confucian ancestor rituals or shamanic rituals for appeasing spirits; Buddhist priests are invited to chant sutras after funerals and host cremated remains in their temples; dead leaders feature in many Christian denominations and New Religions as founders, protectors, and respected elders. This panel seeks research papers that explore how the dead are venerated in Korean contemporary and historic religious groups, and what makes them central in each case. Work on recent veneration practices related to victims of mass deaths such as the sinking of the Sewol Ferry and the Itaewon disaster is especially welcome.

Lastly, the Evangelical Studies Unit and the Korean Religions Unit welcome proposals for a joint session on Christian in South Korea that explores the anthropological, historical, and sociological dimensions of evangelical megachurches, and also studies that use a transpacific lens.

Any other papers that address the relationship between society, culture, and religion as broadly construed can be submitted directly through the AAR portal. Other inquiries can be directed to Sean Kim ckim@ucmo.edu, or Liora Sarfati lsarfati@tauex.tau.ac.il. In submitting proposals, please follow the AAR guidelines carefully.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Chong Bum (Sean) Kim, University of Central Missouri
ckim@ucmo.edu
- Liora Sarfati, Tel Aviv University
lsarfati@tauex.tau.ac.il

Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Unit

Call Text:

Latinx Labor and Religion: Considering Latinx Cultural Production

In keeping with the 2023 theme *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*, our unit invites papers on the topic of Latinx labor and religion. Latinx history has long been based in labor history and a great deal of scholarly literature on Latinx populations account for the disproportionate representation of Latinx in various sectors of the U.S. workforce. Many Latinx communities constitute a labor diaspora. We therefore invite papers which help the academy understand what the cultural productions of Latinidad look like at the intersection of labor and religion? We encourage scholars to propose papers that examine these questions surrounding minoritized Latinx religious traditions.

'Protesting Poverty': Exploring the Legacy of Progressive Brazilian Christianity (Co- Sponsorship with Religion in Latina/o Americas)

In this co-sponsored session, the Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society and the Religion in the Americas program units invite proposals that explore the sociopolitical relevance of Brazilian Protestantism by engaging *Protesting Poverty: Protestants, Social Ethics, and the Poor in Brazil* by Raimundo Barreto (Baylor Press, 2022). In this watershed publication, Barreto contends that “progressive Evangélicx Christianity, a branch of Brazilian Christianity that combines charismatic spirituality and sociopolitical progressive action, offers valuable sources for Christian social ethics in contemporary Brazil” ([publisher's description](#)). This session welcomes proposals that consider the implications of *Protesting Poverty* for our understanding of Latinx and Latin American religions. We seek submissions that explore the transnational dimensions and material implications of a progressive Brazilian Protestant social ethic. Panelists should seek to highlight how religious communities develop and deploy liberative practices, strategies or theories to contest global systems of exploitation.

Navigating Language: (In)visibility and Power amongst Latinxs (Co-sponsorship with World Christianity Unit)

The 2023 AAR presidential theme “*La Labor de Nuestras Manos*” and the conference’s geopolitical location offers us an opportunity to reflect anew on the communities that nourish scholarship in the religious academy, particularly Latinx communities and their experiences over time. The Spanish phrasing of the theme poses a challenge among those who do not speak the language and will struggle to grasp all that it communicates. This challenge reminds us of language’s power as a vehicle for (in)visibility.

In co-sponsorship with the World Christianity unit, we invite papers that consider how language in its broadest sense – that which foment culture and meaning-making – renders the labor of Latinx communities (in)visible. We urge scholars to consider this question from both the vantage point of Latinx communities and their (un)seen labor as well as from the perspective of the scholars of religion to whom they entrust their stories. Other considerations include: What are the languages (culture & meaning) that enhance or diminish the labor of Latinx communities? What obligations and ethical imperatives do scholars face, especially those doing ethnographic work, in representing the language (culture & meaning) of labor in Latinx communities?, What would it look like for scholars of religion in Latinx communities to utilize language to disrupt the hegemony of English as the lingua franca for the AAR?

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Ángel Gallardo, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
ajgallardo@smu.edu
- Lauren Frances Guerra, Loyola Marymount University
laurenguerra18@gmail.com

Law, Religion, and Culture Unit**Call Text:**

As always, the Law, Religion, and Culture Unit welcomes proposals for individual papers, papers sessions, and roundtable panel proposals, including author-meets-critics sessions, on any aspect of the cultural, historical, critical, and comparative study of the intersections of law and religion in globally. This year we are particularly interested in work that pursues translational framings of “religious freedom,” investigations into immigration law in a global context, and examinations of issues related to prisons, carceral studies, and prison abolition movements worldwide. We would also welcome studies of the state (and consequences of the potential end) of Indian secularism. As 2023 will mark the 200th anniversary of *Johnson v M’Intoch*, and the current US Supreme Court will rule in June on *Brackeen v. Haaland*, we’re particularly interested in panels on Indian law in the US, its history and future, as well as comparative approaches to global indigenous legal struggles.

For possible co-sponsorship with the Teaching Religion unit: on the consequences of recent laws regulating education (like the Stop Woke Act in Florida), with particular relation to the impact of such legislation on teaching religion and the role of religion in crafting such legislation.

For possible co-sponsorship with the Catholic Sex Abuse group: on religious sexual abuse more generally, with attention to legal issues (including courtroom performance of religious expertise, the role of expert witnesses in court, and media framings of the religious).

For possible co-sponsorship with Religion and Ecology: on environmental law, with particular focus on advocacy and legal issues related to environmentalism and the Global South.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Spencer Dew, Ohio State University
spencerdew@gmail.com
- Leslie Ribovich, Transylvania University
lribovich@transy.edu

Lesbian-Feminisms and Religion Unit

Call Text:

The Lesbian-Feminisms and Religion Unit invites papers that explore the relationship between lesbian-feminisms and trans theory within the study of religion. Lesbian-feminism and transness overlap in myriad ways. Lesbian-feminism is a theme of trans studies: Susan Stryker’s essay, “My Words to Victor Frankenstein” (1994), invokes lesbian motherhood as an experience shared across trans and non-trans partners, while Andrea Long Chu’s “On Liking Women” (2018) explores the feeling that she has “never been able to differentiate liking women from wanting to be like them.” Trans studies, in one of its many possible stories, can be thought to emerge as a response to (by no means universal) lesbian-feminist transphobia.

These terms cohere to one another while troubling the other’s categories and aims in ways harmful and generative across intersecting activism and affections. “In *The Terrible We* (2022), Cameron Awkward-Rich thinks with the bad feelings and mad habits of thought that persist in both transphobic discourse and trans cultural production... He demonstrates that rather than only impeding or confining trans life, thought, and creativity, forms of maladjustment have also been and will continue to be central to their development.” We are broadly interested in the confluence of fears and desires, despair and joy, amidst lesbian-feminisms and trans studies within religion. Is there a lesbian-transfeminism to be found in the study of religion? Are these discourses ir/reconcilable? We seek historical and speculative proposals on affect, archives, theory, and methods that illuminate the influence of religion in re/shaping such intimacies. Underrepresented scholars, practitioners, and activists are especially encouraged to submit proposals.

Co-sponsored session with Mysticism Unit

The Lesbian-Feminisms and Religion Unit and the Mysticism Unit invite papers that explore trans spirituality and mystical practice. We are especially interested in papers that interrogate trans spiritual practices that lay claim to deracinated beliefs and rituals and papers that analyze claims of trans exceptionalism and the inherent sanctity of trans subjects. What logics of exclusion are reproduced through these spiritual practices? And what promises and limitations arise from an emphasis on healing in trans mysticism?

co-sponsored session with Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection

The Lesbian-Feminism and Religion with Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Units seek proposals for a retrospective on Lauren Berlant's work with a focus on their later work, namely *On the Inconvenience of Other People*.

Mission Statement:

For over 30 years this unit has been committed to lesbian-feminism in the study of religion. 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. We are especially committed to scholars and scholarship that advance people of color, persons with disabilities, decoloniality, and economic justice. This is accomplished with diverse and timely themes, and by providing a theoretical space for probing and further developing the openings and opportunities afforded by changing sociopolitical and theoretical contexts.

Chairs:

- Sarah Bloesch, University of North Carolina
sbloesch@smu.edu
- Michelle Wolff, Augustana College
michellewolff@augustana.edu

Liberation Theologies Unit

Call Text:

"Labor is Not Enough"

Considering the 2023 AAR meeting theme, *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*, the Liberation Theologies program unit invites proposals that consider the provocation "Labor is Not Enough." Whether we are talking about the violence of the 'adjunctification' of the academy (especially in the humanities and religious studies); "right to work" legislation and its affront to full time or unionized labor; the promotion of anti-work or 'good living' ideologies that inevitably disenfranchise certain work sectors; or the varieties of unpaid labor in our institutions and society at large - we are confronted with the reality that labor is not enough - whether from the political Right or even the Left. Staggering economic inflation in prices for the essentials of life (healthcare, food, housing,

education) means that most workers experience economic disenfranchisement and need at an unparalleled level globally. In what ways does our work reflect this reality? In what ways does the religious academy participate in the structures that disenfranchise labor? Where is liberation to be found when labor - as it is hegemonically or counter-hegemonically construed - is not enough to sustain communities and life with dignity? Might there be categories and things that fail to be acknowledged as labor?

For this session, we welcome papers that discuss:

- Labor organizing in the academy and elsewhere
- Analysis and critiques of “the good life” or “good living” trends
- Racial capitalism and racial communism
- Terror capitalism
- The labor of the earth and non-human creation
- Labor legislation (“right to work”, etc.)
- Invisible or unpaid labor
- Critical analysis of the “dignity of labor” theme in religious ethics and other areas
- Liberation Theology as a ‘commodity’
- Movement work as labor - especially around gender/sexuality
- Aesthetics, art and class critique. Avant Garde approaches to ‘labor’ or anti-labor
- Reactionary hijacking of labor and labor critiques
- Limits of economic reductionism around labor on the Left
- Religious and secular notions of labor and anti-labor thought
- Radical hospitality and labor

“Gender, Sexuality, and Protest: The Iranian Protests and Beyond”

Co-sponsors: Liberation Theologies unit; Religion, Social Conflict, and Peace unit; Women and Religion unit, Political Theology unit

The 2022 protests in Iran over the death of Mahsa Amini while in custody of the country’s ‘guidance control’ (or, ‘morality police’) represent a new experience in the voice of youth, especially women, in articulating religious and secular theories of resistance. Its practical and intellectual impact continues to be felt in Iran and globally, especially through the amplification of the Kurdish protest slogan “Women, Life, Freedom!”. This session is dedicated to understanding the dynamics of gender and sexuality in activism and political change. Proposals are encouraged that touch on the role of women in protest with regards to the movement in Iran and internationally, as well as gender, women and the public role of the religious/secular at large. Other possible areas include:

- Gender and sexuality as lens to think about protest, globally
- The relationship between protest and religion
- Non-oppositional ways of considering “loyalty” and “dissent”

“Labor Union Organizing in San Antonio and Beyond”

Co-sponsors: Class, Religion and Theology unit; Ethics unit; Religion and Economy unit

Units call for proposals regarding labor issues and worker organizing in general, in San Antonio or Texas, and/or in the hotel/convention center/hospitality industry. We hope

to organize both a pre-conference workshop and a panel on these topics, and encourage

submissions from labor organizers, activists, and scholars. For a number of years it was a priority of the AAR to take into account the labor situation on the ground in its host cities. This session and possible pre-conference workshop, therefore, offer an opportunity to reflect on that commitment, understand the labor situation in our host city, and hopefully re-energize the AAR's commitment to solidarity with all those the labor of whose hands makes the annual meeting possible at all.

“Political Theology in the Asia Pacific” (Book Launch/Discussion)

Geopolitical changes in the Asia Pacific have challenged the world order and will shape the destiny of the twenty-first century. It is urgent to reflect on the relationship between the theological and the political in this region. This book (edited by Kwok Piu Lan, Baylor University Press, 2023) demonstrates the necessity of a transnational framework for political theology in the Asia Pacific. Contributions to this volume consider: race and caste, racial capitalism, gender, geopolitics, power, environmental issues, the struggles of Pacific peoples, political authority in China, national ideology and people's folklores in multireligious Indonesia, Asian American identity in the US-China contest; perspectives on conflict resolution, war, and violence, elucidating the power of mourning, the use of art in interreligious healing, the search for just peace, the arguments for reparations; and the intersection between sexual politics and theology by queering heteronormativity, Asian values, and binary thinking in national narratives.

We invite proposals that engage this pioneering book showcasing the work of representative Asian, Pacific, and Asian American scholars who live in nine different countries in Asia, Europe, the South Pacific, and North America.

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

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Iskander Abbasi, University of Johannesburg
alex.abbasi8@gmail.com
- Maria T. Davila, Merrimack College
mariatdavila@gmail.com

Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Unit

Call Text:

The Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Unit welcomes any paper, panel, or roundtable proposals engaging scholarship on Martin Luther, Lutheran Theology and Ethics, and Global Lutheran Perspectives and Traditions.

For the 2023 American Academy of Religion Meeting in San Antonio Texas, our Unit especially welcomes paper, panel, and roundtable proposals engaging any of the following themes:

Embodied Justice

AAR's 2023 Presidential Theme "La Labor de Nuestras Manos", the "Work of our Hands," asks members to consider embodied dimensions in the work of scholars of religion and theology. That work is sometimes made explicit in our scholarly arguments, sometimes done as labor for teaching or ecclesial institutions, sometimes engaged in the labor of justice, and sometimes is seen and unseen in a host of ordinary ways. Where many theologies have cleaved binaries and divisions between body and spirit, spiritual and material, work and divine calling, scholarship inspired by Luther has more frequently refused. As Elisabeth Gerle notes in her book, *Passionate Embrace*, "The sharp boundaries between spiritual and material are dissolved in Luther's writings because he sees God's care and love in the material."

How can we think of the *embodiment* of scholarship engaged with Luther and Lutheran themes theology in the present? How does Lutheran theology challenge the oft-made binaries of theory versus praxis, faith versus ethics, work and Spirit? How can Lutheran approaches be better at self-criticism for the sake of embodied justice? And how can these embodied approaches engage thinking about the work of global justice in relation to: racial justice, reproductive justice and abortion rights, decolonial justice, workers' rights, and a just planetary future? What does 'embodied justice' look like from a Lutheran angle in theology, ethics, and historical scholarship?

Gender, Sexuality, and Context

Feminist, Womanist, and Mujerista scholars in Lutheran theology have produced significant recent work that both explores Global Lutheran perspectives and reconstructs Lutheran themes for the present. This call seeks to expand upon recent scholarship in gender, sexuality, and Lutheran theology and ethics. How does Lutheran theological language engage themes of gender and sexuality justice in diverse global contexts? How might Lutheran themes be challenged or transformed by perspectives from diverse and intersectional global gender constructions? How do Lutheran traditions engage thinking about reproductive labor, abortion access, or reproductive justice? How does Lutheran theology and ethics respond to gender- or sexuality-based violence? How does Lutheran How do Queer and Trans* perspectives challenge, reshape or reconstruct Lutheran theology? How might queer and Trans* theory offer new perspectives? How might Lutheran theology challenge transphobia? Any proposals that wrestle with gender, sexuality, and theology, ethics, and history in context are welcome.

Sisters in the Wilderness – Honoring the life and scholarly legacy of womanist theologian Delores Williams and the 30th Anniversary of *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of*

Womanist Godtalk (Orbis, 1993)

Our unit is arranging a co-sponsored panel with the Black Theology unit and Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions, honoring the scholarly legacy of the late Delores Williams, a trailblazing womanist theologian. We recognize the significance of Williams' works and particularly highlight the 30th Anniversary of the publication of *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist Godtalk*. This is an invited panel with closed submissions.

Any number of themes relating to Global Lutheran Traditions in Contemporary Theology:

- Luther, Lutheranism and Islam
- Luther, Lutheranism, Judaism, and Anti-Semitism
- Empire and Decolonial Lutheranism
- Reproductive Justice
- Lutheranism, Indigenous Traditions, and Settler Colonialism
- Alternative and marginalized themes in Lutheran theology
- Scholarship on the historical Luther and Luther's biographers
- Scandinavian Creation Theology
- Luther, Emotion, and Affect Theory
- Etc.

Open Call

The Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Unit considers *any* papers or panel proposals related to the research interests of this Unit. We welcome proposals from scholars who wish to share their current research. In panel or roundtable proposals, the Unit strongly encourages organizers be attentive to gender and racial diversity.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Jacob Erickson, Trinity College, Dublin
jacobjerrickson@gmail.com
- Marit Trelstad, Pacific Lutheran University
trelstma@plu.edu

Men, Masculinities, and Religions Unit

Call Text:

The Men, Masculinities, and Religion seeks panel proposals and experimental panels that use short, creative presentation formats. We are particularly interested in roundtables, and brief provocations that open up conversation between panelists and audience members, and presentations that creatively use and present objects, media clips, art,

music, sounds, social media etc. We encourage proposals of full panels and roundtables and paper proposals on the following topics:

Masculinity and Celebrity

We are interested in celebrity—from musicians and CEOs, to politicians and influencers, and explorations of how gender, secular and religious authority and performance, and public personas intertwine.

Global Muscular Christianities

We are interested in proposals and panels that revisit, complicate, and revise the concept of Muscular Christianities and bring new methodologies and sources, geographic focuses, communities, and novel considerations of race, body, sport, religion, nation on this movement/concept.

Fashioning Masculinities: Lightning Session

We invite proposals for 5-7 minute presentations that creatively consider the fashion and the fashioning of masculinities. (We invite 200-300 word proposals rather than the full proposal length.) What objects, garments, grooming practices/tools, jewelry and adornments, hair styles etc. shape religious masculinities? A panel on fashioning masculinity may invite short, creative and visually-driven presentations to open up conversation about masculinity and embodiment, consumer and popular culture, religious and secular authority, and sexualities.

Masculinities & Music/Music Scenes

We are interested in papers/roundtables/panel proposals on religion, masculinities and music: including but not limited to hip hop, reggaeton/perreo, funk, hardcore/punk, jazz, salsa and merengue etc. What sounds, songs, and artists might open up conversations about gender, religion, and music? Panelists or papers might center on a specific artist or even a song. A panel on masculinities and music might creatively invite the audience to listen to songs along with short papers/panelist comments.

Religion, Masculinities, & Social Media/Internet Discourse

From incels to TikTokers, how do conversations on masculinities, romantic relationships, race, and the body circulate on social media? How do the forms/formats of particular social media platforms shape performances of masculinity or the formation of particular publics and discursive communities? Do different communities, generations, etc. use and engage with social media platforms to develop religious and gender identities, critiques, and discourses on race, gender, and sexuality?

Masculinities and Carceral Christianities

We invite proposals that explore carceral Christianities, gender and policing, histories and contemporary explorations of imprisonment and surveillance. How do religion and theology interact with the carceral state and mass incarceration? How are experiences of incarceration theologized and racialized, in particular for Black or Indigenous/First

Nations communities?

Masculinities, Healing, and Healers

We invite proposals that think about gender, men, masculinities, and healing or papers that explore healers from the perspective of race, gender, and sexuality. How have different ethnic and racial communities navigated healing? What ancestral knowledge and practices and/or contemporary innovations and movements provide local sources of healing? How might we think about religion, healing, and mental health and its relationship to gender and sexuality?

"Trads": Masculinity Hate Politics in Transnational South Asian Contexts

Potential co-sponsorship between North American Hinduism, Men, Masculinities, and Religions, Hinduism, and South Asian Religions Unit

This panel explores the hate politics, purity discourses, and identitarian grounding of groups that describe themselves as “Trads” or Traditionalists which operate in transnational contexts. While members of this group reject the Indian Constitution as a Western construct, many of its symbols are imported from the West—the white supremacist Alt-Right in the United States.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Sarah Imhoff, Indiana University
seimhoff@indiana.edu
- Alyssa Maldonado-Estrada, Kalamazoo College
amaldona@kzoo.edu

Middle Eastern Christianity Unit

Call Text:

The Middle Eastern Christianity unit welcomes proposals on the following topics from all academic fields of study (sociology, ethnography, history, theology, literary theory, ritual studies, etc.) as they are applied to Middle Eastern Christians in any of their communities throughout history, whether in their native lands, or as immigrants throughout the world. Successful proposals must present a clear thesis, explain the theoretical and methodological approaches of the research, and identify a specific body of evidence that the research will interpret. Please make good use of the allowed word count to submit a well developed proposal. The Middle Eastern Christianity Unit encourages and promotes the inclusion of all scholarly voices and invites proposals from scholars of all ethnic/national backgrounds, genders, professional ranks, disciplinary perspectives, and life circumstances.

“The Work of Our Hands”: Book Cultures and Media Production of Middle Eastern Christianity

The Middle Eastern Christianity unit invites proposals addressing the 2023 AAR annual meeting theme, “The Work of Our Hands,” with a special focus on book cultures and media production of Middle Eastern Christians in any of their communities throughout history, whether in their native lands, or as immigrants throughout the world.

Transnational Connections between the Middle East and South Asia

From the early spread of Syriac Christian traditions to South India to the more recent presence of Indian and Pakistani migrants in the Gulf States, traffic across the Indian Ocean has long connected the Middle East and South Asia. The Middle Eastern Christianity unit welcomes paper proposals for a co-sponsored session with the South Asian Religions unit engaging the intersections between Middle Eastern and South Asian religious traditions, communities, or individuals in the contemporary world or any historical period.

Properties, Infrastructures, and Spaces of Christianity in the Middle East

The Middle Eastern Christianity unit welcomes proposals from all academic fields of study (sociology, psychology, history, literary theory, ritual studies, etc.) engaging the theme of properties, infrastructures, and spaces of Christianity in the Middle East. Papers should consider contestations of space and religiosity within the community or in relation to other non-Christian spaces—including the creation and contestation of sacred space, the use of architecture, religious art (visual and auditory), and communal narratives to sacralize and spirit the space.

Approaches to the Study of Middle Eastern Christianity

We invite proposals addressing theories and methods for the study of Middle Eastern Christianity in the region itself or in diaspora settings, from any disciplinary perspective and in all historical periods. Proposals addressing new and innovative approaches, engaging understudied and unseen aspects of Middle Eastern Christianity, and mapping the field’s development around the world are especially encouraged.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Mourad Takawi, University of the Incarnate Word
mtakawi@gmail.com
- Deanna Womack, Emory University
deanna.f.womack@emory.edu

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

Call Text:

This Unit encourages individual paper, paper session, and roundtable proposals that engage with the concepts and literature of “moral injury.”

For the 2023 meeting in San Antonio, we are also especially interested in paper and/or panel proposals on:

- Ritual, moral injury, and healing.
- The ongoing war in Ukraine.
- The role of moral injury and genocide.
- A discussion of a particular work in moral injury or work that could be read along with moral injury literature.

We are also interested in your thoughts and ideas beyond the above list. Contributions are always welcome that engage:

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

Again, although we are open to all proposals, we encourage potential submitters to think about and responding to the following aspects of moral injury:

- The history of moral injury research and theory has assumed that moral injury occurs largely to sympathetic features with a bias toward U.S. and European figures. How can this assumption be challenged? How would our ideas of moral injury change as a result?
- In a war like Ukraine, it has been noted that European and North American policy makers and publics seem more open to caring for the displaced from the Ukraine war than other wars or conflicts outside of Europe. The refugee crisis from Syria is a case in point. When discussing moral injury and war, how can we take account of such critiques to challenge and improve approaches to and framings of moral injury?
- There is a strong ethical aspect to moral injury, as highlighted in its being a moral. What are the moral tensions and ambiguities in moral injury literature and cases? Agency is very important in discussions of moral injury. How does agency fit into certain understandings of moral injury? How do specific cases bring issues of moral injury into concrete relief? How are our ethical assumptions challenged?

Mission Statement:

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

examining how understandings of recovery from moral injury might illuminate post-

conflict situations in many areas of the world, this unit will interrogate how educating a wider public about moral injury might challenge the role of religion in supporting war and the militarization of international and intra-national conflicts, the effects of war on combatants in post-conflict societies, and more effective means for social support in recovery from moral injury. Contributions are welcome engaging: • Diverse religious, cultural, and social systems and their sacred texts • Neuroscientific approaches to ritual, moral formation, and the moral emotions • Proposed methods for recovery, such as ritual, pastoral counseling, spiritual direction, arts, community life, narrative, and interreligious cooperation • The roles of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, class, race, and other forms of oppression in relation to personal agency and theories of ethics.

Chairs:

- Joseph Wiinikka-Lydon, Guilford College
jlydon@post.harvard.edu
- Michael Yandell, Emory University
m.yandell@me.com

Mormon Studies Unit

Call Text:

The Mormon Studies Unit welcomes papers and/or panels on a variety of themes and topics relating to the Mormon tradition, broadly defined. The proposals should analyze the material in terms of the academic study of religion.

- A Co-Sponsorship with New Religious Movements. We welcome papers that address the creation of Mormon NRMs and the relationship between Mormon traditions and other NRMs. We are especially interested in papers that explore the construction of gender, sexuality, and childhood.
- Mormonism and Religio-Racial Identity. Papers may consider historical and contemporary global issues about religion and race. We welcome papers that explore the construction of, challenges to, and deconstruction of racial categories.
- Streaming Mormonism. Ever since the “Mormon Moment” of 2011, the presence of Mormon traditions in the media and on social media has been blossoming. Papers may engage questions of media identities and discourse, especially around online streaming platforms.

Open Call: Other papers or panels dealing with aspects of Mormonism not mentioned in the previous call will also be considered. Papers may be selected for their relevance to themes which emerge among other submissions.

Mission Statement:

This Unit will examine the range of topics, disciplines, and methodologies that can be brought into dialogue with Mormonism as studied in an academic environment. It is interested in exploring strategies for teaching about Mormonism, both as the main focus of a class or as a unit within a survey course. It seeks to identify the best resources available for teaching and understanding the tradition and provide encouragement for scholars to fill gaps in what is currently available. The Unit encourages significant

comparative studies and interdisciplinary cross-fertilization and hopes to explore intersections between Mormonism and ethics, theology, philosophy, ecclesiology, missiology, spirituality, arts and literature, sociology, scripture, and liberation studies.

Chairs:

- Sara Patterson, Hanover College
patterson@hanover.edu
- Taylor Petrey, Kalamazoo College
tpetrey@kzoo.edu

Music and Religion Unit

Call Text:

The Music and Religion section is perpetually interested in panels that combine performance and scholarly reflection, and/or book panel discussions that help to advance the field. These ideas can be incorporated into any of the other ideas below.

- Indigenous Religious Musics from around the World
- Religious Music at the Borderlands and/or Religious Music and Immigration
- Music in Theocracy/Christian Dominionism
- Religious Music in Spanish-Speaking N. America
- Emerging technologies in worship
- Hank Williams (born 1923) and Southern/Country Gospel Music
- Music and Mysticism
- Theoretical and Theological Articulations of Music's Meaning and Purpose from Asian and African religious systems – we are especially interested in Japanese Buddhist, Confucian, South Asian, African Islamic traditions (including chanting), and indigenous African cultures African American Music at the Turn of 21st century
- Anniversary-themed presentations surrounding musical works and music scenes
- Texas-themed presentations on musical works and music scenes

We are also soliciting submissions for a panel cosponsored by the Music and Religion and the Arts, Literature, and Religion units:

Religion, Music, and Text: Music plays an integral part in religious rituals and performances. It facilitates the religious experience of those performing and participating in the ritual. However, this music is written and composed based on religious texts and informs the music and/or performance. This panel will explore the theme of religion and music, musical texts and performance, and its representation in artistic and literary forms.

Mission Statement:

The discipline of religious studies has expanded beyond linguistic rationality to include the importance of musical phenomena in the development of religious communities and religious consciousness. Meanwhile, theological aesthetics is moving beyond the textual to include music as a resource in its own right for constructive and transformative meaning-making. Music, religiously speaking, is no mere adjunct to the study of sacred

space, ritual, visual art, liturgy, or philosophical aesthetics; rather, it is a distinct field in its own right – with its own particular content, methods, and norms. By placing the relationship between music and religion at the center of our endeavor, this Unit seeks to serve scholars who operate out of this ubiquitous, but ironically unrepresented, realm of academic pursuit within the guild.

Chairs:

- Alisha L. Jones, University of Cambridge
alj61@cam.ac.uk
- Joshua Busman, University of North Carolina, Pembroke
joshua.busman@uncp.edu

Mysticism Unit

Call Text:

Trans Mysticism

The Lesbian-Feminisms and Religion Unit and the Mysticism Unit invite papers that explore trans spirituality and mystical practice. We are especially interested in papers that interrogate trans and lesbian-feminist spiritual practices that lay claim to deracinated beliefs and rituals, and papers that analyze claims of trans exceptionalism and the inherent sanctity of trans subjects. What logics of exclusion are reproduced through these spiritual practices? And what promises and limitations arise from an emphasis on healing in transmysticism?

Who Counts as a 'Mystic'?

What “qualifications” must one possess to be designated a mystic, and how far beyond the traditional category of religion may the term be applied? Can self-help gurus, UFO abductees, spiritualists, or fantasy authors – for example – “count” as mystics? This session seeks papers that interrogate the category of the mystic, and welcomes especially submissions that examine theoretical considerations through empirical examples.

Africana Religion, Queer and Trans Studies, and Mysticism: Creativity, Synthesis, and Embodiment
(Co-sponsorship between African Diaspora Religions, Mysticism, and Queer Studies in Religion Units)

In African religions devotees/practitioners navigate visible and invisible worlds in ways that lead to mystical union/communion. What kinds of embodied practices or material technologies are used to facilitate mystical encounter? What role do creativity, story, and sound play in fostering mystical engagement? How does the fluid and hybrid nature of African religions enable marginalized and queer identities to experience mystical empowerment and transformation? We invite papers on African religion and mysticism including themes related to embodiment, movement and gesture; queer identity; race, gender and marginality; ritual, ceremony and adornment; material culture and technologies; energy and performance; and sound, music and rhythm.

Psychedelic Scholars of Mysticism

Psychedelics have proven to be one important catalyst for many notable (and notorious) scholars of mysticism to enter the field. This panel asks what methodological questions might be provoked by scholars of comparative mysticism whose research is informed by their own psychedelic experiences. Does such an approach offer potential insights that would be otherwise unavailable via normative scholarly methodologies? Submissions might address this issue through classical examples in the field (e.g., William James) and/or more contemporary examples. For possible co-sponsorship with the Drugs and Religion Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit began as a Consultation within the AAR in 1987 and achieved formal Unit status in 1989. While its early focus was primarily Christianity and Western religions – and the study of experience and textual interpretation within those areas – the Unit has grown and changed over time, paralleling the change and growth in the AAR itself. Today, our conversations cut across boundaries that characterize many of the Program Units within the AAR – boundaries of discipline, tradition, temporality, and region. Members of our Unit use different methodologies and work across a variety of disciplines, among which are the psychology of religion, sociology of religion, history of religions, hermeneutics and textual analysis, biographical analysis, feminist studies, film studies, philosophy of religion, mysticism and science, art criticism, postmodern theory, cultural studies, and anthropology of consciousness, among others. This interdisciplinarity has importance not only to our work as scholars, but also to our work as teachers and public educators. We post our current call, past sessions, a selection of past papers, as well as links in the field of mysticism to our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/aarmysticism/>.

Chairs:

- Jason N. Blum, Davidson College
jnblum09@gmail.com
- C. Libby, Pennsylvania State University
cml83@psu.edu

Native Traditions in the Americas Unit

Call Text:

We invite individual paper and group proposals on any aspect of Native Traditions in the Americas (North, Central and South). In particular, we invite papers on the following topics:

In light of this year's theme "La Labor de Nuestros Manos" we invite proposals for papers or panels that reflect on the contributions of Native traditions in the Americas to addressing the work we do, and the ways our work can be brought to bear for the public good. This might include:

- The additional expectations/burdens placed upon BIPOC faculty (particularly pre-tenure faculty) regarding student mentoring, advising, community engagement, and activism and how to navigate these challenges in ways that honor our commitments while also ensuring our own well-being.
- Work within the public understanding of Indigenous traditions and ways scholars can become further involved in the application of Indigenous scholarship to law, public policy, and other arenas outside of academia.
- The blessings and challenges of working within community—which may not always lead to traditional scholarly outcomes (such as conference papers or academic journal articles) but nonetheless is reflective of Indigenous methodologies.

We also invite papers on the following topics:

- Proposals for a roundtable discussion or workshop around the future of the subfield, the role of Native American religious studies within the academy, and innovative ways to make our conversations more inclusive and diverse. This may also include proposals reflecting upon the history of the field and of the Society for Study of Native American Religious Traditions.
- In light of the 200th year anniversary of Johnson vs. M'Intosh, we invite proposals that reflect on the impact of this case and the broader import of the Doctrine of Discovery.
- The history of Native American protest, and the battle for civil rights, treaty rights, and tribal sovereignty—and how these protests are shaped by religious sensibilities, motivations, and power.
- Guiding principles for, and examples of decolonizing methodologies in practice.
- What does it look like to do engaged scholarship that is community-based and/ or driven? How do we navigate both advocacy and scholarship in the subfield of Native American and Indigenous religious traditions?
- For a possible co-sponsored session with Indigenous Religious Traditions group: a panel on pedagogy and the newly published volume, *Indigenous Religious Traditions in 5 Minutes*.
- For a possible co-sponsored session with the Religion and Ecology group: we invite papers considering climate justice for Indigenous communities, and how traditional ecological knowledge can inform climate policy, green energy expansion, and moves toward climate resiliency. We are interested in engaging academics, activists, and scholar-practitioners working on these issues in the academy and on the ground.
- For a possible co-sponsored session with the Religion and Popular Culture Group: We invite papers on the role of Indigenous religious and spiritual traditions within popular works by contemporary Native American and First Nations creators. How have religious and spiritual traditions oriented or emerged within recent creative works (i.e. films such as *Blood Quantum*, music by artists such as *Crown Lands*, streaming series such as *Reservation Dogs*, or other forms such as comic books, novels, or video games)? How have these works mobilized, or chafed against, the conventions of popular genres?

- For a possible co-sponsorship with the Religion and Cities Unit, a panel or papers exploring the urban Indigenous experience, particularly in light of our location in San Antonio.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Brennan Keegan, College of Charleston
keeganbl@cofc.edu
- Andrea McComb Sanchez, University of Arizona
amccomb@email.arizona.edu

New Religious Movements Unit

Call Text:

For the 2023 annual conference we invite papers on any research pertaining to NRMs. We particularly seek papers on the discourse of “mind control” and “undue influence” as these concepts are attributed to NRMs; papers related to family law and the experience of second-generation NRMs members; and papers on NRM practitioners in the military, federal prisons, and other federal institutions. Finally, we seek papers for a possible co-sponsored panel with Mormon Studies considering Mormon NRMs and NRMs with Mormon connections.

Mission Statement:

This Unit 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 NRMs, and to make known to a broader audience the importance of such movements for understanding issues of religious difference, community building and maintenance, ritual and doctrinal innovation, and other aspects of religious life. As scholars of minority, alternative, and new religions, we are deeply aware of the challenges facing those on America’s religious margins. We know the immense human toll such intolerance causes. Our scholarship also demonstrates the violence and tragedy that can result when federal and state agencies fail to recognize the humanity of marginalized religious groups. We are resolved to make space for difference both within the academy and beyond.

Chairs:

- W. Michael Ashcraft, Truman State University
washcraf@truman.edu
- Jeremy Rapport, College of Wooster
jrapport@wooster.edu

Nineteenth Century Theology Unit**Call Text:**

In 2023 we will have three sessions:

- An invited panel on Emily Dumler-Winckler's recent book, *Modern Virtue: Mary Wollstonecraft and a Tradition of Dissent*.

For our other sessions we are looking for paper proposals on the following themes:

- Jewish Theology in the Nineteenth Century - We welcome proposals on any aspect of Jewish theology in the nineteenth century. However, as 2023 marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of British zoologist and co-discoverer of evolution Alfred Russell Wallace, we encourage papers on the broad theme of Jewish theology and nature.
- Theology and Patristic Scholarship in the Nineteenth Century (co-sponsored with the Schleiermacher Unit) - The nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of self-consciously modern forms of theology, with many of these theologies also underpinned by sophisticated historical narratives dating back to the Patristic period. The broad outlines of doctrinal history that major nineteenth-century theologians from Schleiermacher to Baur, Dorner, Ritschl, and Harnack constructed, have continued to inform historical theology even where their underlying dogmatic judgments were emphatically rejected. The goal of this panel is to take stock of this fascinating but under-researched aspect of nineteenth-century theology. For this session we invite paper and panel proposals that examine how historical and systematic theology worked hand in hand throughout the century, papers that analyze individual figures as well as broader, diachronic trends.

We ask that all accepted papers be submitted to the AAR's Full-Paper Submission program by November 1. We have found that pre-circulated papers improve the quality of our sessions. Our regular attendees expect to read the papers before the meeting. Presenters will give 15-20-minute summaries of their papers during their session.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Sheila Briggs, University of Southern California
sbriggs@usc.edu
- Annette G. Aubert, Westminster Theological Seminary
aaubert@wts.edu

North American Hinduism Unit

Call Text:

While we accept paper proposals, we strongly encourage full panel (paper or roundtable) proposals with a coherent theme. In addition to the CFPs below, we welcome other full panel proposals. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Shana Sippy and/or Dheepa Sundaram. We encourage people to contact the Chairs advance of submitting proposals if you have any questions or need assistance. We also welcome the possibility of co-sponsored sessions.

New "Emerging Voices" panel.

We invite outstanding emerging scholars of North American and Diaspora Hinduism to present their work at a paper session at the forthcoming AAR. The primary goal of the Emerging Voices Roundtable is to showcase the work of emerging scholars and to create space for emerging voices (in terms of sexuality, gender, or race) through their intersections with North American Hinduism. We aim to learn from these new scholars not only in terms of the content of their research, but also to provide a national platform for career development and networking. Panelists will also be paired with a more senior scholar to mentor them in advance of the AAR. Contact Shana Sippy (shana.sippy@centre.edu) and Dheepa Sundaram (dheepa.sundaram@du.edu) for more information.

Borders and Boundaries, Migrancy and Movement: The Politics of Identity, Religion, and South Asians in North America

Contact: Gaurika Mehta (gm2680@columbia.edu):

This panel aims to examine the contours of migration among South Asians in North America. In particular, it seeks to look at the motivations, challenges, and changes that migrants face. Possible topics to explore include: diasporic responses to the Farmer's, CAA/NRC Protests; the issues faced, in particular, by undocumented migrants from South Asia; the relationship between labor and migration; and the roles played by religious groups in response to these and other aspects of migration. (In part, we see this panel as a response to our presence in Texas).

Domesticity, Motherhood, Embodiment

Contact: Aarti Patel (apatel10@syr.edu)

This panel seeks papers that explore the intersections of homemaking, pregnancy, and/or motherhood with South Asian religious traditions in the United States. Papers might address questions and the discourse around access to particular kinds of pre- and post-natal (health) care while considering the context of South Asian conceptions of maternal- and child- care, traditions, rituals, and/or beliefs more broadly.

**This panel seeks potential joint sponsorship with the South Asian Religions Unit.*

Solidarity and Ally Discourses among Hindu Diasporic Communities

Contact: Shana Sippy (shana.sippy@centre.edu)

This panel seeks to explore the ways in which various Hindu groups in the diaspora forge, frame, and perform different solidarities and alliances—ranging from progressive to conservative—and the responses (both positive and negative) of various groups.

Possible topics include the politics of solidarities between Hindus and LGBTQ+ organizations, right-wing and mainstream Zionists, anti-caste advocacy groups, Muslim organizations, Black and other anti-racist organizations, or Native/Indigenous groups.

Pedagogical Strategies for Teaching Caste and Casteism in North American Contexts

Contact: Shreya Mani (sm820@duke.edu)

This roundtable seeks to explore the ways caste can be taught in South Asian religions and Hinduism courses at the university level. We seek panelists who consider how to center the perspectives and lived experiences of caste-oppressed groups within the teaching of traditions such as Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, Islam, Buddhism, and other South Asian religions. Potential topics include: how to teach Hindu canonical texts equitably, caste as a heuristic for understanding South Asian religious traditions and cultures, media representations of caste as a teaching tool, etc. We welcome papers that consider caste equity broadly within South Asian traditions in the context of North American pedagogy on South Asian religious traditions.

* This panel may seek joint sponsorship with the South Asian Religions Unit.

"Trads": Masculinity Hate Politics in Transnational South Asian Contexts

Contact: Dheepa Sundaram (dheepa.sundaram@du.edu)

Potential co-sponsorship between North American Hinduism, Men, Masculinities, and Religions, Hinduism, and South Asian Religions Unit

This panel explores the hate politics, purity discourses, and identitarian grounding of groups that describe themselves as “Trads” or Traditionalists which operate in transnational contexts. While members of this group reject the Indian Constitution as a Western construct, many of its symbols are imported from the West—the white supremacist Alt-Right in the United States.

Queerness and Queering in South Asian and Hindu Religions (Texts, Traditions, and Spaces)

Contact: Prathik Murali (prathikmurali@ufl.edu) and/or Arun Brahmbatt (abrahmbhatt@stlawu.edu)

This panel aims to explore a range of ways in which Queering manifests and Queerness is expressed and experienced South Asian Religions (Texts, Traditions, and Spaces).

*This panel seeks potential joint sponsorship with South Asian Religions Unit.

Islam as a Civilizational Other in North American Hindu Contexts

Contact: Dheepa Sundaram (dheepa.sundaram@du.edu)

This panel explores how Islam and Muslims are contextualized as “other” in North

American Hindu spaces as a way to seek belonging within predominantly white Christian

spaces. The panel would consider topics such as the: intersections between white supremacy and Hindu nationalist politics of othering, how online hate alliances emerge featuring Muslims as the other, the anti-Muslim rhetoric of US Hindu right-wing organizations.

Harnessing Our Scholarly Privilege and Power for Public Good: Reproductive Justice and Religion

Contact: Shana Sippy (shana.sippy@centre.edu) and Michal Raucher (michal.raucher@rutgers.edu)

With particular awareness of the AAR's presence in Texas (or wherever we may be), this call for proposals seeks to respond directly to the realities of a post-Dobbs America. We hope to bring together scholars who work in a range of regions and on different religious traditions in order to share their knowledge and comparative perspectives that will deepen our understanding of the issues surrounding reproductive justice. In the planning phase, we seek to gather together scholars and activists who wish to think through and prepare some type of public program on the issue of Reproductive Justice for the annual meeting. We anticipate this session will be jointly sponsored by a number of different units and, depending on the response, may involve multiple sessions or additional programming.

We understand people have different concerns and questions they hope to address around these issues. During pre-conference planning, we hope to facilitate virtual conversations about the following topics among others:

- Possible sessions (in-person and virtual)
- The location of the AAR/SBL meeting in Texas and practical responses
- Addressing safety, health, and security concerns of AAR/SBL participants
- Pedagogies for teaching about reproductive justice and abortion, along with strategies for supporting students in cases where they are in contexts where they are unable to access abortion resources
- The possibility of some sort of public programming or political action (fundraising for clinics, protests?)
- Facilitating opportunities for scholars of religion to learn from activists who are working on the ground, particularly those working in states with restrictive laws
- Possibly securing a grant to support these conversations and exchanges in a more sustained way

Caste in Diaspora: Rethinking Caste as a Transcontinental Practice

Contact: Shreena Gandhi (shreenaniketa@gmail.com)

This panel seeks papers that challenge the myth that caste has disappeared in the Indian diaspora, both within the U.S. and beyond, as a result of the indentured diaspora and other migration waves. We are especially interested in papers that use caste as a mode of examining the development of Hindu traditions in places like North America, the Caribbean, as well as transnationally in places such as Fiji, South Africa, etc.

Hinduism and the Other in the North American Hindu Diaspora

Contact: Prea Persaud (preakpersaud@gmail.com)

This panel seeks papers that discuss interreligious encounters, conflict, and/or solidarities between Hindus and other religious groups in the Americas. Papers may discuss how Hindus use these encounters to define Hinduism or draw boundaries around their identities, how conflicts are mobilized in politics, the intersection between constructions of racial and religious identities, ways in which religious practices have been combined or mixed, issues of marriage, gender, etc.

Diasporic Dimensions of Hindu Traditions

contact: Bhakti Mamtara (bmamtora@wooster.edu)

This panel invites papers that analyze the making of modern Hindu diasporas. In particular, the panel welcomes papers that investigate (1) trans-generational conceptions of and relationships with “homelands” and (2) the role of networks in shaping multi-directional flows of religious ideas.

*This panel may seek co-sponsorship with the Hinduism Unit.

Mission Statement:

This Unit was established in 2006 for the purpose of drawing greater scholarly attention to Hinduisms outside of South Asia. Though it will focus on North America, the Unit also welcomes relevant research on Hinduisms in other non-Indian contexts. The Unit has three main goals: • To study and describe Hinduisms in North America and related diaspora contexts • To develop a more sophisticated understanding of what distinguishes these Hinduisms from those in South Asia • To nurture thoughtful debate on the methodologies unique to and appropriate for their study

Chairs:

- Shana Sippy, Centre College
shana@sippys.net
- Dheepa Sundaram, University of Denver
dheepa.sundaram@du.edu

North American Religions Unit

Call Text:

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

The Unit sponsors roundtables, debates, workshops, performances, pre-circulated papers, and other creative formats. As always, this program unit also welcomes proposals for keyword panels based on important concepts in the field. We encourage the submission of both individual contributions and complete panels, though we may reconfigure proposed panels to place them on the conference program. For panel proposals, diversity of rank (including graduate student, post-doctorate, contingent

faculty, and junior and senior participants), and gender, race, and ethnicity are strongly encouraged. We especially seek proposals from junior and contingent scholars. 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. Please ensure that all submissions are anonymous.

In addition to the above, we seek proposals on the following topics for our 2023 meeting in San Antonio:

- In keeping with the presidential theme of *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*, we are interested in the work we do as scholars of religion and therefore welcome papers on the techniques, impacts, responsibilities, and risks of public scholarship, broadly conceived -- be that through the public-facing sharing of our research (e.g. podcasting in *American Religion* and other forms of media engagement), or through ground-up work that is co-created with different publics and/or towards normative change (e.g. community-engaged research and scholar-activist methodologies).
- Thinking about religion and hands, we are also interested in submissions focusing on religion and material culture, including making in/of American religion, the creation of material religion, and the use of material culture in the study of religion; on religion and labor, with the latter category conceived broadly; and feeling religion, including attention to affect and the senses.
- We welcome proposals assessing the state of the field: What do we mean when we say "North American Religion?" How salient is that category in our disparate institutional and professional locations? How do we think of the field in light of the 50th anniversary of Sydney Ahlstrom's *A Religious History of the American People* and the 25th anniversaries of Thomas Tweed's *Retelling U.S. Religious History* and David Hall's *Lived Religion in America*?
- For a possible co-sponsorship with the Afro-American Religious History Unit; In light of the 50th anniversary of Roe, the repeal of Roe, and our location in Texas, we welcome panels on Religion and Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Justice, for a possible co-sponsored session with Afro-American Religious History.

Mission Statement:

Purpose, Practices & Procedures: Purpose of an AAR Program unit: The purpose of program units is twofold: to provide a forum for dialogue and exchange among differing approaches and projects in the field and to provide opportunities for the discussion of work that does not fall within the agendas that find other expressions in the Annual Meeting program. Program units should provide significant time for presenting research in the major subfields of religion. Purpose of the North American Religions Program unit: The North American Religions Program unit exists to sponsor conversations about the field at thematic, theoretical, definitional, experimental or historiographical levels, in order to ask where the study of North American religions is going or should be going. Such conversations embrace the diversity of scholars, disciplines, methods and traditions that make up the field. Routine functions: The Steering Committee composes the Call for

Papers for NAR sessions for the AAR Annual Meeting; reviews, shapes and accepts

proposals for those sessions; reviews and reports on sessions; and communicates with the NAR constituency. Composition: The Steering Committee is made up of ten members, two of whom are elected by the members to serve as co-chairs. A Steering Committee term is three years, renewable for a second three years if everyone is amenable. The terms are staggered, so that there are continuity and change on the committee. During a total of six possible years, a member might serve a co-chair term, which is three years. A member elected to serve as co-chair has at least one full year's experience on the Steering Committee. The co-chair elections are staggered as well, so that each new co-chair serves with an experienced co-chair. Responsibilities: The co-chairs take care of the business of NAR and moderate communication of the Steering Committee. All members of the Steering Committee make decisions on substantive matters. All attend the Annual Meeting and reserve Friday dinner for Steering Committee socializing, envisioning and business. All attend the NAR Business Meeting. Succession: Members of the Steering Committee are replaced by the following procedure: when there is a vacancy, after the Annual Meeting the co-chairs ask the NAR constituency (via email) for nominations. From among the nominees, the Steering Committee votes to elect a new member. The co-chairs maintain this "NAR Purpose, Practices & Procedures" document, make it available to the Steering Committee and the NAR constituency, and revise it as needed by vote of the Steering Committee.

Chairs:

- Samira Mehta, University of Colorado
smehta@post.harvard.edu
- Isaac Weiner, Ohio State University
weiner.141@osu.edu

Open and Relational Theologies Unit

Call Text:

For 2023, we are inviting proposals on the following topics that have been crafted with an ear toward the year's presidential theme of "La Labor de Nuestros Manos":

- Co-Sponsored with the Practical Theology Unit

What is the relationship between open and relational theology and practical theology? How can practical theology inform open and relational theology, which is sometimes accused of being excessively philosophical? What does open and relational theology, as an applied theology, look like? For example, how does the discipline of pastoral care and postcolonial practical theology challenge open and relational theology? What are the implications of ORT for church life in an age of declining church attendance? This session will explore open and relational theology as a practical theology that affects lives, structures, and institutions. We will consider the ways in which open and relational theology can be discussed in practice, as well as the ways in which lived experience can transform open and relational theology.

- Co-Sponsored with the Pragmatism & Empiricism in American Religious Thought Unit

Despite philosophical disagreements, pragmatists and open and relational thinkers are concerned about ideas that produce change in the world. Open and relational thinkers have been leading the charge to develop ecologically sustainable communities, while some of the strongest voices for racial and ethnic justice in the United States are pragmatists. Both schools of thought engage these issues and more, including feminist and womanist activism and rights, LGBTQIA+ rights, as social conservatives resist movement toward inclusiveness. How might open and relational theology and pragmatism inform one another, analytically and ethically, and work together moving forward?

- Co-Sponsored with Theology Without Walls Unit

What is Open and Relational Theology? What is Theology Without Walls? How might their two identities and correlative practices inform one another? In what ways is Theology Without Walls a form of Open and Relational Theology? How might Open and Relational Theology adopt the panreligious openness of Theology Without Walls? This session will explore the thought worlds and practices of ORT and TWW, considering similarities and differences, in an attempt to better understand both, with an eye toward the positive transformation of each.

Mission Statement:

The Open and Relational Theologies Unit promotes academic research and discourse on open, relational, and process methods and perspectives (including those of open theism, process philosophy, and other relational and personalists traditions). These explorations tend to be constructive in nature, regularly involving theological and philosophical speculation about the nature of God, freedom, power, relationality, materiality, love, and more. Our Unit's inquiries also explore the implications of open-relational methods and perspectives on a wide range of social, scientific, and spiritual topics. We welcome contributions from across religious traditions.

The ORT Unit is committed to diversity and inclusion. In order to maximize the diversity of our panels, our proposal review process stipulates that proposer names be anonymous to chairs and steering committee members during review but visible to chairs prior to final acceptance or rejection. Further, a successful pre-arranged session or panel proposal must incorporate gender and racial-ethnic diversity; diversity of theoretical method and rank are also highly encouraged.

Chairs:

- Krista E. Hughes, Newberry College
kristaehughes@gmail.com
- Jon Paul Sydnor, Emmanuel College, Boston_
jonpaulsydnor@gmail.com

Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements Unit

Call Text:

The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements Unit of the American Academy of Religion seeks papers and panels for the 2023 meeting in San Antonio on the following topics:

- Latinx Pentecostals in the Borderlands, including interactions with Methodist groups
- Social development of Pentecostals/Charismatics historically and theologically
- Clergy, laity, and contested and emerging theologies
- Pentecostal/Charismatic popular culture including humor and foodways
- Pentecostal/Charismatic Movements and their approaches to civil rights laws including but not limited to LGBTQ issues and women's rights (Roe v. Wade)
- Book panel on significant books which expand or challenge the current narratives of Pentecostal/Charismatic history
- Papers which explore comparative pneumatology between the Wesleyan/Methodist and Pentecostal/Charismatic movements

For panels, the unit requests diverse representation in presenters, research subjects, topics, and methodologies.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Andrea Johnson, California State University, Dominguez Hills
anjohnson@csudh.edu
- Erica Ramirez, Auburn Seminary
erica.ramirez@gmail.com

Philosophy of Religion Unit

Call Text:

In order to foster rich, innovative, and challenging intellectual conversations, the Philosophy of Religion Unit is committed to inclusion. Our Unit expects pre-arranged sessions or panel proposals to incorporate diversity of gender, race, ethnicity, and rank. The steering committee invites proposals on (but not limited to) the following topics:

- Expanding the canon and/or unconventional sources for the philosophy of religion
- Bruno Latour: In the year of his passing and 10 years after the publication of his lectures on natural religion, we welcome explorations of Bruno Latour's legacy for the study of religion, ecology, and/or science (for a possible co-sponsorship with the Religion and Ecology unit)
- Literature, poetry, and philosophy of religion, especially in relation to those religious traditions, texts, and thinkers that often philosophize about religions via

literary and poetic methods, that expand our understanding of philosophical methodologies.

- Frantz Fanon and Aime Cesaire as resources for philosophy of religion
- Queer theory and philosophy of religion: How would queer theory be framed by philosophy of religion? Could philosophy of religion be transformed into a type of queer discipline? If so, how? Which new theorists beyond the established ones (Foucault, Butler, Kosofsky Sedgwick, etc.) could help shape how we think about or even theorize the value of "queer theory" within the context of philosophy of religion?
- New and critical approaches to phenomenology
- Hope and/or pessimism
- Responses to Keri Day's book, *Azusa Reimagined: A Radical Vision of Religious and Democratic Belonging* (Stanford, 2022)
- Geertz's *Interpretation of Cultures* 50 years later

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

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Stephen Bush, Brown University
stephen_bush@brown.edu
- Lori K. Pearson, Carleton College
lpearson@carleton.edu

Platonism and Neoplatonism Unit

Call Text:

Nature and the Platonic Tradition/ Nature and Panpsychism

The Platonic tradition has, throughout history, offered a radically alternative understanding of the relationship between humans and nature, and between humans and non-human animals. This panel invites papers that explore historical and contemporary instances of the Platonic conceptualisation of nature. We encourage contributions that explore the contemporary application of this tradition for the task of reconceptualising our collective understanding of nature. Exploration of the relationship between Platonic realism across multiple religious traditions is encouraged, as well as

constructive proposals for inter-religious ecologies. Papers may draw upon sources from antiquity to the present, ranging from the philosophical and theological sources to the poetic and artistic resources. An additional theme for 2023 is Nature and Panpsychism.

One and Many in Plato and the Platonic Tradition

The question of 'one and many' is an issue that steps over different traditions, East and West, and over many time frames. It is also fundamental to the study of Pythagoras and Plato. We encourage contributions that explore the emergence of this and cognate issues in Presocratic thought, Plato's dialogues themselves, the Early Academy, and early or later Pythagoreanism. However, we also welcome contributions that wish to frame this question in much broader ways: for instance, in relation to other current themes/projects in the Platonism and Neoplatonism Unit, namely, the Christian Platonic tradition, as in our volume *Christian Platonism* (eds. Alexander J.B. Hampton, John Peter Kenney, Cambridge 2021), or our co-sponsored panel *Schleiermacher's Plato* (Julia Lamm, De Gruyter, 2021); or also in relation to innovative approaches to race, diversity, and identity that are also part of our focus in our other two panels.

Mission Statement:

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

Chairs:

- Alexander J.B. Hampton, University of Toronto
a.hampton@utoronto.ca
- Douglas Hedley, University of Cambridge
rdh26@cam.ac.uk

Political Theology Unit

Call Text:

The Political Theology Unit welcomes paper and panel submissions on any topic pertaining to the interaction between religious and political thought and practice.

Here are some themes we're particularly interested in this year:

The Figure of the Enemy in Political Theology

Through the work of Carl Schmitt, the enemy has been central to reflection on political theology. Schmitt insisted that politics is founded on the friend-enemy distinction, and later theorists such as Chantal Mouffe have harnessed this claim in service of democratic theory. Whereas some religious traditions gesture toward nonviolence as an ideal, the polarization of contemporary politics suggests that the figure of the enemy retains a powerful force.

We are keen for proposals that reflect broadly on the role of enmity in politics and theology:

- How might earlier reflection on the enemy illuminate political conflict today?
- What is the relation between political theologies of the enemy and racialized violence?
- How could the figure of the enemy clarify contemporary anxieties around migration?
- How does the figure of the enemy shape political reflection in Judaism, Islam, Atheism, etc.?

LGBTQI+ rights as a site of political-theological contestation (co-sponsored with the Queer Studies in Religion unit)

Recent years have seen a significant and concerning rise in anti-LGBTQI+ violence and rhetoric and threats to LGBTQI+ rights—from the devastating shootings at Pulse nightclub in Florida and Club Q in Colorado Springs, to the disruptions of pride events and drag queen story hours by white nationalists across the country, to the bomb threats of children's hospitals in Massachusetts, Wisconsin, and Ohio following coordinated harassment campaigns from anti-trans groups. We invite paper, roundtable, and session proposals that aim to better understand, critically interrogate, and/or offer resources for responding to that violence via engagement with political theology and queer studies in religion.

Jewish Enlightenment, National Identity, and Modern Christian Thought (co-sponsored with the Schleiermacher Unit and Religion in Europe Unit)

Modern Jewish and modern Christian thought have developed in close interaction, mutually influencing one another's understandings not only of ethics, revelation, and religious community, but also emerging conceptions of national identity. With an eye toward the AAR's 2023 theme of *La Labor de Nuestras Manos* and the need for revisiting public understandings of religion, this session invites paper or panel proposals reflecting on points of ongoing dialogue, divergence, and debate regarding the Jewish and Protestant Enlightenments and emerging notions of nationalism in modern Jewish and Christian thought, pertaining not only to the US but also to European contexts. Such proposals might consider:

- Jewish and Christian conceptions of national identity and the modern state, especially within or in comparison to European contexts
- The Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment) and national identity
- The mutual influence between the Haskalah and modern Christian thought (including the thought of Friedrich Schleiermacher)
- The persistence of antisemitism in contemporary politics, in overt and implicit forms
- The relevance of modern Jewish and Christian thought for understanding white nationalism today

Religion, Secularity, and Humanitarianism (co-sponsored with the Religion and the Social Sciences Unit)

and the International Development and Religion Unit)

In his 2012 book *Humanitarian Reason*, Didier Fassin argues that the lasting presence of religion, specifically Christianity, can be seen in the ascendancy of humanitarian values in Western democratic societies. The primacy of “humanitarian reason,” Fassin contends, elevates the redemptive work of individual and state humanitarian actors and virtues of compassion and charity over the political actions, historical struggles, and subjectivities of those Howard Thurman calls the “disinherited.” This form of response to an unequal world order all too often reifies victimhood and dominant power relations, and commodifies/valorizes the suffering of “others.”

Inspired by and in dialogue with Fassin’s work, we seek paper proposals that explore:

- Religious and/or secular (moral) logics of humanitarianism, including but not exclusive to Christianity
- How humanitarian discourse, ideals, and practices have been mobilized in specific contexts or within international development across space and time
- Contemporary faith-based or religiously-informed humanitarian movements and responses
- Relationship between humanitarianism and liberation/decolonial movements (and critiques)
- How humanitarian reason (and the valorization of suffering) gets taken up or contested in international development work
- Affective links between compassion and moral action
- Political theologies of humanitarianism

Gender, Sexuality, and Protest: The Iranian Protests and Beyond (co-sponsored with the *Liberation Theologies* unit; the *Women and Religion* unit; and the *Religion, Social Conflict, and Peace* unit)

The 2022 protests in Iran over the death of Mahsa Amini while in custody of the country’s ‘guidance control’ (or, ‘morality police’) represent a new experience in the voice of youth, especially women, in articulating religious and secular theories of resistance. Its practical and intellectual impact continues to be felt in Iran and globally, especially through the amplification of the Kurdish protest slogan “Women, Life, Freedom!”. This session is dedicated to understanding the dynamics of gender and sexuality in activism and political change. Proposals are encouraged that touch on the role of women in protest with regards to the movement in Iran and internationally, as well as gender, women and the public role of the religious/secular at large. Other possible areas include:

- Gender and sexuality as lens to think about protest, globally
- The relationship between protest and religion
- Non-oppositional ways of considering “loyalty” and “dissent”

Mission Statement:

The Political Theology Unit examines the interaction between religious and political thought: how do they influence one another, and how should we respond? Political theology emerged as an area of study through the work of scholars such as Carl Schmitt, who examined the origin of political concepts in Christian theology. The area has also drawn upon theological traditions (Christian, Jewish, and otherwise) in order to reflect constructively upon the way in which politics ought to operate. In recent years, political

theology has been taken up by scholars in various disciplines, including philosophy of religion, Biblical studies, Islamic studies, African American religion, sexuality and religion, and elsewhere. This program unit draws upon these diverse approaches in order to explore the contribution of political theology to the study of religion. The Unit aims to expand the conversation about political theology to highlight minority, feminist, and queer voices and to foreground scholars from Jewish, Muslim, and other religious traditions. The goal of the unit is to provide a forum for a diverse group of scholars to explore what political theology means in their own work, how they see the conversation about political theology developing, and how political theology can enrich the study of religion.

Chairs:

- Michelle Sanchez, Harvard University
msanchez@hds.harvard.edu

Practical Theology Unit

Call Text:

Co-sponsored Session with Religion and Human Rights Unit

The Work of Our Hands: What does Practical Theology have to say about “decent work”?

According to the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal #8, “sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” (<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>) is a driver for progress worldwide. Last year, the Practical Theology Unit had a productive session discussing the range of questions raised by a paradigm of growth, theoretically as well as practically. With the AAR 2023 presidential theme as *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*, our program unit turns its attention now specifically to work, and we ask, “What constitutes decent work?” Therefore, we seek presentations that address this question from the perspective of practical theology. We are interested in papers that reflect critically on the nature and purpose of work and that endeavor to conceptualize the nature and purpose of “decent work” from a religious or theological perspective. We also seek presentations that engage practical theological questions raised by the lived experiences of workers. Questions that facilitate such engagements include:

- For a possible co-sponsored session with the Religion and Human Rights program unit, we are particularly interested in proposals focused on religion, labor/work, and human rights “on the ground.” We wish to explore the conversation and practice of human rights and the rights of workers within grassroots communities, especially in dialogue with religious thought and scholarship of religious studies.
- How could the notion of decent work be enriched by the social and solidarity economy framework, and what contribution could religion make towards this solidarity? How could religion and religious actors contribute to the implementation of the decent work agenda?
- How might different sub-disciplines of practical theology engage the concept of decent work—in education, preaching, spiritual and pastoral care, and ecclesial practices?

Co-sponsored Session with Open and Relational Theology (ORT) Unit

What is the relationship between open and relational theology and practical theology? How can practical theology inform open and relational theology, which is sometimes accused of being excessively philosophical? What does open and relational theology, as an applied theology, look like? For example, how does the discipline of pastoral care and postcolonial practical theology challenge open and relational theology? What are the implications of ORT for church life in an age of declining church attendance? This session will explore open and relational theology as a practical theology that affects lives and structures institutions. We will consider the ways in which open and relational theology can be discussed in practice, as well as the ways in which lived experience can transform open and relational theology.

Roundtable: How is climate crisis addressed in practical theological disciplines/practices?

(closed to submissions)

1970: Climate change is coming!

1980: The data from the 70s are correct. Climate change is really coming!

1990: We must act now!

2000: It's getting tight!

2010: Must act now for real!

2020: Climate catastrophes are increasing!

2022: Huh? Why do climate activists take to the streets?

The climate crisis is the greatest threat to creatures and creation. Some still deny it; others play it down. Moreover, the most significant problems caused by the world's wealthiest countries are occurring in the global South. Young people from all over the world keep gathering and protesting. And yet little is being done about the climate crisis in politics and society.

But many people, including those in the church, also stay out of the discourse, as if the whole thing has nothing to do with their faith, nothing to do with their lives, nothing to do with their children and grandchildren. The climate crisis challenges habits such as nutrition, mobility, attitude towards the earth, etc., and challenges new ways of living. What does practical theology have to say about this? How is the climate crisis addressed in practical theological disciplines and religious practices? This interactive panel will provide impulses from a practical theological perspective, but at the same time, all session participants will be invited to join in the thinking and discussion.

Mission Statement:

This Unit engages practical theology and religious practice, reflects critically on religious traditions and practices, and explores issues in particular subdisciplines of practical theology and ministry. The Unit engages this mission in five interrelated public spheres with the following goals: For practical theology – to provide a national and international forum for discussion, communication, publication, and development of the field and its related subdisciplines. For theological and religious studies – to foster interdisciplinary

critical discourse about religious practice, contextual research and teaching for ministry, and practical theological method and pedagogy. For a variety of religious traditions – to

enhance inquiry in religious practice and practical theology. For academic pedagogy – to advance excellence in teaching and vocational development for faculty in divinity and seminary education generally and for graduate students preparing to teach in such settings specifically. For the general public – to promote constructive reflection on social and cultural dynamics and explore the implications of religious confession and practice.

Chairs:

- Marc Lavalley, Barry University
mlavalley@portsmouthabbey.org
- Sabrina Müller, Zurich University
sabrina.mueller@theol.uzh.ch

Pragmatism and Empiricism in American Religious Thought Unit

Call Text:

The Pragmatism and Empiricism in American Religious Thought Unit seeks papers on the following themes:

The Pragmatism and Empiricism in American Religious Thought Unit seeks papers dealing with both/either the Social Activism line of Pragmatism and/or the metaphysical line of Pragmatism.

Pragmatism, Empiricism, Metaphysics and Social Activism

We will explore these two related-yet-distinct lines of Pragmatism through panels on three influential and/or novel books that deal with integral themes to Pragmatic and Empirical philosophy and theology:

Benjamin Chicka's 2022 book *God the Created: Pragmatic Constructive Realism in Philosophy and Theology* attempts to synthesize several lines of thought that are typically understood as antithetical to one another. In philosophy, Chicka attempts to integrate both realistic, metaphysical classical Pragmatism with Analytic or Neo-Pragmatism; in theology, Chicka attempts to integrate Process theology and ground-of-being theology. Chicka proposes a revised version of Charles S. Peirce's Pragmatism as a third way forward through these debates that avoids the binaries and allows philosophers and theologians to learn from differences and disagreements rather than simply dismissing the opponent(s)'s position(s). We invite papers on Chicka's book as a whole or papers that deal with Chicka's treatment of the following themes or topics:

- empiricism and religion & science;
- "Pragmatic Constructive Realism (PCR)" and the relationship of metaphysical pragmatism with analytic pragmatism;
- Charles Peirce, instead of Alfred North Whitehead, as a mediating position for the debate between Process theologians (e.g., John Cobb or Whitehead) and ground-of-being theologians (e.g., Robert Neville or Paul Tillich); or
- the attempt to derive ethical direction from a ground-of-being theology through this synthesis.

The practical upshot of Chicka's metaphysical Pragmatism is that it uplifts social justice work for the historically marginalized; the Unit also seeks papers addressing this urgent social action more concretely. In that vein, Cornel West and Jeffrey Stout's work on social Pragmatism will be placed in dialogue with metaphysical Pragmatism.

2022 marked the 40th anniversary of Cornell West's *Prophesy Deliverance! An Afro-American Revolutionary Christianity*. 2024 will mark the 20th anniversary of Jeffrey Stout's *Democracy and Tradition*. Both of these monumental texts have been extremely influential on Pragmatic thought and action in the decades since their publication. How can Social Pragmatism either draw on these resources to address novel problems or move beyond these paradigms as we work with our hands today? The Unit seeks papers either reflecting on the relevance of these texts for contemporary social action or articulating novel advances on these new classics moving forward.

Pragmatism, and Social Movements (Co-sponsored with Open and Relational Theology Unit) Despite philosophical disagreements, pragmatists and open and relational thinkers are concerned about ideas that produce change in the world. Open and relational thinkers have been leading the charge to develop ecologically sustainable communities, while some of the strongest voices for racial and ethnic justice in the United States are pragmatists. Both schools of thought engage these issues and more, including feminist and womanist activism and rights, LGBTQIA+ rights, as social conservatives resist movement toward inclusiveness. How might open and relational theology and pragmatism inform one another, analytically and ethically, and work together moving forward?

Mission Statement:

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

This joint session with Open and Relational Theologies Unit, entitled *Open and Relational Theology, Pragmatism, and Social Movements: Despite philosophical disagreements, pragmatists and open and relational thinkers with the prevailing question of "How might open and relational theology and pragmatism inform one another,*

analytically and ethically, and work together moving forward?" What might each benefit from the other's respective critique of culture, what might be the overlaps, particularly as it relates to contemporary issues?

Chairs:

- Karen-Louise Rucks-Walker, Quinsigamond Community College
karenl.rucks@charter.net
- Xavier Pickett, North Carolina State University
Xavier.pickett@ptsem.edu

Psychology, Culture, and Religion Unit

Call Text:

Practical and Theoretical Responses to Suicide and Suicidality at the Intersection of Psychology and Religion. This panel will focus on the implications of the significant rise in suicides and suicidality in recent years, including differences among groups of identification and belonging (age, gender and sexuality, race, ethnicity, immigration status, etc.). Topics might include working clinically or pastorally with survivors of attempted suicide or survivors of those who have died by suicide, psychological and religious issues of stigmatization and shame, and the effects on family, friends, and communities.

Swiping, Tapping, and Scrolling: The Psychological and Religious Implications of Social Media and Digital "Embodiment". This call engages the impact of social media and the physical/embodied reality of "swiping, tapping, and scrolling" on mental health, religious identity and belonging, and communal life. How has this reality affected individual psychology, relationships, and religious identity and formation? What are the psychological and religious impacts across groups and/or communities of this different "work of our hands?"

The Expressive Work of our Hands in Healing: The Arts, the Body, the Earth. This call engages the issues of embodied cognition, embodied healing, and the physical work of our hands. How does engagement with expressive arts and embodied practices (painting, sculpting, crafts, dance, music, gardening, farming, cooking) or other forms of physical labor/enjoyment facilitate psychological and religious healing or transformation? What is unique about "making" that impacts religious/psychological healing or formation? Creative/body-focused proposals welcome.

AAR/PCR at the Border: Psychological and Religious Perspectives on Borders, Margins, and Crossings. The ongoing realities of migration, immigration, displacement continue to raise multi-dimensional issues around marginalization, suffering, justice, and the work of care. What is the work of our hands in relation to these realities? Papers might engage themes related to being turned away and being welcomed, identity migration and identity formation, the creation of centers and margins, or other associated themes.

Psychological, Religious, and Pedagogical Engagement with "DEI" Paradigms in the Classroom and Beyond (Co-sponsorship with Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogy Unit). What does it mean to successfully engage diversity, equity, and inclusion in a classroom or institutional setting in a way that is transformative? This panel invites critical engagement from psychology, religion, and pedagogical perspectives in relation to both the value and limits of DEI paradigms for rectifying power imbalances and other issues in pedagogical spaces. What does transformative pedagogy in relation to DEI concerns look like? How might DEI paradigms contribute to equitable and inclusive change or does the focus on DEI let institutions and/or faculty off the hook for deeper work on decolonizing the academy?

Mission Statement:

The PCR unit is comprised of scholars and practitioners in the fields of psychology, religious studies, and cultural analysis. The interests of our members range from Freudian and Jungian psychoanalysis to the practice of pastoral counseling, from object relations theory to cultural studies of trauma and healing. Our primary purposes are to foster creative research, encourage the exchange of ideas among the membership, and provide a forum within the AAR for people with shared backgrounds in the interdisciplinary study of psychology, religion, and culture. Here are ways to connect with the PCR unit * Please find info on the Annual PCR Call for Papers here: <https://aarweb.org/content/psychology-culture-and-religion-unit> * Join the PCR listserv by writing to: psychculturereigion@aarlists.org * You can also join the PCR Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/558617967619873/>

Chairs:

- Lisa M. Cataldo, Fordham University
lisacataldo7@gmail.com
- Kirsten Sonkyo Oh, Azusa Pacific University
kirstenoh@gmail.com

Quaker Studies Unit

Call Text:

Quaker Studies is accepting proposals on the following topics:

- A roundtable discussion on *Global Quakerism in a Postcolonial Context* (Are we now in a position to write a truly postcolonial history of Quakerism? If not, why not? If so, what would such a history look like?)
- co-sponsored with the Buddhism Unit exploring "light" and "religious pluralism"
- Quakers and labor/class
- Quakers and regional/on the border witness (possible dialogue with sociology of religion/sociologists like Jim Spickard and Meredith McGuire)--possible connections with economics as well as sociological/anthropological studies of Quakerism

Mission Statement:

The Quaker Studies Unit seeks to advance critical scholarship on Quakerism and related cultural phenomena. The unit is particularly focused on interdisciplinary analyses of Quakerism in its global contexts and in the breadth of its theological diversity. As the unit understands it, Quaker Studies includes the variety of religious traditions that directly derive from the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), as well as the spiritual and social movements and practices that have influenced--or been influenced by--Quakerism.

Chairs:

- Jennifer Buck, Azusa Pacific University
jen.marie.buck@gmail.com
- David Harrington Watt, Haverford College
dhwatt@haverford.edu

Queer Studies in Religion Unit

Call Text:

In addition to an open-call for papers and sessions that engage broadly with themes related to queer and trans studies in religion, we particularly invite paper and session proposals on the following themes and topics:

- For a potential co-sponsored session with the African Diaspora Religions unit and the Mysticism unit on "Creativity, Synthesis, and Embodiment." In African religions devotees/practitioners navigate visible and invisible worlds in ways that lead to mystical union/communion. What kinds of embodied practices or material technologies are used to facilitate mystical encounter? What role do creativity, story and sound play in fostering mystical engagement? How does the fluid and hybrid nature of African religions enable marginalized and queer identities to experience mystical empowerment and transformation? We invite papers on African religion, queer studies, and mysticism including themes related to embodiment, movement and gesture; queer identity; race, gender and marginality; ritual, ceremony and adornment; material culture and technologies; energy and performance; and sound, music and rhythm.
- For a potential co-sponsored session with the Political Theology unit on "LGBTQI+ rights as a site of political-theological contestation." Recent years have seen a significant and concerning rise in anti-LGBTQI+ violence and rhetoric and threats to LGBTQI+ rights—from the devastating shootings at Pulse nightclub in Florida and Club Q in Colorado Springs, to the disruptions of pride events and drag queen story hours by white nationalists across the country, to the bomb threats of children's hospitals in Massachusetts, Wisconsin, and Ohio following coordinated harassment campaigns from anti-trans groups. We invite paper, roundtable, and session proposals that aim to better understand, critically interrogate, and/or offer resources for responding to that violence via engagement with political theology and queer studies in religion.

- For a potential co-sponsorship between Queer Studies in Religion and African Diaspora Units, “Slippery Borderlands and Fluid Crossroads: African Diaspora Religions and Queer/Trans Identities”
 Concretely defined by walls and guards; impeded by nature through mountains, deserts or bodies of water; or delineated by restrictive inchoate ideologies. Borders can have hard edges as well as amorphous boundaries. Borders are anchored in spatial mobility, situational identity, local contingency, and ambiguities of power. Historically borders have been political and ideological sites of economic exchange, cultural mixing, contestation of identity, empire, nation, and regional authority with the imposition of rules, edicts and restrictions. This co-sponsored panel proposes to explore the permeability of borders in light of the policies, politics and presentation of identity predicated on differing ideologies of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or systems of faith and spirituality.
- For a potential co-sponsored session with the Eastern Orthodox Studies unit on “Queer Studies, LGBTQI+ Lives, and Orthodox Christianity.” Orthodox-majority contexts, communities, and leaders often cause terrible harm to LGBTQ+ persons through homophobic violence, discourse, and policy. Sexual diversity is perhaps the most polarizing issue facing the modern Orthodox world—from the ecclesial discourse surrounding Pride parades and the conflict in Ukraine, to the Orthodox Church in America’s statement against discussing sexuality—and its real-life effects cannot be understated. Yet, international initiatives over the past decade as well as recent publications have argued Orthodox tradition has resources within it to address issues of gender and sexuality with greater openness and theological consistency. This session will ask: what would a queering of Orthodoxy and an Orthodox engagement with Queer Studies look like? We welcome paper and pre-arranged panel proposals that accurately elucidate or constructively address any aspect of LGBTQ+ identity and Orthodox Christianity and its related topics (asceticism, celibacy, eunuchs, same-sex marriage, sexual ethics, queer theology, bodily agency, etc.) from any discipline (sociology, anthropology, history, theology, etc.).
- For a potential co-sponsored session with the Study of Judaism Unit and Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Unit. 2023 is the 40th anniversary of the film *Yentl*, the 50th anniversary of *The Way we Were*, and the 55th anniversary of *Funny Girl*. We invite proposals of individual papers, panels, or roundtables that re-consider Barbra Streisand as icon and director, including revisiting the themes of gender, religion, race, sexuality, and class in her films.
- Contemporary issues – e.g., the Sanctuary movement, reproductive justice, pop culture, Christian nationalism – in conversation with queer and trans studies
- Methods in Queer and Trans Studies in Religion – e.g., ethnography, oral histories, queer(ing) the archive
- Proposals related to the 2023 presidential theme of “*La Labor de Nuestras Manos*” in conversation with queer and trans studies in religion – e.g., queering Islam, theory and practice, public-facing scholarship/scholarship beyond academia

Mission Statement:

The core goals of this Unit are as follows: • Foster the application of queer theory and gender theory to the study of religion • Encourage comparative study of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues in religion • Support the growth of bisexual studies and transgender studies in the field. We actively seek to explore the connections between queer theory in religion and complementary or overlapping fields of inquiry, such as postcolonial theory, critical race theory, disability theory, feminist theory, and cultural studies, among others.

Chairs:

- Elyse Ambrose, University of California, Riverside
eambrose@drew.edu
- Brandy Daniels, University of Portland
brandydaniels@gmail.com

Qur'an Unit

Call Text:

The Qur'an Unit welcomes papers on all aspects of the Qur'an, including its text; Late Antique and historical context; literary, aesthetic, and material forms; oral and written transmission; liturgical use, role in the lives of Muslims; tradition of commentary and exegesis; and its influence in the world more broadly. We welcome proposals that represent the full range of how the Qur'an can be approached in terms of academic methods, as well as the full range of ways in which the Qur'an is interpreted and interacted with in Islamic tradition.

For the 2023 annual meeting, we are especially interested in proposals highlighting new or developing areas of research in relation to the Qur'an or that relate to the annual theme of *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*. Some possibilities for the latter include: reflections on the state of field, pedagogy, public engagement, mentoring sessions, etc.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to provide a forum for comprehensive scholarly discussion of the Qur'an, its commentaries, and its role in Muslim and world societies through a variety of disciplinary and methodological perspectives. We particularly welcome student-scholars, scholars from all areas of the academy, and scholars of diverse backgrounds in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, and religion to help us achieve our goals of promoting an understanding of the Qur'an.

Chairs:

- Lauren Osborne, Whitman College
osbornle@whitman.edu
- Samuel Ross, Texas Christian University
s.ross@tcu.edu

Reformed Theology and History Unit

Call Text:

The Reformed Theology and History Unit seeks paper proposals on the following topics:
Reformed Confessions and the Church

In connection with the 100th anniversary of Karl Barth's lectures on the Reformed confessions during his formational tenure at Göttingen, the Reformed Theology and History Unit invites proposals that examine the nature of Reformed confessions and their significance for the Church. Theological, historical, contextual approaches, among others, are welcome including, but in no way limited to, approaches that engage with Barth's own reflections in this significant lecture cycle and elsewhere. Alternatively, proposals may wish to explore the historical and/or theological importance of confessions in the history and theology of Reformed Christianities such as the Three Forms of Unity, the Westminster Confession of Faith, Barmen, or the Accra Confessions. Proposals that engage theological with the strengths and limitations of confessions and confessionalism, especially in relationship to church unity, discipline, and identity are also welcome. Constructive proposals that explore the offerings of past (or potential future) confessions for present ecclesiological concerns are especially encouraged.

Reformed Theological Ethics: War, Violence, and Peace

In light of the AAR Presidential Theme for 2023, the RTHU invites proposals related to issues of war, peace, violence, and the Reformed faith. This might include studies of early Reformed Christian engagement in or reflection by figures like Zwingli, Calvin, or Knox on practices of war, rebellion, and migration. Or papers might consider how Reformed Christianities have supported slavery in antebellum America, burned 'witches' for heresy, persecuted Anabaptists in early modern Switzerland, committed war-time atrocities in modern Korea as well as resisted Japanese colonialism in Taiwan or protested apartheid in South Africa. We welcome analyses of case studies and theological writings from different global contexts and time periods that capture the positive and negative contributions of the Reformed tradition in relation to war, peace, and violence. We also welcome studies of how contemporary Reformed Christian communities are relating to these complex and fraught histories in current ecclesiology and ethics.

Paul Dafydd Jones' Patience

The Reformed Theology and History Unit plans to co-sponsor with the Christian Systematic Unit a panel on Paul Dafydd Jones' new book.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to open up the traditions of Reformed Christianity for critical review and study, attending to their theological and historical patterns of belief, practice, and polity. Our aim is to present panels and paper sessions that balance theological and historical approaches, and that attend from diverse perspectives to single figures and larger cultural movements, with a particular interest in exploring 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.

Chairs:

- Christina Larsen, Grand Canyon University
larsen.cn@gmail.com
- Joshua Ralston, University of Edinburgh
joshua.ralston@ed.ac.uk

Religion and Cities Unit

Call Text:

The Religion and Cities Unit seeks papers that analyze the interactive relationship between religion and urban environments at the AAR's Annual Meeting. What theoretical models do we draw upon to engage the infrastructure, activities, and culture of cities across the globe? We are open to papers or panels that engage the ecological relationship between religion and cities in a variety of ways. We especially encourage papers or panels proposed from non-profit-scholar collaborations.

Inspired by the 2023 Presidential Theme, "La Labor de Nuestras Manos," we are particularly interested in the following topics:

Potential Co-Sponsor Session with Religion and Memory Unit

Right now, cities across the globe are experiencing what one observer has called an "epidemic" of church closures as churches, mosques, synagogues, and other places of worship permanently shutter their doors. Declines in religious affiliation and worship attendance have driven much of this trend, but so too have aging congregations, rising costs of real estate, and other fluctuations accompanying gentrification and the historic preservation of old buildings. In some places, these empty houses of worship have been reimaged as homes, places of business, or the site of new religious communities as churches and synagogues becoming masjids or temples. In other places, they remain abandoned.

This session calls for papers or projects that examine the narratives, histories, transformations, religious reincarnations, or secular afterlives of abandoned places of worship in urban spaces across the globe. What does the repurposing of these spaces tell us about the nature of religion in the modern world? What role does the scholar of religion have in the preservation or transformation of historic places of worship?

Potential Co-Sponsor Session with Religion and Economy Program Unit

The story of the Riverwalk in San Antonio is one that links the city, the environment, the economy, and religion. In 1921, a category 1 hurricane hit Texas, resulting in massive flooding that resulted in \$19 million in property loss and the death of 50 people in San Antonio. To prevent the future loss of life and property, architect Robert H. H. Hugman proposed the riverwalk, a design that simultaneously tamed the river while reviving colonial Spanish mission architecture for urban development through tourism.

Inspired by this history of the Riverwalk, the Religion and Cities and Religion and Economy units invite papers and panel proposals for a co-sponsored session that considers the labor of producing and contesting urban and environmental landscapes. This could include literal landscapes of economic and environmental change, infrastructures and land use, green spaces, and urban ecologies. We also welcome

proposals focused on the labor of producing imaginative landscapes, including landscapes of memory, border landscapes, and pathways through the city.

Potential Co-Sponsor Session with Native Traditions in the Americas

For a possible co-sponsorship with the Native Traditions in the Americas Unit, a panel or papers exploring the urban Indigenous experience, particularly in light of our location in San Antonio.

Non-Profit Collaborations

In recent decades, religious studies scholars and theologians have shifted from researching in communities to researching with communities. We welcome papers and projects to examine how collaborating with community members and/or non-profit organizations has transformed the study of religion and theology in the city. How does partnering with a non-profit organization inspire us not only to reevaluate how and why we do research, but who we do research for? How do community members challenge us to rethink the academic-non-academic divide? And how might religious studies and theological perspectives offer more just solutions to city officials?

Gender, Religion, and the City

From women protesting the morality police in Iran to the Biden Administration raising the transgender flag to celebrate International Transgender Day of Visibility to Ms. Marvel visualizing feminism in a mosque in Jersey City, it is an important moment to examine the intersection of gender, religion, and the city. We are interested in papers or projects that examine who has the right to the city through a gendered lens.

Mission Statement:

This unit engages in critical analysis of ecological relationships between religion and cities. We are interested in exploring the cooperative and conflicting relationships between cities across the globe and their religious communities in the struggle for social justice, especially in response to racial capitalism and settler colonialism. Our work is interdisciplinary and includes scholars from Religious Studies, History, Anthropology, Social Ethics & Urban Sociology, Architecture & Urban Planning, and Gender Studies.

Chairs:

- Fatimah Fanusie, Institute for Islamic, Christian, and Jewish Studies
fanusie@icjs.org
- Rupa Pillai, University of Pennsylvania
rupillai@sas.upenn.edu

Religion and Disability Studies Unit

Call Text:

The Religion and Disability Studies Unit invites proposals that critically examine the relationship between disability and religious thought, practice, or history. We welcome

papers on all topics, yet with particular interest in non-Christian perspectives and underrepresented cultural locations. We especially seek proposals on the following:

- Madness or hysteria as topics of religious or theological studies. We are most interested in presentations that view these topics in intersectional ways (e.g. black mad studies).
- Critical engagement of *From Inclusion to Justice: Disability, Ministry, and Congregational Leadership* by Erin Raffety (Baylor University Press, 2022). Proposals ought to highlight salient lessons Raffety's text offers churches and other communities about the work their hands should be doing with regard to disability. We seek constructive evaluations or elaborations of Raffety's arguments.
- For a possible co-sponsorship with the Religion and Healing Unit, and the Class, Religion and Theology Unit: Care and healing as "the work of our hands." How might caregiving, care work, and healing be best represented in religious studies scholarship? What current pitfalls or potential surround care and healing as both concrete practices and academic subjects? How has care been politicized or depoliticized in academic discourse pertaining to disability specifically? Who does care labor (paid and unpaid), who pays for its paid forms? How does this economic organization of care labor affect both the receivers and the providers of care labor – and how does this all relate to religious practices or thought, esp. in regards to disability and/or healing?
- For a possible co-sponsorship with the Religion and Science Fiction Unit: We seek proposals that engage science-fictional imaginings of the dis/abled body in tandem with theories or tropes of religion and/or science fiction. We are receptive to a wide range of critical approaches that engage issues of dis/ability in catastrophic situations like a post-apocalyptic world, alien invasion, or a pandemic.
- For a possible co-sponsorship with the Religion, Emotion, and Affect Unit: Phenomenologies of "tired." The particular exhaustions of illness, impairment, disablement, and debilitations. Ruminations on energy and sleep. Ruminations on stagnation and stuckness. Affective dimensions of criptime.
- For a possible co-sponsorship with the Christian Spirituality Unit: "A Critical Analysis of how the Lives and Experiences of Persons with Disabilities and/or their Communities Express Spirituality in Distinctive, Constructive, or Liberative ways"
- For a possible Co-Sponsored Session with Religion and Disability Studies: We invite papers on representations of disability experiences and religion in popular media. We are especially interested in examinations of how the religious backgrounds, commitments, or influences on persons with disabilities have been represented in recent popular media, be it television, film, literature, graphic novels, etc. How are persons with disabilities shown to be active or constructive participants in religious reflection or practice in ways that challenge ableist norms and assumptions? Alternatively, how might popular media offer timely correctives or challenges to current religious thought and practice surrounding disability?

Mission Statement:

The Religion and Disability Studies Unit is committed to maintaining the visibility, viability, and value of the experience and politics of disability as they relate to the study and practice of religion. We promote engagement between disability studies theory and the study of religion, examine the role of disability in lived religious experience and theology, and consider the historical and contemporary role of disability in diverse religious traditions, texts, and cultures. As intersectionality becomes an increasingly critical hermeneutic in the academy, we encourage robust dialogue and collaboration with other program units involved with disciplined reflection on religion.

Chairs:

- David Scott, Iliff School of Theology
dscott@iliff.edu
- Heike Peckruhn, Daemen University
pheike@gmail.com

Religion and Ecology Unit**Call Text:**

The Religion and Ecology Unit seeks individual paper and complete panel proposals relating to a wide range of themes in religion and ecology, including proposals that resonate with the 2023 thematic emphasis on “La Labor de Nuestras Manos” – the work of our hands. What is the work of our hands as the field of religion and ecology? How does climate change and environmental destruction inform religious efforts? Whose hands and whose labor should scholars of religion be interpreting, studying, or advocating for? Topics include, but are not limited to, questions such as:

- What is the role of religion in civil disobedience and protest movements as well as legal battles and policy reform? How have religious laws influenced the environment and environmental initiatives?
- What connections are there or should there be between religion and labor, especially those who work with landscapes—from agriculture, to architecture, to energy projects, to aesthetic projects? How do religious accounts of environmental labor either frame and interpret work or inform approaches and objectives?
- Pedagogies of Religion and Ecology: what pedagogies are effective for teaching religion and ecology? How can the teaching religion benefit by using different approaches that range from project-based learning to outdoor education to land-based teaching?
- Contributions to Religion and Ecology in non-English languages: what are the sources, movements, or communities who are working on environmental initiatives, research, or teaching in languages other than English?

We also acknowledge the interdisciplinary nature of and multifaceted approaches to research on the connections between religion and ecology. We especially welcome new

contributions to religion and ecology intended to develop and push the field in methodology, topics, themes, texts, authors, objectives, and/or audience.

The Religion and Ecology Unit is also pursuing possible co-sponsored sessions with the following Units:

- The Native Traditions in the Americas Unit: “Religion and Climate Justice.” We invite papers considering climate justice for Indigenous communities, and how traditional ecological knowledge can inform climate policy, green energy expansion, and moves toward climate resiliency. We are interested in engaging academics, activists, and scholar-practitioners working on these issues in the academy and on the ground.
- The Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Unit and Religion and Human Rights Unit: “Religious activism, human rights, and resilience.” Keeping in mind the presidential theme “La Labor de Nuestras Manos” and our meeting location in Texas, we invite papers that consider the following:
 - Religion and human rights “on the ground”: we seek proposals on the conversation and practice of human rights within grassroots communities, especially in dialogue with religious thought and scholarship of religious studies;
 - The co-creation of “sacred spaces” in the community-engaged work of scholars, laborers, and activists; how do practices of rest and resistance foster such spaces?
 - Ecology and resilience: How might faith traditions and practices that emphasize relations with the natural world bolster our capacity to build just and flourishing communities and ecosystems? How does the ‘work of our hands’ to achieve climate justice bolster our capacity to build just and flourishing communities and ecosystems?
 - Intersectional approaches to climate change and environmental justice. We are especially interested in considering intersectional vulnerabilities; centering survival for people of color and the global South in climate justice efforts.
- The Philosophy of Religion Unit: “Bruno Latour and Natural Religion.” In the year of his passing and 10 years after the publication of his lectures on natural religion, we welcome explorations of Bruno Latour’s legacy for the study of religion, ecology, and/or science.
- Religion and Ecology Unit: On environmental law, with particular focus on advocacy and legal issues related to environmentalism and the Global South.

Mission Statement:

This Unit critically and constructively explores how human–Earth relations are shaped by religions, cultures, and understandings of nature and the environment. We are self-consciously inter- and multi-disciplinary and include methods from a variety of social sciences such as those found in the work of theologians, philosophers, religionists, ethicists, scientists, activist-scholars, sociologists, and anthropologists, among others.

We also strive to be a radically inclusive unit and welcome papers that challenge the

dominant Eurocentric environmental discourse while envisioning new conceptual frontiers.

Chairs:

- Kimberly Carfore, University of San Francisco
kimberly.carfore@gmail.com
- Joseph Wiebe, University of Alberta, Augustana
jwiebe@ualberta.ca

Religion and Economy Unit

Call Text:

This Unit welcomes individual papers, paper sessions, and roundtable proposals related to the group's mission. We strongly encourage the submission of pre-arranged paper and roundtable sessions, including and especially sessions with innovative formats and modes of presentation. Proposals for individual papers are most likely to be accepted if proposed in relation to one of the themes listed below, due to the higher probability that they might complement other individual submissions. Please note that our Unit typically holds sessions that last 90 minutes.

Successful proposals not only will reflect theoretical and methodological rigor and clarity but also will engage existing scholarship around the study of religion and economy. A successful pre-arranged session also must incorporate gender and racial/ethnic diversity. Diversity of academic rank, theoretical method, and field also are highly encouraged and more likely to be successful.

Potential themes include but are not limited to the themes listed below, which we present in two categories: ideas proposed by participants in the unit and members of the steering committee, as well as ideas generated in dialogue with other program units. We welcome proposals on these themes, but we also welcome proposals on any other themes that contribute to the Unit's work or push it in new directions.

Themes Suggested by Religion + Economy Unit Members/Steering Committee

- *La Labor de Nuestras Manos* – the terms and categories that constitute this year's Presidential Theme (Labor, Our, Hands).
- Shadow Economies and Shades of the Religious – shadow economies and the formalizing contours to which they contribute. Proposals might consider informal labor sectors, criminalized and underground economies, regulatory evasions, cryptocurrencies, and related subjects. So too proposals may consider the way attention to such topics contributes to and/or challenges the smudged relations of the categories that orient our unit (religion, economy)
- Un/waged Labor – the language of labor as well as its relation to wages. Our program unit continues to ask after wages as a marker of the labor relation and its organizational appeals. Yet, this can also result in the obscuring of work or related practices that are unwaged or precariously remunerated (e.g. gig work). Proposals might consider practices positioned outside the waged relation (e.g. care work, voluntarism), concepts that are defined in contrast to waged labor (e.g. salary,

reimbursement, reward, gift, etc), notions of “burn out” or “quiet quitting,” and related subjects.

- Rents and the Rented – the category of rents in its many formulations and its use in and for the study of religion. The notion of rents is broader and more disputed than colloquial uses about land, the housing market, and other temporary usage. Often understood to result from market inefficiencies, asymmetrical information, or group affiliation and not always easily distinguished from related concepts (e.g. profit, surplus, royalties, etc), rents urge us into questions about productivity and privilege, ownership and excess, property, accumulation, and dispossession.
- Gimmick, Slogan, Soundbites, and Other Aesthetic Categories for the Study of Religion & Economy – aesthetic categories and their contribution to the study of religion and economy. For instance, Sianne Ngai has recently suggested “the gimmick” as aesthetic judgment and capitalist form, one that simultaneously works too hard and too little. What might this aesthetic category and others like it (slogan, soundbite, etc) offer for scholars of religion and economy? We particularly welcome interdisciplinary, field-crossing proposals that consider together analytical, empirical, literary, and other creative approaches to this topic.
- Re/imagining Re/production: We invite proposals considering a re/imagining of the concept of “prosperity” and/or discourses of “abundance”, cooperative/solidarity economies, life after neoliberalism, and relational dimensions of labor and rest.

Themes Developed as Potential Co-sponsorships

- **Producing and Contesting Urban and Environmental Landscapes (Co-Sponsorship w/ Religion and Cities Unit)** – The story of the Riverwalk in San Antonio is one that links the city, the environment, the economy, and religion. In 1921, a category 1 hurricane hit Texas, resulting in massive flooding that resulted in \$19 million in property loss and the death of 50 people in San Antonio. To prevent the future loss of life and property, architect Robert H. H. Hugman proposed the riverwalk, a design that simultaneously tamed the river while reviving colonial Spanish mission architecture for urban development through tourism.

Inspired by this history of the Riverwalk, the Religion and Cities and Religion and Economy unit invite papers and panel proposals for a co-sponsored session that considers the labor of producing and contesting urban and environmental landscapes. This could include literal landscapes of economic and environmental change, infrastructures and land use, green spaces, and urban ecologies. We also welcome proposals focused on the labor of producing imaginative landscapes, including landscapes of memory, border landscapes, and pathways through the city.

- **Labor Union Organizing in San Antonio and Beyond (Co-sponsorship w/ Liberation Theologies + Religion, Class, and Theology + Ethics Units)** – The Liberation Theologies; Class, Religion, and Theology; Ethics; and Religion and Economy units call for proposals regarding labor issues and worker organizing in general, in San Antonio or Texas, and/or in the hotel/convention center/hospitality industry. We hope to organize both a pre-conference

workshop and a panel on these topics, and encourage submissions from labor

organizers, activists, and scholars. For a number of years it was a priority of the AAR to take into account the labor situation on the ground in its host cities. This session and possible pre-conference workshop, therefore, offer an opportunity to reflect on that commitment, understand the labor situation in our host city, and hopefully re-energize the AAR's commitment to solidarity with all those the labor of whose hands makes the annual meeting possible at all.

- Possible Co-Sponsorship w/ Religion and Human Rights Unit: In keeping with this year's presidential theme of *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*, we are particularly interested in proposals focused on religion, labor, rights, and economic life.

Mission Statement:

This Unit sponsors multidisciplinary conversations that explore intersections between religious and economic modes of social life. Religion and Economy 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 inquiry that cuts across religious traditions, geographic locations, methods, and historical time periods, this Unit's collaborative explorations not only address and explore capitalist and non-capitalist economic systems but also consider how broader systems of "exchange" produce social relations among varied actors—from humans to spirits to material objects. By interrogating the concepts of religion and economy, this Unit also encourages scholars to consider the stakes of other concepts with ongoing currency in the study of religion, including secularism, spirituality, affect, desire, ritual, agency, value, and subject formation.

Chairs:

- Rebecca Bartel, San Diego State University
rbartel@sdsu.edu
- Kati Curts, University of the South
kacurts@sewanee.edu

Religion and Food Unit

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.

For possible co-sponsorship with the African Religions and/or African Diaspora Religions Units:

Recognizing our location in borderlands Texas, we invite papers considering geographically relevant topics such as:

- religion and food in the Texas, Mexican, Latin American, Indigenous, and borderlands Latinx communities
- meat, barbecue, meat-eating, and alternative meat
- religion and food in relation to land, water, agriculture, and those who work the land, often migrant workers
- the consumption of peyote, ayahuasca, and other ethnobotanical/entheogenic/psychedelic substances

More broadly, we welcome papers on topics such as religion and food in relation to:

- healing and ethnomedicine
- control, power, agency, and struggle
- gender and sexuality
- food and the spirit world

For a possible co-sponsored session, the Religion and Food unit and Comparative Study of Religion unit invite proposals on religion, food, agriculture, land, and those who work the land, including migrant, low-wage, child, injured, or enslaved workers. For example, sabbatical and jubilee traditions structure restorative rest for bodies and land.

Additionally, traditional ecological, embodied, and place-based knowledge systems shape dynamic interactions between people, food, and lands. Such knowledge systems may be responsive to disruptions to local land, waterway, and climate. Paper and panel proposals for this co-sponsored session should be sent by email to Dr. Roberta Sabbath, roberta.sabbath@unlv.edu, rather than using PAPERS.

Food, faith, Ritual, and Celebration at the Border [a Pre-formed Panel, not accepting submissions]

Co-sponsorship between the Religion and Food, African Diaspora Religions, African Religions, and Comparative Study of Religion units will internally select panelists for a panel theme on religion, food, agriculture, land, and those who work the land, including migrant, low-wage, child, injured, or enslaved workers.

For example, sabbatical and jubilee traditions structure restorative rest for bodies and land. Additionally, traditional ecological, embodied, and place based knowledge systems shape dynamic interactions between people, food, and lands. Such knowledge systems may be responsive to disruptions to local land, waterway, and climate.

As always, we welcome general proposals on the topic of religion and food.

Mission Statement:

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

- The relationships of religious commitments to food (production, preparation, consumption, and invention)
- Diet and sustainability
- Issues of food (in)justice, which may include food availability or insecurity, commitment

to wellness, access to healthy foods, food deserts, etc.

- Environmental/ecological issues, e.g. desertification, flood, fire, and climate related food ethics issues
 - Theological, spiritual, and religious interrelationships as expressed in food commitments or confluences
 - 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.

Chairs:

- Aldea Mulhern, California State University, Fresno
aldea@csufresno.edu
- Benjamin Zeller, Lake Forest College
zeller@lakeforest.edu

Religion and Human Rights Unit

Call Text:

We seek papers that explore the topics of religion and human rights from a breadth of scholarly perspectives. We seek analyses of the way in which particular religious actors and traditions articulate the compatibility or incompatibility of religion and human rights; how human rights serve to complicate or enhance our understanding of categories such as “religion” and “secularity”; and how the intersection of religion and human rights implicates issues of race, gender, law, politics, ecology etc.

Proposals on any topic related to religion and human rights are welcome.

In keeping with this year’s presidential theme of *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*, we are particularly interested in proposals on the following topics:

For a possible co-sponsorship with the Religion and Ecology Program Unit and the Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Program Unit, we invite papers that consider:

- religion and human rights “on the ground”: explorations of the conversation and practice of human rights within grassroots communities, especially in dialogue with religious thought and scholarship of religious studies
- the co-creation of “sacred spaces” in the community-engaged work of scholars, laborers, and activists. How do practices of rest and resistance foster such spaces?
- ecology and resilience: How might faith traditions and practices that emphasize relations with the natural world bolster our capacity to build just and flourishing communities and ecosystems? How does the “work of our hands” for climate justice bolster our capacity to build just and flourishing communities and ecosystems?
- intersectional approaches to climate change and environmental justice. We are especially interested in considering intersectional vulnerabilities; centering survival for people of color and the global South in climate justice efforts

For a possible co-sponsorship with the Practical Theology Program Unit, we invite proposals focused on religion, labor/work, and human rights. Here again we will explore the conversation and practice of human rights within grassroots communities, especially in dialogue with religious thought and scholarship of religious studies.

We also invite proposals that consider religious, theological, and philosophical approaches to human rights ideas. In keeping with the presidential theme, we especially welcome proposals on Islamic thought and human rights.

Finally, we invite proposals in areas related to: human rights and religious freedom; environmental rights and the “rights of nature”; human rights in marginalized communities; the limits of human rights in cases of oppression; human rights, religion, and immigration; history of human rights thought and practice; and human rights thought and practice as understood from diverse methodological perspectives.

Mission Statement:

The Religion and Human Rights Unit seeks to enhance both scholarly and public conversation around the intersection of religion and human rights ideas and practices. We solicit papers in any area of religion and human rights studies. Topics we engage include: how particular religious actors and traditions articulate the compatibility or incompatibility of religion and human rights; how human rights serve to complicate or enhance our understanding of categories such as “religion” and “secularity”; how religious and human rights approaches address particular cases and social issues; and how the intersection of religion and human rights implicates issues of race, gender, law, politics, etc. We recognize that both human rights and religious ideologies can inspire thought and action that benefits the vulnerable and promotes the common good; at the same time, both can serve the interests of power, oppression, and colonialist hegemony. Thus it is vitally important to evaluate and critique both. Participants in the unit approach these topics, and others, from diverse areas of study, methodologies, and perspectives. The unit also prioritizes the public understanding of religion in conversation with human rights ideas. Human rights is a much-discussed topic in the media and political circles, yet much public dialogue assumes that religion and human rights are either straightforwardly congruent with each other, or straightforwardly opposed to each other. The unit welcomes papers that critique, nuance, and enhance public understanding of the intersection of religion and human rights.

Chairs:

- Laura Alexander, University of Nebraska, Omaha
lealex@unomaha.edu
- Jenna Reinbold, Colgate University
jreinbold@colgate.edu

Religion and Memory Unit

Call Text:

This unit provides the opportunity for scholars to engage in conversation about the relationship between religion and memory, broadly conceived. We are interested in examining how religions and memories form and shape each other across broad geographical areas, methodologies, religious traditions, and historical eras.

This year, we invite papers, panels, and roundtables that explore the following themes:

- *The Materials of Memory*. Following the AAR's 2023 theme "el trabajo de las manos," we invite papers that examine the things we make to help make memories. Beyond museums and monuments, memories are documented or made using a variety of hand-crafted personal, domestic, or communal media such as photo albums, home movies, and other artifacts. What do religions make in order to make memories? And what kind of religious identities do these memories cultivate?
- *Key Terms in Religion and Memory*. The pandemic and its aftermath have led many to reflect upon the principles that guide the work we do. We therefore seek papers or a structured roundtable on key terms in the study of religion and memory. This can include, but is not limited to, terms such as: nostalgia, heritage, archive, commemoration, etc.

We also welcome papers, panels, and roundtables on other issues of religion and memory in any time period and any geographic context.

With the Religion and Cities Unit, we invite papers on **Architectures of Absence: Religion, Cities, and Shuttered Places of Worship**.

Right now, cities across the globe are experiencing what one observer has called an "epidemic" of church closures as churches, mosques, synagogues, and other places of worship permanently shutter their doors. Shifting patterns in religious affiliation and worship attendance have driven much of this trend, but so too have aging congregations, rising costs of real estate, and other fluctuations accompanying gentrification and the historic preservation of old buildings. In some places, these empty houses of worship have been reimagined as homes, places of business, or the site of new religious communities as churches and synagogues becoming masjids or temples. In other places, they remain abandoned.

This session calls for papers or projects that examine the narratives, histories, transformations, religious reincarnations, or secular afterlives of abandoned places of worship in urban spaces across the globe. What does the repurposing of these spaces tell us about the nature of religion in the modern world? What role does the scholar of religion have in the preservation or transformation of historic places of worship?

Mission Statement:

This unit considers memory's role in the making of religions and the ways in which religions make memories. It explores the construction and representation of narratives of the past as memory in relation to religious practices, ideologies, and experiences. We encourage critical reflection on religion in relation to ideas of memory, heritage, and public history. We are interested in examining these topics across broad geographical areas, religious traditions, methodological practices, and historical eras.

Chairs:

- Christopher Cantwell, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
ccantwell1@luc.edu
- Rachel Gross, San Francisco State University
rbgross@sfsu.edu

Religion and Migration Unit

Call Text:

The Religion and Migration Unit seeks individual paper proposals and panel proposals (presider, three presenters, and respondent). The Religion and Migration Unit is committed to diversity and inclusion.

Panel session proposals should incorporate gender diversity within the panel; diversity of race/ethnicity, and rank are also highly encouraged. The 2023 Religion and Migration Unit Call for Papers for the Annual Meeting to be held in San Antonio, TX welcomes proposals on the following themes:

Stages of Migration and Religion: Scholars have distinguished the process of migration into three stages: (1) pre-migration, (2) transit, and (3) post-migration in order to understand what migrants experience at different stages of migration. But can we truly understand migration as an “event-of-transit,” which has an identifiable structure of “pre-migration” and “post-migration”? What are the benefits and limitations of examining migration through identifiable stages? What are the possible implications for religion or how does religion affect these stages of migration?

New Languages of Migration: Across many disciplines, we have used metaphors of displacement, exiles, border crossings, nomads, transnationalism, aliens, diaspora, exodus, asylum seekers, and urban flight to describe, capture, and reflect “a world in motion” as well as “people on the move.” What are new images, metaphors, concepts, and keywords to examine the dynamic and complex process of how religion shapes and is shaped by these migrants, the places they have left behind, and the ones they enter into?

Teaching Religion and Migration: What are some of the issues and/or challenges teaching religion and migration in public/private colleges and universities? In what ways have we progressed and/or experienced positive change in the classroom/field?

For Co-Sponsorship with Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Unit:

Asian Religions in North America: Focusing on communities that have been historically underrepresented, including South Asian, Southeast Asian, East Asian, Pacific Islander, and non-Christian communities. How or in which ways have religious traditions been constructed, reconstructed, or represented in North America by immigrant/migrant/refugee communities? What emphases, innovations, or concerns do we see in Asian-American diaspora communities? What if anything has been lost or gained in transition?

Engagement with recent publications, such as Melissa Borja’s [Follow the New Way: American Refugee Resettlement Policy and Hmong Religious Change](#) are also welcome.

Finally, we offer an open call for any other topics dealing with religion and migration, especially proposals that address theoretical and methodological issues at the

intersection of migration and religious studies. We are also interested in hosting a book panel, so please feel free to submit panel proposals for recently published books on Migration and Religion (author, panelists, and respondents).

Mission Statement:

This Unit is a forum in which scholars working on religion and migration from multiple perspectives can interact across methodologies, religious traditions, and regions. We solicit papers addressing the religious practices, experiences, needs, and beliefs of migrating peoples who adapt to new environments and impact their societies of origin and destination. We understand religion and migration broadly, from the religious communities of rural migrants in regional cities to the new understandings of religion that second-generation children construct in order to make sense of their ethnic identities or ethical responses of receiving communities. If you are interested in furthering the discussion on religion and migration, please join the AAR Religion and Migration Group on Facebook.

Chairs:

- Ulrich Schmiedel, University of Edinburgh
ulrich.schmiedel@ed.ac.uk
- Nanette Spina, University of Georgia
spinan@uga.edu

Religion and Politics Unit

Call Text:

We seek proposals for papers, panels, roundtables, or book discussions on any topic at the intersection of religion and politics in national, international, and especially comparative perspective. This year, our call focuses on:

- Religion at the border, including issues involving immigration, detention, and refugee policy
- Religious nationalism in US, global, and comparative perspective
- Religion, democracy movements, and anti-democracy crackdowns (especially Iran)
- On the 250th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party, the religious dimensions of freedom and protest
- Religion, global citizenship, and governance of global issues (e.g., climate change, pandemic, human rights, religious freedom, humanitarian crises involving refugees and mass migration)
- The centennial of *Johnson v. McIntosh* and the “Discovery Doctrine” in US property law
- Abortion, reproductive rights, and the politics of motherhood
- Religion, theology (of any tradition), and the moral life of politics
- Guns, gun culture, and gun violence, especially school shootings
- Visions and practices of theocracy, past and present
- The bicentennial of the Monroe Doctrine and implications for Native American/indigenous rights, sovereignty, and colonialism

- Religion and Politics (Co-sponsored with the Sociology of Religion Unit): Including issues such as abortion, healthcare, LGBTQ+ rights, religious freedom, immigration, education, guns, climate change, courts, crime, voting, and more.

We also welcome proposals relevant to the conference location (San Antonio, Texas) and its theme, *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*. We ask how the academic study and teaching of religion and politics inform broader public audiences and influence civic life outside of the academy.

In addition, we seek proposals for the following potential co-sponsored sessions:

Co-sponsored with Religion in Europe Unit

Religion and the European Right: The rise of right-wing political groups across Europe—as seen for example in the October 2022 election of Giorgia Meloni in Italy, or the December 2022 attempted coup in Germany—has served as a reminder of the importance of understanding how religion informs the goals and grievances of the European right. We seek papers that explore the various ways that religion and/or religious narratives inform and intersect with these political movements, whether in the form of religious nationalism, narratives against particular religious traditions (i.e., Islam, Judaism), or alternatively, in responses to the European right. In particular, we invite papers that form the basis for comparisons across Europe and/or in conversation with perspectives from the United States context.

Co-sponsored with Interreligious and Interfaith Studies Unit

Law and Politics through an Interfaith Lens: Recent rulings by the U.S. Supreme Court again demonstrate the extent to which Christianity is woven into American law and politics. For example, debates rooted in Christian intellectual history dominate public discourse and manifest in attempts to regulate women’s bodies through limiting access to reproductive health care such as abortion and contraceptives. Such debates also spur the weaponization of religious freedom claims to justify discrimination based on religion, gender, and sexuality.

We invite paper, panel, or roundtable proposals that address these intersections of religion and politics through an interfaith lens, confronting the impact of Christian dominance in our multifaith society.

We encourage deep excavation of public discourse. Some media pundits characterized overturning *Roe v. Wade* as “Christian Sharia,” for example, demonstrating the ease with which Islamophobic tropes are embedded—and revealing deep-seated ignorance regarding the nuanced perspectives of non-Christian traditions on reproductive justice. Debates about immigration and gun control in the U.S. have also become correlated with the camps of Christian liberals and Christian conservatives. How might inter- and multi-religious perspectives challenge these polarized frames by providing alternative cognitive paradigms through which religion and politics can be viewed? What is the impact on non-Christian Americans who find themselves forced to align with categories, factions, and contentions that are rooted in the history of American Christian thought and practice?

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a forum for scholars and professionals interested in the relationships among religion, the state, and political life, both in the United States and around the world. Our members focus on the interaction between religious and political values, movements, and commitments, and the role of religious individuals and communities in bodies' politic. This focus includes attention to the ways in which religion and religious actors participate in public discourse, contribute to debates over public values and social policy, and affect – and are affected by – activity in the political sphere. We welcome members doing both normative and descriptive work from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds, including religious studies, political science, philosophy, social ethics, law (including church–state studies), history (as it relates to contemporary understandings), and theology. We seek to advance scholarly inquiry on religion and politics and we seek also to speak to broad and diverse publics about areas falling under the Unit's purview. We also maintain a year-round Religion and Politics Google group, which is open to all AAR members here: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/aar-religionandpolitics>

Chairs:

- John Carlson, Arizona State University
john.carlson@asu.edu
- Ann Duncan, Goucher College
ann.duncan@goucher.edu

Religion and Popular Culture Unit

Call Text:

Everything is Bigger in Texas: In recognition of our meeting's location in San Antonio, we invite papers and re-arranged panels addressing the complex popular cultures and politics of Texas. From reproductive rights to guns to textbooks, the state can be understood as a bellwether of white Christian conservatism nation-wide. But this isn't the whole story. Seeing national politics from the vantage of Texas also brings into view Latin/x popular religious cultures, borderlands, and the Asian immigrant communities across the state.

Bodies and the State: In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, and in light of its over-turning and threats to the availability of contraceptives and trans healthcare, we invite papers and pre-arranged panels addressing the intersections of bodies, popular culture and governance. How do popular cultures serve as sites for the exploration of bodies, their religious meanings, and their regulation by the state?

The Exorcist at 50: We invite pre-arranged panels or papers that mark the 50th anniversary of the landmark film *The Exorcist*, in conversation with other entries within its franchise, and/or other popular culture related to possession.

Transnational Circulations of Religion and Popular Culture: How do religious communities that overflow national borders utilize popular culture to inform doctrine, practice, or communal identity? How do pop culture objects contribute to and complicate the

globalization of religion or global imaginations of religion? We are especially interested in papers that examine pop culture representations transnational or diasporic religious communities, pop culture and religious tourism/pilgrimage, or cultural knowledge as a collective process.

Open Call. We welcome any and all proposals that are not specifically mentioned in the call for papers and we are specifically interested in topics and theoretical insights from outside North America.

Calls for Possible Co-Sponsored Panels:

- Co-Sponsored with Disability Studies Unit: Representations of disability experiences and religion in popular media. We are especially interested in examinations of how the religious backgrounds, commitments, or influences on persons with disabilities have been represented in recent popular media, be it television, film, literature, graphic novels, etc. How are persons with disabilities shown to be active or constructive participants in religious reflection or practice in ways that challenge ableist norms and assumptions? Alternatively, how might popular media offer timely correctives or challenges to current religious thought and practice surrounding disability?
- Co-Sponsored with Native Traditions in the Americas Unit: We invite papers on the role of Indigenous religious and spiritual traditions within popular works by contemporary Native American and First Nations creators. How have religious and spiritual traditions oriented or emerged within recent creative works (i.e. films such as *Blood Quantum*, music by artists such as *Crown Lands*, streaming series such as *Reservation Dogs*, or other forms such as comic books, novels, or video games? How have these works mobilized, or chafed against, the conventions of popular genres?
- *Co-sponsored with Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop and Religion Unit:* We invite proposals on the intersection of hip-hop cultures, Black Apocalypticism, and the politics of conspiracies. Proposals might touch on, but are not limited to, original analyses of *Ye* or the Black Hebrew Israelites.
- Co-sponsored with Sikh Studies Unit: We invite papers investigating the creation, consumption, and dissemination of popular culture in Sikh communities around the globe.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is dedicated to the scholarly exploration of religious expression in a variety of cultural settings. We encourage a multidisciplinary display of scholarship in our sessions and are committed to taking popular culture seriously as an arena of religious and theological reflection and practice.

Chairs:

- David Feltmate, Auburn University, Montgomery
dfeltmat@aum.edu
- Eden Consenstein, Princeton University
Edenc@unc.edu

Religion and Public Schools: International Perspectives Unit**Call Text:**

The "Religion & Public Schools: International Perspectives" program unit welcomes diverse approaches and methods, and always seeks to situate our papers and panels within global and comparative contexts. Our primary focus is on the many ways in which religion education is undertaken and understood in public/state schools. This year we are calling for papers/proposals on any of the following topics:

- Teaching controversial issues in public schools around the world.
Such issues might include the nature and extent of discrimination on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity; the relationship between religion, violence, and peace; gender and sexuality; or other topics that create or seek to resolve conflicts in a community.
- Religion education and the Sustainable Development Goals.
The UN Sustainable Development Goal #4 is to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." We seek papers that consider RE and human rights -- including religious freedom -- as elements in the work toward realizing the SDGs by 2030.
- Empirical and theoretical analysis on the teaching of religion in a comparative way in public schools around the world on topics related to the main objective of this unit.
- Other papers on religion education and public schools will be considered, though priority will be given to proposals that fit the specific themes above.

Mission Statement:

This Program Unit promotes the global and comparative study of "religion education" in public schools around the world. By encouraging interdisciplinary research on the ethical, legal, political, pedagogical, and theological issues that arise with the study of religion in elementary and secondary schools, we seek to deepen our understanding of alternative approaches to religion as an academic subject. We also hope to find new ways of responding to the increasing religious diversity in schools and societies and to study the relationship between religious education and citizenship education in pluralistic democratic societies.

Chairs:

- Angela Bernardo, Sapienza University of Rome
angela.bernardo@uniroma1.it
- Erik Owens, Boston College
erik.owens@bc.edu

Religion and Science Fiction Unit

Call Text:

The AAR Theme this year is the work of our hands/*La Labor de Nuestras Manos*. We are invited to consider generally "the work that we do in the study of religion and think more broadly about what it is that we do when we do the work of our hands." In light of this we invite paper proposals that envision the work of 'religion' in speculative worlds or the work of speculative worlds as religion. The theme of hands, handiwork, labor and/or embodiment are encouraged. This may include reflection on ways our "hands" are imagined in novel ways in SF, such as their delegation and dispersion in robots, AI, space colonies, and so on. SF scenarios offer new visions of hands for new works of creation, of combat, of healing, of discovery. Related to this theme is prediction and prophetic writing for alternative futures and future labor, imagined by authors such as (but not limited to) the work of Paolo Bacigalupi, Octavia Butler, Emily St. John Mandel, Nnedi Okorafor, and Kim Stanley Robinson.

We seek proposals for a co-sponsored session with Religion and Disability that engages science-fictional imaginings of the dis/abled body in tandem with theories or tropes of religion and/or science fiction. We are receptive to a wide range of critical approaches that engage issues of disability in catastrophic situations like a post-apocalyptic world, alien invasion, or a pandemic.

Mission Statement:

This Unit connects the study of religion to the limitless possibilities for world-making, soul-saving, god-imagining, community-forming, and human-being posed by science fiction (and broadly, "speculative" fictions). Science Fiction (SF) is a literary and visual medium addressing the most basic existential and teleological questions human beings can pose. As the genre of infinite possible worlds and human and superhuman becoming, SF has a unique ability to ask, examine, and suggest answers to the most profound questions and to envision transcendence beyond traditional realist literature or religious interpretations of the world.

Chairs:

- Emanuelle Burton, University of Illinois, Chicago
emanuelle.burton@gmail.com
- Rudy V. Busto, University of California, Santa Barbara
rude@religion.ucsb.edu

Religion and Sexuality Unit

Call Text:

This year we are particularly interested in papers addressing and analyzing the following themes:

- Religion and sexuality on the border: e.g. in terms of the geographic location (e.g. US-Mexico border, Israel-Palestine, Russia-Ukraine, other contested land areas);

or in terms of other geographic, linguistic, political, epistemological, or disciplinary senses of 'the border'.

- The intersections of religion and sexuality in the work of Gloria Anzaldúa and Chicana feminist discourse.
- Recruitment of religion and sexuality in specific public policy debates, including topics such as: sexuality and religion and gun violence; sexuality in white nationalism; sexual and moral panics under the guise of 'religious freedom.'
- Religion and sexuality as technologies and/or technologies of religion and/or sexuality.

For a possible co-sponsorship with the Teaching Religion Unit, we seek papers exploring "Stifled Pedagogy: Teaching Religion and Sexuality in an Era of Censorship." We invite proposals that offer frameworks for understanding contemporary challenges within and outside the religious studies and theology classrooms, such as political challenges to reproductive rights, undermining of trans rights, debates about "divisive concepts" and "critical race theory," and academic freedom. How is teaching about religion informed by particular institutional, state-wide, or other restrictions or debates? What pedagogical and/or political strategies are worth considering in response to these realities? We especially welcome proposals that blend theoretical frameworks with practical or demonstrable cases.

For a possible co-sponsorship with the Afro-American Religious History Unit, we seek papers on African-American religion and so called "illicit" practices, specifically:

- Black religious communities, carceral systems, and the (de)criminalization of recreational substance use;
- Histories of African-American religion and narcotic use, broadly configured (ritual, recreational, medicinal, etc.);
- Black religious communities and religious activism in relation to the history of other practices criminalized or deemed illicit, especially sex work, pornography, and other practices related to religion and sexuality.

We also invite proposals that approach the presidential theme and academic work in religious studies in places unlike the academy from the perspective of 'religion and sexuality'.

Other proposals for papers, sessions, panels and/or book sessions in keeping with the general mission of the Unit are always welcome.

Mission Statement:

This Unit examines religion and sexuality, broadly conceptualized, and focuses on questions of why and how sex matters for particular religious persons, communities, or traditions. We welcome collaboration with other Program Units doing work in some area of sexuality. Distinguishing this Unit from other Program Units are an emphasis on empirical research and analysis and an intentionally multidisciplinary and comparative religious focus. We especially encourage interdisciplinary approaches, interest in gender (broadly defined), and strong attention to methodological issues. This unit is committed

to diversity and inclusivity; pre-arranged panels should reflect gender and racial/ethnic diversity as well as diversity of field, method, context, and scholarly rank as appropriate.

Chairs:

- Megan Robertson, Desmond Tutu Centre for Religion and Social Justice
mrobertson@uwc.ac.za
- Claudia Schippert, University of Central Florida
claudiaschippert@gmail.com

Religion and the Social Sciences Unit

Call Text:

The Religion and Social Sciences Unit (RSS) supports scholarship at the intersection of the social sciences and religious or theological studies. Topic areas include the study of religious and theological questions through specific social scientific methodologies, the integration of theological and social scientific approaches to the study of religious communities and practices, and comparative assessments of current issues by humanities-based and social scientific methods. As always, we welcome proposals related to these topics.

For the 2023 meeting in San Antonio, we are also especially interested in paper and/or panel proposals that offer social scientific methodological and/or theoretical analyses in regard to:

Translating Social Scientific Research on Religion for Social Policy and Practitioners

Connecting to the 2023 conference theme, “La Labor de Nuestras Manos” (“the work of our hands”), we invite papers exploring how social scientific research on religion can be or is translational for social policy and professional practitioners in fields such as social work, public health, medicine, law, and philanthropy. We are especially interested in papers that critically reflect on what it means to effectively translate scholarly work on religion so that it can be useful for specific groups/areas of practitioners on the ground, and also how the expertise and needs of practitioners can, or should, inform scholarly research.

Race, Religion, and Social Justice Movements

Also connecting to the 2023 conference theme “La Labor de Nuestras Manos” (“the work of our hands”), we invite papers using social science methods/theory that explore how religion and spirituality intersect with movements for social change, especially those confronting white supremacy, anti-Blackness, anti-Asian hate, anti-Muslim racism, and anti-Jewish racism. We are especially interested in how religion or spirituality are deployed by individuals and groups on the ground in quests for racial justice and equity, as well as intersectional movement work that seeks to address multiple and overlapping forms of injustice. Finally, we invite papers that compare different models and structures of activism or address changing modes of activism in response to the contemporary moment.

Myth, Conspiracy, and Religious and Scientific Authority

As the COVID-19 pandemic becomes endemic, so have anti-scientific myths and conspiracies. The politicization of the pandemic and normalization of conspiracy cults like QAnon have made apocalyptic logics and myths an entrenched feature of American political culture. We invite papers offering social scientific analyses of authoritative discourse in religion and science as it relates to myth, apocalypticism, and conspiracy in our current moment. Papers may also explore intersections between religious and scientific authority as well as how authority is legitimated and contested in the contemporary moment, both in the United States and transnationally.

Religion and the Mental Health Crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic gave rise to an unprecedented crisis of mental health care, leading to high levels of burnout among care providers and a shortage of mental health resources relative to need. We invite papers that offer social scientific analyses of how the mental health crisis has intersected with spirituality and with religious leaders, communities, and cultures. Examples might include, but are not limited to, clergy burnout and how the so-called “great resignation” has played out among clergy and religious leaders, how religious leaders and communities have addressed mental health needs in their congregations and communities, and the role of spirituality in mental health.

Religion, Secularity, and Humanitarianism (co-sponsored with the International Development and Religion Unit and the Political Theology Unit):

In his 2012 book *Humanitarian Reason*, Didier Fassin argues that the lasting presence of religion, specifically Christianity, can be seen in the ascendancy of humanitarian values in Western democratic societies. The primacy of “humanitarian reason,” Fassin contends, elevates the redemptive work of individual and state humanitarian actors and virtues of compassion and charity over the political actions, historical struggles, and subjectivities of those Howard Thurman calls the “disinherited.” This form of response to an unequal world order all too often reifies victimhood and dominant power relations, and commodifies/valorizes the suffering of “others.” Inspired by and in dialogue with Fassin’s work, we seek paper proposals that explore:

- Religious and/or secular (moral) logics of humanitarianism, including but not exclusive to Christianity
- How humanitarian discourse, ideals, and practices have been mobilized in specific contexts or within international development across space and time
- Contemporary faith-based or religiously-informed humanitarian movements and responses
- Relationship between humanitarianism and liberation/decolonial movements (and critiques)
- How humanitarian reason (and the valorization of suffering) gets taken up or contested in international development work
- Affective links between compassion and moral action
- Political theologies of humanitarianism

Religion in the Post-Dobbs Era (co-sponsored with the Bioethics and Religion Unit)

We invite papers/panels to address post-Dobbs abortion issues as ethical matters, reproductive justice, or other religious perspectives. This broad call can include consequences of the Dobbs decision on different religious and non-religious communities (e.g. patients of color, healthcare providers, religious communities), influences of religious communities on the Dobbs decision, responses to this decision by religious communities, and spiritual care for patients and healthcare providers who have experienced religious or other forms of marginalization from abortion experiences and abortion practices. The committee particularly welcomes papers/panels with social scientific approaches to these topics.

Social Scientific Research on Religion as Ethical Practice (co-sponsored with the Ethics Unit) We invite papers that explore intersections between social scientific research on religion and activism, solidarity, and social ethics. We are particularly interested in papers that analyze or use methods that challenge the researcher/subject relational frame, disrupt knowledge hierarchies, center the agency and epistemologies of communities outside of the academy, and/or explore how ethnographic methods influence ethical inquiry pursued in normative and/or descriptive modes. Examples of methods examined might include, but are not limited to, collaborative ethnography, participatory action research, and community-based participatory research.

Public Understanding of Religion (Co-sponsored with the Sociology of Religion Unit) Including applied sociology of religion, scholars' responsibilities to diverse publics, and more.

Mission Statement:

The Religion and Social Sciences Unit (RSS) supports scholarship at the intersection of the social sciences and religious or theological studies. Topic areas include the study of religious and theological questions through specific social scientific methodologies, the integration of theological and social scientific approaches to the study of religious communities and practices, and comparative assessments of current issues by humanities-based and social scientific methods. As always, we welcome proposals related to these topics.

Chairs:

- Rachel Schneider, Rice University
rsv2@rice.edu
- Sara Williams, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
sawilliams212@gmail.com

Religion in Europe Unit

Call Text:

This Unit analyzes religion in both Eastern and Western Europe or related to Europe (broadly defined) in any historical period. We encourage interdisciplinary, interreligious,

and comparative approaches, and we particularly welcome submissions from members of underrepresented groups in the Academy.

Religious nationalism has developed into one of the central topics of religious and political debate in the United States and across Europe. For the 2023 meeting, we seek proposals related to the overarching theme of "Religion and Nation - European Perspectives", especially related to the following specific calls:

- For a co-sponsored session with the Religion and Politics Unit:
The rise of right-wing political groups across Europe - as seen for example in the October 2022 election of Giorgia Meloni in Italy, or the December 2022 attempted coup in Germany - has served as a reminder of the importance of understanding how religion informs the goals and grievances of the European right. We seek papers that explore the various ways that religion and/or religious narratives inform and intersect with these political movements, whether in the form of religious nationalism, narratives against particular religious traditions (i.e. Islam, Judaism), or alternatively, within responses to the European right. In particular, we invite papers that form the basis for comparisons across Europe and/or in conversation with perspectives from the United States context.
- For a co-sponsored session with the Contemporary Pagan Studies Unit:
We invite papers that examine varieties of religious nationalism in the contemporary world which are inspired by historical or imagined links to European histories of Christianity or to pre-Christian Paganisms. We welcome studies of diverse geographical contexts in order to spark a conversation about the intersections of race, religious identity, political ideology, and collective memory.
- For a co-sponsored session with the Schleiermacher Unit and the Political Theology Unit:
Modern Jewish and modern Christian thought have developed in close interaction, mutually influencing one another's understandings not only of ethics, revelation, and religious community, but also emerging conceptions of national identity. With an eye toward the AAR's 2023 theme of *La Labor de Nuestras Manos* and the need for revisiting public understandings of religion, this session invites paper or panel proposals reflecting on points of ongoing dialogue, divergence, and debate regarding the Jewish and Protestant Enlightenments and emerging notions of nationalism in modern Jewish and Christian thought, pertaining not only to the US but also to European contexts. Such proposals might consider:
 - Jewish and Christian conceptions of national identity and the modern state, especially within or in comparison to European contexts
 - The Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment) and national identity
 - The mutual influence between the Haskalah and modern Christian thought (e.g. Friedrich Schleiermacher)
 - The persistence of antisemitism in contemporary politics, in overt and implicit forms
 - The relevance of modern Jewish and Christian thought for understanding

white nationalism today

- Author-meets-critics panel on [Coping with Defeat](#):
 - Jonathan Laurence's 2021 book, *Coping with Defeat: Sunni Islam, Roman Catholicism, and the Modern State*, traces the surprising similarities in the rise and fall of the Sunni Islamic and Roman Catholic empires in the face of the modern state and considers how centralized religions make peace with the loss of prestige. In reflecting on this rich and multi-dimensional book, we welcome scholarly responses to, critiques of, or engagements with *Coping with Defeat*. Proposals should indicate a desire to participate on this specific panel and need only briefly outline the disciplinary, methodological, and/or scholarly perspective of the proposed response, critique, and/or engagement with the book.

We also welcome proposals beyond these themes, especially proposals for complete pre-arranged sessions related to Europe, broadly interpreted. Successful sessions will reflect gender and racial/ethnic diversity, as well as diversity of field, method, and scholarly rank as appropriate.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is designed to serve as a forum for scholarly dialogue on religious issues related to the social, cultural, and political contexts of both Eastern and Western Europe to help guide critical conversations about Europe and its global entanglements. Our 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 European-related experiences.

Chairs:

- Carol Ferrara, Boston University
carol_ferrara@emerson.edu
- John McCormack, Aurora University
jmccormack@aurora.edu

Religion in Premodern Europe and the Mediterranean Unit

Call Text:

We welcome proposals on all topics related to the Unit's subject matter, broadly conceived. Proposals that are themselves comparative in nature or that present novel approaches to the study of premodern religion are particularly welcome. We encourage the submission of preformed panel proposals suitable for 90-minute time slots. We also encourage the submission of individual paper proposals for panels on the following subjects:

Teach this Image (Co-sponsored with the Arts, Literature and Religion Unit)

This session will be oriented towards how we use images and material objects in pedagogy. Contributors would pick an image (or crafted piece of any kind - liturgical implement, garment, mask, sculpture, relief, amulet, architectural site or feature), that has been useful in teaching and examine or describe its pedagogical use and what the object

has been fruitful to illuminate. The images should be selected from things easily available since the session is envisioned as a way of sharing resources. To include more papers we request shorter talks (8-12 minutes).

Intersecting Narratives: Religious, Political, and Personal Stories

This session will explore how Christian, Muslim, and Jewish stories intersect and influence each other. It starts with the assumption that narratives are useful to think with because they allow study of the way the social and the self are contiguous; they establish the grounds for thinking of the present in relation to the past, and religions in relation to one another. When stories move between religious traditions, how do they change? In what ways might such translation re-present public or private perceptions of a situation, or articulate different conceptions of the self and the social?

Author Meets Critics: Leah DeVun *The Shape of Sex*

We plan an Author-meets-Critics session to discuss Leah DeVun's new important book, *The Shape of Sex: Nonbinary Gender from Genesis to the Renaissance* (Columbia, 2021) While we may invite some panelists, we are also interested in soliciting abstracts from potential respondents interested in issues of gender and sexuality in the different religious traditions of pre-modern Europe and the Mediterranean.

Mission Statement:

This Unit aims to bring together scholars working on premodern Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in order to create a venue in which religious phenomena can be considered comparatively. Individual papers may be embedded in a single tradition, but presenters should be interested in engaging this material comparatively during the discussion period.

Chairs:

- Claire Fanger, Rice University
claire@celestiscuria.org
- Lora Walsh, University of Arkansas
ljwalsh@uark.edu

Religion in Southeast Asia Unit

Call Text:

The Religion in Southeast Asia Program Unit at the American Academy of Religion invites proposals for individual papers, paper sessions, and roundtables. For those interested in proposing organized paper sessions, we would encourage you to consider a 90-minute session with pre-circulated papers. (This can be indicated in your panel proposal.)

We invite proposals on all topics. Here are some topics generated at our 2022 business meeting:

- New media (with a possible focus on gender and sexuality)
- Emerging voices (i.e. recent dissertations, PhD projects, postdoctoral work)

- New approaches to comparative religion through Islam and Buddhism
- Southeast Asian Christianity
- Translation
- Religion and the law

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.

Chairs:

- Etin Anwar, Hobart and William Smith Colleges
anwar@hws.edu
- Alexandra Kaloyanides, University of North Carolina, Charlotte
akaloyan@uncc.edu

Religion, Affect, and Emotion Unit

Call Text:

The Religion, Affect, and Emotion program unit is hosting a “shadow conference”: several sessions which highlight the below-the-grid content of the AAR’s usual formal presentations and content. We are interested in proposals on the following topics that lean into the personal/subjective/anecdotal, especially as it relates to the experiences and conditions of academic life -- and potentially as it is entwined with the content of presenters’ expertise. Proposals should be focused on the affective dimensions of the following topics and themes, but do not need to speak explicitly to formal theories of affect.

We welcome the playful bending of usual presentation norms and forms. In particular, we hope to build one or more “Lightning Sessions” made up of 5-8-minute papers. Please indicate in your proposal if you are open to being included for consideration in this format.

Labor

What does academic labor feel like right now?

Prompts/suggestions: Wild, extended metaphors; grainy sociological or anthropological descriptions; structural affective diagnoses with deep particularity; explorations of contingency and precarity; consideration of institutional contexts of labor.

Exhaustion/fatigue

We are all very tired.

Prompts/suggestions: Phenomenologies of “tired.” The particular exhaustions of illness, impairment, disablement, and debilitations. Ruminations on energy and sleep.

Ruminations on stagnation and stuckness. Affective dimensions of crip time.

Note: Given sufficient interest, this topic would be co-sponsored with the Religion and Disability unit.

Creativity

What is your creative life right now? Or where has it gone?

Prompts/suggestions: the tensions and overlaps between labor and creativity; creativity in late capitalist academic life; dreams, craft, and academic life; creativity and aliveness/eros; creativity and resistance; creativity in/from debility; creativity as care work/care work as creative work.

Separately, we are interested in proposals which explore the *limits* of affect theories as they have been articulated and imagined thus far. What epistemological, ethical, philosophical, other conundrums have emerged in relationship to the theorizing on affect? What are some constructive re-imaginings, revisions, or expansions might be possible?

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides space for theoretically-informed discussion of the relationship between religion, affect, and emotion. The Unit serves as a meeting point for conversations on the affective, noncognitive, and passional dimensions of religion coming from diverse fields, including anthropology, comparative religion, psychology, decolonial theory, gender and sexuality studies, cultural studies, philosophy, and theology. Proposals drawing on these theoretical resources to examine specific religious traditions, shifting historical understandings of religion and affect/emotion, comparative work that looks at affective forms across traditions, and broader theoretical reflections are all welcome.

Chairs:

- Maia Kotrosits, University of Waterloo
maiakotrosits@gmail.com
- Marvin Wickware, Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago
marvin.wickware@lstc.edu

Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Unit

Call Text:

In addition to general papers and proposals dealing with religion, colonialism, and post-colonialism, we invite papers on the following topics:

- Space, place, and geography in post and decolonial theory, especially but not limited to the consideration of borderlands, for a possible co-sponsorship with the Space, Race, and Religion Unit.
- Critical interrogation of the concepts of the postcolonial and decolonial in the study of religion. We welcome papers that track how scholars of religion have taken up the postcolonial and decolonial, and to what end.

Imagining and Playing the Postcolonial Fantastic: Religion, Post-Colonialism, and Speculative Fiction

We are inviting proposals that bring together postcolonialism, speculative fiction, and the radical imagination. We are particularly interested in contributions that deal with forms not traditionally examined, like analog role-playing games, performance art, and other interactive experiences.

Author(s)-Meet-Critics: Book Panel

We are also planning to have another book panel in 2023, after the successful panels on books by Birgit Meyer, Richard King, Pamela Klassen/Jennifer Graber, Chris Driscoll/Monica Miller, J. Brent Crosson, Choi Hee An, and Tisa Wenger/Sylvester Johnson in the past. Submissions of full panels on a recently published book touching on issues of colonialism and postcolonialism are also welcome, but please contact the co-chairs beforehand if you are interested in developing a book panel with our Unit. Among the books we are investigating for 2023 are la paperson's "A Third University Is Possible" and An Yountae's "The Coloniality of the Secular: Race, Religion, and Poetics of World Making".

Thank you for considering sending a proposal to the Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Unit and we look forward to seeing you in person again in San Antonio.

Please note that the Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism Unit is deeply committed to inclusion and diversity. Please ensure that any full panel proposals are sensitive in their consideration of a plurality of gendered and racialized voices.

Mission Statement:

This Unit presents an opportunity for scholars in various subfields of religious studies to explore a topic whose relevance cuts across specializations. We bring together scholars treating different time periods, geographical regions, and traditions in working to strengthen our field's role in the study of empire, colonialism, and postcolonialism.

Chairs:

- Kathy Chow, Yale University
kathy.chow@yale.edu
- Adrian Hermann, University of Bonn

adrian.hermann@uni-bonn.de

Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Unit

Call Text:

The Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Unit invites proposals on the following topics. Please note we are committed to diversity and thus strongly encourage the use of world cinema and global visual culture products as well as the gender and ethnic diversity of participants. Additionally, we expect presenters to incorporate visual media in presentations and ask that all proposals indicate how visuals will be used. We also ask that proposals be clear about their theoretical and methodological approaches and perspectives.

2023 Themes and Topics:

- Kyrie, Kanye, and the visuality of sports/music (Co-Sponsorship with Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop and Religion unit)
- Individual papers, panels, or roundtables that re-consider Barbra Streisand as icon and director, including revisiting the themes of gender, religion, race, sexuality, and class in her films (potential co-sponsorship with the Queer Studies and Study of Judaism Units)

We invite proposals exploring:

- Video Gaming and/as Pedagogy
- Borders/Borderland
- 100 Years of Disney and Warner (Co-sponsorship with History of Christianity unit)

On the centennial of the founding of Disney and Warner Bros., we invite proposals that examine the telling or narration of Christian history through film and popular culture

Book Panel

We seek creative panels focused on key scholarly monographs on the subject of religion, film, and visual culture published in 2022 or 2023. These panels can take the form of critical reviews, generative roundtables responses, prompts for further exploration, author dialogue, and more. Be sure to include a brief summary of the book and clearly delineate its significance and relevance for the study of religion, film, and visual culture. Outline how the participants will contribute to a broad conversation on the subject and advance the book's arguments and conclusions.

Mission Statement:

This Unit offers a forum for theory and methodology of the visual for those interested in the interdisciplinary study of religion, film, and visual culture. There is no single way to study religion and the visual, and we expect scholars to provide new perspectives on the way we understand visual culture and to provide this understanding through traditional and emerging methodologies.

Chairs:

- Kutter Callaway, Fuller Theological Seminary
kuttercallaway@fuller.edu
- Rebecca Moody, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
rmoody@wpi.edu

Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Unit**Call Text:**

The Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Unit is committed to diversity and inclusivity. Pre-arranged panels should reflect gender and racial/ethnic diversity as well as diversity of field, method, and scholarly rank as appropriate.

- Co-sponsored with the Indigenous Religious Traditions Unit and the Native Traditions in the Americas Unit, we seek proposals that address the genocidal aspects of European colonialism by historically linking or comparing the genocide of Indigenous Peoples, US Slavery, and the Holocaust. This approach may include an explicit assessment of or engagement with Raoul Peck's [Exterminate All the Brutes](#)—which he describes as tracing the origins of white supremacy through historically linking the genocide of Native Americans, US Slavery, and the Holocaust—or any comparative historical or conceptual analysis between any of these two atrocities. A comparison that includes a case of a genocide of Indigenous Peoples is of particular interest.
- Co-sponsored with the Comparative Religious Ethics Unit, we invite papers that explore the experiences of religious minorities in mass atrocities. Topics may include, but are not limited to: the logics of the persecution of religious minorities; the role of religious ethics in rescue behavior of or by religious minorities; and the ethics governing post-atrocity processes among religious minorities, such as theodicies, reconciliation, and healing rituals.
- We invite proposals that critically reflect on popular media formats and technologies—such as podcasts, virtual reality, holograms, films, and video games—that seek to educate the wider public on genocides.
- We seek proposals that engage the various (and at times, conflicting) definitions of modern antisemitism and recent observations of the mainstreaming of antisemitism.

Mission Statement:

The term “genocide” was coined by Raphael Lemkin in 1944, and in 1948 the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. In this context, our Unit treats prominent atrocities of the twentieth century, but topics of interest extend before and after this period as well beyond the legal definition of genocide. This Unit addresses religious aspects of genocidal conflicts, other mass atrocities, and human rights abuses that have made a deep and lasting impact on society, politics, and international affairs. Unit interests also include

instructivelessons

and reflections that Holocaust and Genocide Studies can lend to illuminating other human rights violations and instances of mass violence and the construal of genocide within a human rights violation spectrum that allows for the study of neglected or ignored conflicts that include a salient religious element. Our work is interdisciplinary and includes scholars from fields including History, Ethics, Theology, Philosophy, Jewish Studies, Church History, Anthropology, Political Science, Gender Studies, and regional area studies of Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East.

Chairs:

- Benjamin Sax, Institute for Islamic, Christian, and Jewish Studies
bsax@icjs.org
- David Tollerton, University of Exeter
d.c.tollerton@exeter.ac.uk

Religion, Media, and Culture Unit

Call Text:

The Religion, Media, and Culture Unit invites individual presentations, paper/multimedia research presentation sessions, and roundtable proposals on the following themes:

- religious understandings of crypto/currency as religious currency
- media materiality and infrastructure: waste, e-waste, recycling, remediation, and discard
- digital apocalypse: platform outages, demise of Twitter and other online spaces, disappearing archives; or more broadly, apocalyptic thought online
- religion, media and place: pilgrimage, GIS mapping, Google Earth, virtual reality, the metaverse
- religious dating apps, marketing of religious dating apps
- religion apps and digital surveillance: data mining and selling, productivity and spirituality apps as capitalist spirituality
- the role of non-institutionalized media consumers in shaping content and culture of media
- first person shooter manifestos, auteurism, and the role of digital transcendence
- hashtags and ritualization, memorialization, and ethnography (#BlackLivesMatter, #IGotOut, etc)
- AI Art
- state of the field/critical methods and new directions in the study of religion and media

RMC is committed to diversity and inclusivity. Pre-arranged panels should reflect gender and racial/ethnic diversity as well as diversity of field, method, and scholarly rank as appropriate. We strongly prefer papers that include audio/visual media and ask that proposals make use of media clear. We are also particularly interested in session proposals and presentations that break from traditional paper-reading formats. We encourage panels that propose innovative ways to develop collaborative conversation, especially those that allow for timely analysis of current events.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a multidisciplinary forum for exploring the intersections between media and religion. Areas of interest include the participation of religion in digital culture, mediation of religion, the interplay between religious and media communities and between religious and media practices, and the significance of both media and religion in the transformation of religious structures and practices.

Chairs:

- Kathryn Reklis, Fordham University
kathryn.reklis@aya.yale.edu
- Deborah Whitehead, University of Colorado
deborah.whitehead@colorado.edu

Religion, Sport, and Play Unit**Call Text:**

The sporting arena is often thought of as an apolitical sight. Seemingly outside of the

realm of sociohistorical forces, players simply play a game predicated on following rules and competing fairly. Yet to the contrary, sport has never been this alone—it is frequently the place where contentious political issues are laid bare, disputed, and left unresolved.

This call seeks proposals that address the role that religion plays or has played in political expression through sport.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Geopolitical antagonism at global sporting events
- “Sportswashing” in the context of postcolonialism
- Athlete complicity and activism relating to social (in)justice
- Equality and discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation
- The prominence and limitations of partisan politics
- Personal experience and autoethnography
- Rules and procedures involving vaccinations, hormone standards, and/or performance enhancement
- Separation of “Church and State” at public school sporting events

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides an opportunity for scholars to engage in emerging research at the intersection of religion and sport, games, and play. We are interested in examining these topics across broad geographical areas, religious traditions, and historical eras. We encourage critical reflection regarding relationships of religious institutions to sport, play, and games; theological and spiritual experiences of participants and spectators invested in these activities; and the cross-cultural applicability of the received categories.

Chairs:

- Jeffrey Scholes, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs

jscholes@uccs.edu

● Kimberly Diaz, University of California, Riverside
kdiaz038@ucr.edu

Religions in the Latina/o Americas Unit

Call Text:

The Religions in Latina/o Americas Unit is interested in individual paper and pre-arranged panel proposals that advance interdisciplinary and theoretically innovative analyses of religiosities and spiritualities in the Latina/o/x Americas. This includes work focused on particular geographical locations within Latin America, Latin American diasporic communities in the United States and Canada, transnational and hemispheric studies that challenge state structured divisions, as well as thematic & theoretical work that engages Latina/o/x imaginaries. We welcome studies related to any time period across all disciplines and methodologies. Additionally, we are interested in paper and panel proposals related to the list of topics below, as well book panels, “new format sessions,” and emerging scholarship panels. We also seek individual paper proposals for our co-sponsored session. Please note: When submitting your proposal, please identify the proposal as either an INDIVIDUAL or PANEL proposal, and please indicate whether you would like to be considered for our co-sponsored panel or an emerging scholarship panel.

This year, we encourage submissions related to the presidential theme, LA LABOR DE NUESTRAS MANOS and papers that engage the location of San Antonio, Tejas/Texas.

In addition, we are especially interested in papers and panels that address the following topics in relation to religion in the Latina/o/e Americas and Latinx diasporic communities everywhere:

- Labor Histories and contemporary realities of labor in Texas
- Re-living and Re-thinking “Apocalypse” in the Context of the Americas: Resources for Embracing Our Uncertain Future
- New Religious Movements and latinx religion
- Eco-spiritualities and Eco-philosophies and in the Latinx Americas
- Tejano Religion
- Borders, migration, Texas
- Religion, authoritarianism in Latin America
- The impact of COVID-19 in Latin America and on Latinx communities, as well as responses to the global pandemic
- Latinx futurisms
- Alternate temporalities, narratives of historicity, and conceptions of the relationship between time and space in Latina/o/e/x histories, presents, and futures
- Latina/o/e/x studies and communities and post-humanist thought
- Latina/o/e/x communities and climate change
- Critical archive studies

- The politics of translation

- Indigenous language studies, recovery, and preservation
- Embodiment/disembodiment, virtual space, and community
- African diasporic communities in the Latina/o/e/x Americas
- Indigenous communities, including transnational communities and connections
- Latinx and Latin American queer studies
- The Spanish speaking Caribbean and Latinx Caribbean communities in the US

We also invite proposals for the following co-sponsored panel:

The Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society, Religion in the Latina/o Americas, and the Religion in the Americas program units invite proposals that explore the sociopolitical relevance of Brazilian Protestantism by engaging *Protesting Poverty: Protestants, Social Ethics, and the Poor in Brazil* by Raimundo Barreto (Baylor Press, 2022). In this watershed publication, Barreto contends that “progressive Evangélicx Christianity, a branch of Brazilian Christianity that combines charismatic spirituality and sociopolitical progressive action, offers valuable sources for Christian social ethics in contemporary Brazil” (publisher’s description). This session welcomes proposals that consider the implications of *Protesting Poverty* for our understanding of Latinx and Latin American religions. We seek submissions that explore the transnational dimensions and material implications of a progressive Brazilian Protestant social ethic. Panelists should seek to highlight how religious communities develop and deploy liberative practices, strategies, or theories to contest global systems of exploitation.

Prearranged Panel Sessions

In addition to accepting INDIVIDUAL paper proposals, our unit will also consider PANEL proposals, which usually consist of 3-4 presenters, along with a moderator and a respondent. In addition to prearranged panel proposals related to our general call and areas of particular interest this year, we also encourage proposals for book panel sessions and emerging scholarship sessions.

Book Panel Sessions

These sessions work best when 2-3 authors work together to propose a panel with a single, overarching theme. Each panelist should submit an individual proposal that refers to the larger theme, and the panel as a whole should determine ahead of time who the respondent(s) will be. These “New Book” sessions are meant not merely to highlight the merits of each book, but, more substantially, to serve as springboards for a larger group discussion (i.e., What broader issues are raised by placing the books in conversation with one another?)

Emerging Scholarship Session

We encourage 1) doctoral students and recent Ph.D. graduates working in the area of the Latina/o Americas who 2) have never presented at the national AAR meeting to submit papers. To apply, upload your individual paper proposal in the AAR’s PAPERS system, explicitly labeling it as an “Emerging Scholarship” submission.

All participants accepted to the program must be current AAR members and must register for the Annual Meeting. Membership waivers are available to participants working outside the field of the study of religion or participants from developing nations. Contact the program Unit chair for more details on how to arrange a waiver.

Questions may be directed to the group's co-chairs.

Mission Statement:

This Unit fosters interdisciplinary and theoretically innovative analyses of Latina/o and Latin American religiosities and spiritualities in the Americas. We explore the richness and diversity of religious traditions in Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States, highlighting the complex and often explosive relations between religion and politics in the region, the centrality of religion in the Americas since pre-Conquest times, and the global significance of religious events and lived religion in the region. Our goal is to advance knowledge and ways of knowing that expand traditional areas of religious studies throughout the Americas, mindful of transnational and global realities. Thus, we encourage studies that explore non-Western beliefs and practices, including the indigenous, the African diasporic, Buddhist, and Islamic, as well as those that advance more complex understanding of culturally hybrid Christianities. We encourage feminist- and queer-centered perspectives as well as thought rooted in community experience. Diverse disciplinary and methodological perspectives are highlighted in presentation of this scholarship.

Chairs:

- Jessica Delgado, Ohio State University
delgado.92@osu.edu
- Daisy Vargas, University of Arizona
daisyvargas@email.arizona.edu

Religions, Medicines, and Healing Unit

Call Text:

The Religions, Medicines, and Healing Unit welcomes paper and/or panel proposals that explore specific intersections of religious and other healing traditions and practices. Proposals should address the social context of the topic, as well as theoretical and analytical frameworks, such as how this analysis helps us to understand religions, medicine, and healing in new ways. For 2023, we welcome any proposal that addresses our goals, and we have a particular interest in the following themes:

- Justice for Healing, Healing for Justice: This broad theme is open to a variety of submissions, including different modes of justice and forms of healing ranging from individual to collective, institutional, cultural, or historical. Topics may include, but are not limited to, justice and healing in relation to immigration and migration, trauma and abuse, decolonization and reparations (ex. Federal Indian Boarding Schools and reparations for African descendants). We are especially

interested in papers that examine religious traditions, practices, rituals, worldviews, etc. as resources for justice-related healing or healing-related justice, as well as ways that religious actors, practices, and moral frameworks have intensified the need for healing and justice.

- Care and healing as “the work of our hands”: *a co-sponsored call with the Religion and Disability Studies Unit and the Class, Religion, and Theology Unit*. How might caregiving, care work, and healing be best represented in religious studies scholarship? What current pitfalls or potential surround care and healing as both concrete practices and academic subjects? How has care been politicized or depoliticized in academic discourse pertaining to disability specifically? Who does care labor (paid and unpaid), who pays for its paid forms, how does this economic organization of care labor affect both the receivers and the providers of care labor – and how does this all relate to religious practices or thought, especially in regards to disability and/or healing?
- Chaplains and “Spiritual Care” in Healthcare Settings – *A co-sponsored call with the Innovations in Chaplaincy & Spiritual Care Unit: Wendy Cadge’s Spiritual Care: The Everyday Work of Chaplains* (OUP 2022) adds to a growing body of studies about chaplaincy from scholars of religion. Her work examines chaplains as “America’s hidden religious leaders,” contextualizing the spiritual care of chaplains within their diverse religious and workplace ecologies. For this session, we are particularly interested in her contributions regarding chaplaincy in its multiple relations to healthcare settings. We are seeking engagements with this book from a wide range of perspectives—from various scholarly disciplines to direct engagements with embedded practices—as well as from a wide range of voices, including scholars and practitioners, a diversity of religious backgrounds and identities, and multiple viewpoints on the nature of healing and of spiritual care. We are also interested in some panelists addressing how we teach Cadge’s work or train future healthcare professionals about religion and the role of chaplains in light of her contributions.

Graduate Student Award

Graduate students are the future of our profession and contribute substantially to the success of the Religions, Medicines, and Healing Unit by delivering papers based on original research. Through the RMH Graduate Student Paper Award, we recognize this contribution and encourage outstanding research by students. Papers will be evaluated for their originality, appropriate use of sources, and the quality of writing. Eligible students must:

- be actively enrolled in a doctoral program and pursuing a research topic in any discipline related to Religions, Medicines, and Healing;
- have had a paper accepted by the RMH Unit for presentation at the 2023 Annual Meeting;
- have indicated when submitting their proposal that they are applying for the award. Further instructions will be emailed after proposal acceptance.

The Religions, Medicines, and Healing Unit is committed to the value of diversity, equity,

and social justice in our standards of excellence. For pre-arranged panels, we especially

welcome proposals that reflect diversity of gender, ethnicity, race, field, method, and scholarly rank and directly address such within the proposal.

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.

Chairs:

- Kyrah Malika Daniels, Emory University
kyrah.malika.daniels@emory.edu
- Kristy Slominski, University of Arizona
kristy.slominski@gmail.com

Religions, Social Conflict, and Peace Unit

Call Text:

Panel I: Whose Peace? Interrogating and Reconfiguring Religion and the Study of Peace
The field of study called religion and the practices of peace or religion and peacebuilding has been incorporated into policy fields, especially after September 11, 2001. The “mainstreaming” of religion also reflected the discursive trends of neoliberalism and the securitizing of “bad” religion. This mainstreaming presented itself as “postsecular” while mainly being inattentive to the critical study of religion as an anthropological comparative category deeply implicated in histories of colonialism, imperialism, and neocolonialism. We seek papers that will robustly stretch the conversation. Proposals for “whose Peace? Interrogating and Reconfiguring the Study of Religion and the Study

of Peace” can focus on the following topics (not an exhaustive list) through case studies and/or conceptually:

- De-centering European Christianity in the study of religion and peace
- The industry of religion and peacebuilding
- Coloniality of peace, decoloniality of war
- Religion and the critique of the liberal peace
- Interfaith movements and peace: Possibilities and Limits.
- Religion, Peace, and Restorative Justice
- Religion and the Aftermath of Genocides
- Religion and Political Justice
- Public Policy and Peace: Possibilities, Lacunas, and Limits.
- Global South Approaches to Peace
- Manipulations of Religion for Peace
- Religion, Political Violence, and Transitional Justice
- Religion, and political futures
- Indigenous approaches to peacebuilding
- The political grammar of peace (paz, salam, shalom, frieden, pace...)
- Religion and prophetic social movements
- Anarchisms, socialisms, and communalisms on Peace: Possibilities and limits.

Panel II: Religion and Social Protest Across the Globe

The Religion, Social Conflicts, and Peace Unit seeks proposals that interrogate Religion and Social Protests from a global and intersectional perspective. We are interested in discussing the convergences of social, political, and religious forces in disrupting the convergences of neoliberalism, anti-Muslim racism, anti-LGBTQI+ communities, and Christianity or the deployment of a racialized “Christian identity” to preserve hegemonies. We welcome papers on the following topics:

- Religion and resistance to neo-fascism in Europe (Italy, Spain, Hungary, etc.).
- Religion and social justice coalition building in the time of Trumpism
- Religious responses to the intersection of religion and racism globally
- Religion and Global Movements for Black Lives
- Religion and Indigenous Protest in Settler-Colonies.
- Interfaith Movements of Protest
- Religion and Labor Protests
- Religion and Immigrant Protests.
- Religion and Protest post-Covid.

Panel III: Title: “Gender, Sexuality, and Protest: The Iranian Protests and Beyond”

Co-sponsors: Liberation Theologies unit; Religion, Social Conflict, and Peace unit; Women and Religion unit, Political Theology unit

The 2022 protests in Iran over the death of Mahsa Amini while in custody of the country’s ‘guidance control’ (or, ‘morality police’) represent a new experience in the voice of youth, especially women, in articulating religious and secular theories of resistance. Its practical and intellectual impact continues to be felt in Iran and globally, especially

through the amplification of the Kurdish protest slogan “Women, Life, Freedom!”. This

session is dedicated to understanding the dynamics of gender and sexuality in activism and political change. Proposals are encouraged that touch on the role of women in protest with regards to the movement in Iran and internationally, as well as gender, women and the public role of the religious/secular at large. Other possible areas include:

- Gender and sexuality as lens to think about protest, globally
- The relationship between protest and religion
- Non-oppositional ways of considering “loyalty” and “dissent”

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.

Chairs:

- Atalia Omer, University of Notre Dame
aomer1@nd.edu
- Santiago H. Slabodsky, Hofstra University
santiago.slabodsky@hofstra.edu

Religious Conversions Unit

Call Text:

The Religious Conversions Unit welcomes individual papers or full paper/panel session proposals (with a preference for the latter) on any topic related to religious conversion, including, but not limited to the following topics in which the Religious Conversions Unit is especially interested in featuring at the 2023 annual meeting. We are particularly interested in papers and panels that challenge established understandings of the category of “conversion” and push the study of conversion in new directions.

Conversion, schism and sexuality. Debates within and among religious communities over sexuality have been the occasion for schism within denominations and sects, and deconversion out of them, as seen most recently in the departure of several thousand

individual churches from the 30,000-church strong United Methodist Church. At the same time, sexuality, broadly construed, has itself been a motivating force in the reconstruction of sexual identity and sense of belonging for many individuals. We are seeking papers that take up the conjuncture of conversion and sexuality at the individual or collective level.

Conversion of land and space. How can the category of “conversion” be productively applied to the conversion of land, buildings and/or space from one use to another? Contributions could consider the conversion of undeveloped land to agriculture, industry or mining, the conversion of religious structures such as churches and synagogues to breweries and nightclubs in secularizing societies, the conversion of religious structures from one religion to another or conflicts over the conversion of sacred indigenous land to secular purposes.

Religious transformation in global perspective/Decolonizing Conversion. “Conversion” is a category with deep roots in Christian, specifically Protestant, thought and culture. How well or poorly does it apply to varieties of religious transformation in different religious and cultural contexts? What do we mean by “conversion” in diverse socio-historical contexts beyond U.S. based Christianity?

We also have a possible preplanned session to mark the 15th Anniversary of Carolyn Chen’s classic in conversion studies, *Getting Saved in America: Taiwanese Immigration and Religious Experience*, for which we are not seeking proposals.

Mission Statement:

This Unit studies the full spectrum of issues related to religious conversions, in any historical or geographic context, encompassing different forms of religious belief and practice. The scope of the issues we cover is broad and wide-ranging. We consider investigations into the reasons for various types of religious conversions including, but not limited to intellectual, theological, philosophical, historical, experiential, psychological, social, cultural, political, and economic causes. We also study the consequences of religious conversions, both individually and socially, and their implications. We encourage the methodologies of multiple disciplines, as well as interdisciplinary approaches. More narrowly focused areas of inquiry suggested by interested scholars include, but are not limited to the following:

- Multiple conversions
- Group and individual conversions
- Forced conversions
- The narrative and/or literary aspects of conversions
- Deconversions
- 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)

Chairs:

- Eliza Kent, Skidmore College
ekent@skidmore.edu
- Edith Szanto, University of Alabama
eszanto@ua.edu

Ritual Studies Unit**Call Text:**

The Ritual Studies Unit invites individual papers and full panel proposals from a variety of religious and cultural traditions exploring ritual in various local and transnational contexts. Proposals should engage with ritual theory in some way. We are interested in sessions that experiment with new formats favoring increased interaction and discussion and we particularly encourage papers/presentations that involve actually doing ritual practices.

Whenever possible, our sessions will be formatted to encourage interaction and group discussion on the basis of concise, pre-circulated papers of no more than five pages submitted for circulation by October 15, 2023. Because at least 30 minutes of every session will be reserved for discussion, presentation times will vary in accordance with the number of speakers in the session.

This year, we are especially interested in proposals addressing issues relating to uncomfortable aspects of ritual. Possible themes include: organic and inorganic ritual remains and leftovers, memorabilia, swag, and so forth, the discovery of disturbing ritual procedures, awkwardness, mistakes, and boredom, conflict as a constitutive dynamic of ritual, and the ways ritual practices can act to formulate or promote conspiracy and sorcery (historical and contemporary).

We also welcome papers that explore unsettling aspects of ritual solidarity. Not only do ritual affirmations of identity generally imply a more or less violent exclusion of others, and/or the reinforcement of gender or other hierarchies, they are often strikingly ambivalent for the participants themselves. The solidarities rituals enact may be felt to be overly simplified, inherently problematic or out of sync with the personal realities and/or social conditions of those concerned. Moreover, such ambiguities are not necessarily the result of recent, rapid cultural change, but may be an inherent feature of ceremonial practice itself.

In line with the 2023 Presidential Theme, “La Labor de Los Manos,” the Ritual Studies and Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society (ANARCS) program units are seeking papers or panel sessions focused on analyses of rituals in Asian American religions, or Asian American communities. We invite papers dealing with rituals in Asian American diasporic communities from a variety of possible perspectives, such as the ways certain religious rituals have been adapted for non-religious settings, the processes whereby rituals reinforce or challenge gender, class, generational, sexual, or racial hierarchies, the potentially divisive qualities of certain ceremonial practices, etc.

Within the framework of a co-sponsored session with the Space, Place and Religion Unit, we also invite papers focusing on ritual and circular space in different religious and cultural traditions. What shared attentions, patterned interactions, processes of

inclusion/exclusion, etc., do circular ritual spaces put into effect? How are such dynamics affected by matters of scale, by the means used to produce the circular spaces in question, by a presence or not of something in the center of the circle?

As always, we also invite papers that engage with the “ritual theory canon.” Relevant papers may be purely theoretical or inspired by particular case studies; they may offer new approaches to understanding and utilizing “canonical” ritual theorists or propose new theoretical resources for ritual studies scholarship. We are particularly interested in the theme of sacrifice as a core element of ritual theory, and in pedagogical strategies and experiences as they relate to issues of ritual theory.

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a unique venue for the interdisciplinary exploration of ritual – broadly understood to include rites, ceremonies, religious and secular performances, and other ritual processes – in their many and varied contexts, and from a range of theoretical and methodological perspectives.

Chairs:

- Michael Houseman, École Pratique des Hautes Études
jmichaelhouseman@gmail.com
- Joy Palacios, University of Calgary
joypalacios@gmail.com

Sacred Texts and Ethics Unit

Call Text:

The Sacred Texts and Ethics Unit invites proposals from scholars and/or activists that closely analyze the use of sacred and foundational religious texts, including commentaries, in ethical or political discourse (either contemporary or historical). We welcome individual papers and panel proposals from all religious traditions and methodologies, including constructive ethical reflection with a textual basis.

Proposals on all topics are welcome. We are particularly interested in the following topics:

- In conversation with the presidential theme, how do scholars of religion and theology approach the study of ethical concerns through sacred texts differently? What assumptions and approaches do they share?
- How do political or protest movements (contemporary or historical), from any tradition, employ scripture to make their case?
- Taking a pedagogical turn, what are some best practices and innovative approaches to teaching sacred texts and ethics as part of broader sequences in the humanities?

We are also planning a **roundtable** on the ethics of scholarly labor.

- How might scholars of sacred texts and ethics leverage media beyond the usual scholarly monographs and articles to reach a wider audience?
- Do scholars of sacred texts and ethics have a moral obligation to share their scholarly labor with practitioners?

- How should our scholarship be informed by conversations with practitioners in communities where we or our texts belong?

If you are interested in contributing to the roundtable, please reach out to the co-chairs: R. Brian Siebeking (siebeking@gonzaga.edu) and Raissa von Doetinchem de Rande (derander@rhodes.edu).

Mission Statement:

The Sacred Texts and Ethics Unit invites scholars and activists across the disciplines to critically 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.

Chairs:

- Raissa Von Doetinchem De Rande, Rhodes College
rrande@princeton.edu
- R. Brian Siebeking, Gonzaga University
siebeking@gonzaga.edu

Sacred Texts, Theory, and Theological Construction Unit

Call Text:

For 2023, the unit Sacred Texts, Theory and Theological Construction will be offering two themed and one “open” session. The first themed session will be an invited panel of scholars exploring Deleuze and Islam. This session is currently closed to submission.

STTTC will have two opportunities for general proposals. The first is a co-sponsored panel with the Society of Biblical Literature’s Reading, Theory and the Bible section, “Climate Fiction in/and the Anthropocene: Literary Form and the End of the World as We Know It.” We are especially interested submissions that engage the work of Louise Erdrich (*Future Home of the Living God*) or Joy Williams (*Harrow*) or that focus on non-White writers (e.g.: Nnedi Okorafor, Vandana Singh, Octavia Butler).

For our third, and final panel, we invite the submission of any papers (or even entire panels) which resonate with the general interests and mandate of STTTC. For 2023, we particularly encourage projects treating the concept of “Wilderness” or “Wild Space,” especially those projects which would intersect with the work of the late Delores Williams. As always, Sacred Texts, Theory and Theological Construction is keenly interested in presenting innovative and exploratory work that engages Critical Theory (broadly defined) and Continental Philosophy intersecting with either Sacred Text (including, but by no means limited to Jewish and Christian writings) and Theology (ideally projects that touch on all these elements).

Mission Statement:

This Unit works with the unique intersection of sacred texts, contemporary theory, and theological construction. We call for papers engaged in contemporary constructive theology that think in innovative ways with sacred texts and contemporary biblical studies. We encourage dialogue between constructive theologians and biblical scholars from AAR and SBL, dealing with themes of interest to both academic disciplines in the wake of postmodernity. Topics range from theological hermeneutics to the value of theology, interrogations of our new theoretical contexts to constructive theological proposals, and from the use of sacred texts by contemporary theorists to the use of those contemporary theorists in constructive theology. This unit encourages and is receptive to creative proposals that work at the intersection of biblical studies, contemporary philosophy, theory, and theology.

Chairs:

- Karen Bray, Wesleyan College
karen.bray@gmail.com
- Robert Seesengood, Albright College
rseesengood@albright.edu

Schleiermacher Unit

Call Text:

Re-engaging Schleiermacher Today

Friedrich Schleiermacher's place in the history of modern theology is well-established, but what resources does his thought offer for contemporary scholarship, and what new avenues exist for exploring his thought? This session considers the state of discussions of Schleiermacher's thought today and invites paper or panel proposals that offer fresh studies or perspectives for accessing, interpreting, and/or drawing upon his writings. We especially encourage proposals that are constructive or critical, advance a new interpretation of some aspect of Schleiermacher's thought, treat areas of Schleiermacher's work that are understudied in anglophone scholarship, or offer an entry into a present debate within Schleiermacher scholarship on a given topic.

Theology and Patristic Scholarship in the Nineteenth Century (co-sponsored with the Nineteenth Century Theology Unit)

The nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of self-consciously modern forms of theology, with many of these theologies also underpinned by sophisticated historical narratives dating back to the Patristic period. The broad outlines of doctrinal history that major nineteenth-century theologians from Schleiermacher to Baur, Dörner, Ritschl, and Harnack constructed, have continued to inform historical theology even where their underlying dogmatic judgments were emphatically rejected. The goal of this panel is to take stock of this fascinating but under-researched aspect of nineteenth-century theology. For this session we invite paper and panel proposals that examine how historical and systematic theology worked hand in hand throughout the century, papers that analyze individual figures as well as broader, diachronic trends.

Jewish Enlightenment, National Identity, and Modern Christian Thought (co-sponsored with the Political Theology Unit and the Religion in Europe Unit)

Modern Jewish and modern Christian thought have developed in close interaction, mutually influencing one another's understandings not only of ethics, revelation, and religious community, but also emerging conceptions of national identity. With an eye toward the AAR's 2023 theme of *La Labor de Nuestras Manos* and the need for revisiting public understandings of religion, this session invites paper or panel proposals reflecting on points of ongoing dialogue, divergence, and debate regarding the Jewish and Protestant Enlightenments and emerging notions of nationalism in modern Jewish and Christian thought, pertaining not only to the U.S. but also to European contexts. Such proposals might consider:

- Jewish and Christian conceptions of national identity and the modern state, especially within or in comparison to European contexts
- The Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment) and national identity
- The mutual influence between the Haskalah and modern Christian thought (including the thought of Friedrich Schleiermacher)
- The persistence of antisemitism in contemporary politics, in overt and implicit forms
- The relevance of modern Jewish and Christian thought for understanding white nationalism today

The Schleiermacher Unit is committed to diversity and inclusivity. Pre-arranged sessions or panel proposals should reflect diversity of gender and/or race and ethnicity. Diversities of rank, method, and sub-discipline are also highly encouraged.

Mission Statement:

The unit promotes scholarship – from specialists and non-specialists alike – that critically engage the thought and influence of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834). We encourage constructive, historical, and textual analyses that open new lines of inquiry into Schleiermacher's oeuvre and contribution to contemporary discussions in theology, religious studies, philosophy, ethics, and hermeneutics.

Chairs:

- Kevin Vander Schel, Gonzaga University
vanderschel@gonzaga.edu
- Taraneh Wilkinson, University of Cincinnati
trw28@georgetown.edu

Science, Technology, and Religion Unit

Call Text:

The Science, Technology, and Religion Unit is soliciting proposals on the following topics:

- Technology, Labor, and Human Flourishing-- in response to the conference theme, we are interested in panels and papers that reflect on how technology is

changing the organization of labor, wealth distribution, and/or conceptions of livelihood.

- Laboratory Life-- in light of the recent passing of Bruno Latour, we welcome panels that consider Latour's contributions to both science studies and religious studies. Attention to how scientific labor relates to the cultivation of virtues would be of particular interest as well.
- Prophets, Gimmicks, and Charlatans-- how can religious studies help us to understand contemporary technology markets and their dramatic promises for material progress?'
- The economic conditions of the labor of our hands-- in response to the conference theme, we welcome reflections on how contemporary scholarship is (or isn't) funded. We have particular interest in reflection on influential sources of research funding, including the Templeton philanthropies, the Luce Foundation, and government fellowships.
- Technology and remembering-- how do changes in technology relate to practices of memorialization, commemoration, or remembering?
- Religion/Science in Theology-- we are interested in theological interventions that move beyond the dyad of science and religion.
- Information Theory and Religion-- how do the structural frameworks for systematic thinking in technoscience teach us about religion, and vice-versa?
- Assistive Technologies and Disability Studies-- we are interested in papers that explore embodiment, disability, and critical reflections on the history and future of assistive technologies.
- Confessional panels/papers related to Religion, Science, and Technology
- Finally, STR is always open to paper proposals or panels that do not fit any of these particular parameters.

Mission Statement:

This Unit supports scholarship that explores the relationship of religion, theology, technology, and the natural sciences. We support research that attempts to bridge the gap between religious and scientific approaches to reality and encourage the development of constructive proposals that encourage engagement and dialogue with the sciences, along with a critical assessment of the meaning and impact of technologies for the human condition and the natural world.

Chairs:

- Heather Mellquist Lehto, University of Toronto
heather.mellquist@gmail.com
- Josh Reeves, Samford University
jareeves@samford.edu

Scriptural Reasoning Unit

Call Text:

For the 2023 AAR, we are hosting a Scriptural Reasoning Session reflecting on Rebirth and Renewal in the Abrahamic traditions, a session with invited panelists on the voices of women in the academic study of religion in Judaism, Islam, and Christianity that was postponed last year, and an invited session on Traditions in Translation.

Mission Statement:

Scriptural Reasoning (SR) is a practice of inter-religious text study in which participants from the three 'Abrahamic' religions (and increasingly, from other traditions as well) study short selections of their scriptures together in an open-ended but structured manner. When scholars read scripture across inter-religious difference, the effect is to put traditional wisdom and academic formation into play simultaneously. Over the years, this practice has proved effective at making familiar texts strange and offering a window into the deep patterns of reasoning and implicit logics of these different traditions. The Scriptural Reasoning Unit facilitates a unique mode of academic engagement within the setting of the AAR, rooted in this distinctive practice. It cultivates an approach to the academic study of scriptural traditions centered on the ways in which scriptures generate communities of religious practice: practices of study, of interpretation, of reflection, of ritual, and of social life. Its scholars seek to develop methods for analyzing aspects of this process and to offer philosophical or theological interventions in the ongoing life of the traditions.

Chairs:

- Kelly Figueroa-Ray, Hamline University
kfigueroaray01@hamline.edu
- Laurie Zoloth, University of Chicago
lzoloth@uchicago.edu

Secularism and Secularity Unit

Call Text:

We welcome all types of proposals—including but not limited to individual papers, prearranged papers panels, roundtables, keyword sessions, and other creative and experimental formats.

Itineraries of Secular Technocracy

We would like to explore how prominent business technocrats who prominently claim a secular identity are transforming, changing, colonizing, and dominating various political, online, bodily, topographical, and atmospheric spaces. From Peter Thiel's rise to prominence as a GOP mega donor, to Elon Musk's ownership of Twitter, and the various tech billionaires racing to win the race to outer space - what do their ideologies, politics, and projects indicate about the state of contemporary secularism? What cultural contradictions do their projects respond to and/or manage? How do they map onto and/or refigure liberal and neoliberal capitalist projects of technocratic mastery? How should we historicize them?

Formations of the Secular (for possible cosponsorship with the Cultural History of the Study of Religion Unit)

To mark the 30th anniversary of Talal Asad's *Genealogies of Religion* and the 20th anniversary of his *Formations of the Secular*, we invite scholars of religion to critically reflect on the impact of these influential works on the study of religion, to reengage with them in light of subsequent works addressing the secular or post-secular, or to delineate new lines of inquiry in studies of the secular.

Secularism and Nationalism in India

Over the last decades, the ethos of nationalism in India has transformed. Indian secularism has been viewed as a means of holding together the diverse religious and ethnic groups in India in a way that allows for diversity and pluralism in the public square. However, the rise of Hindu nationalisms under the leadership of Modi have changed the civil landscape dramatically. What is the relationship between these religious nationalisms and the distinct form of Indian secularism that developed after colonialism? Are there resources in such a secularism for combating the anti-democratic forces that threaten ethnic and religious minorities?

Reproduction, Regulation, and Public/Private Zones

To mark the 25th anniversary of Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner's influential essay "Sex in Public," we invite submissions that zones of public/private intimacy are being deconstructed, refigured, and challenged in the context of ongoing struggles for reproductive justice. A major historical thread within literature on secularism has been concerned with differentiations of "public" and "private" spheres of governance, as well as how these distinctions implicate projects of popular democracy and collective liberation. What happens to our theoretical frameworks, and the praxes that emerge from them, when they are contextualized with ongoing attacks on sexual and reproductive autonomy? How should scholars of religion understand—and organize in response to—projects to control, surveil, and criminalize our reproductive lives? We encourage submissions that are anchored in intersectional feminist analysis and that bridge theory and practice. Creative and experimental session formats are also especially welcome.

Decolonizing the Secular

We are interested in papers or panels that develop critical frameworks for decolonizing the secular, whether in discourse, community, organizing, or history. What are ways that decolonial theory can provide critical views on conceptions of the secular or secular communities? What can decolonial approaches to religions in the Americas illuminate about the theory and manifestations of the secular in this hemisphere?

Mission Statement:

The Secularism and Secularity Unit explores a broad a set of questions associated with the secular, including its complex entanglements with religion and spirituality. This inquiry entails the study of political secularism and its role in the construction of religion,

as well as the study of secular people, who can be described with a variety of labels

including atheist, agnostic, humanist, and freethinker. It also includes an ongoing reappraisal of the historical transformations named by “secularization,” which signal the emergence of the modern and presuppose a break from the premodern. The group fosters new directions in secular studies by encouraging theoretically informed research that makes empirical contributions and engages with the subfield’s rapidly growing interdisciplinary literature.

Chairs:

- Lucia Hulsether, Skidmore College
lhulseth@skidmore.edu
- Bradley Onishi, Skidmore College
bradley.b.onishi@gmail.com

Sikh Studies Unit

Call Text:

The Sikh Studies Unit invites individual paper proposals and welcomes pre-arranged panel proposals for a total of three 90-minute sessions. Papers will be selected based on their quality and relevance to the following themes:

Kirat Karna: Honest Labor

Tied to the theme of AAR '23 on ‘Labor’, this panel explores the concept of “Kirat Karna” from a broad and comprehensive perspective. We invite scholars and activists to discuss the Sikh notion of labor and how Gur-Sikh ethics and lifestyle shape the work of Sikh communities in South Asia as well as in the diaspora, inspiring alternative models to rethinking economic, social, and even academic practices. Among suggested topics:

- the labor and challenges of first diasporic generations
- Contemporary issues around the exploitation of labor
- Sikh labor in academia and the issues faced (funding, universities, institutions)
- Applied ethnography, and the impact of scholarship on community
- The labor of collaboration and community engagement
- The labor of protest - workers’ rights and the Kissan Morcha

Co-sponsored panel with Popular Culture Unit

We invite papers investigating the creation, consumption, and dissemination of popular culture in Sikh communities around the globe.

Book Discussion: Authors' Roundtable on The Sikh World (Routledge 2023)

In this session we will hear from the editors and some authors of a new Routledge volume *The Sikh World* that explores the living experiences of the global Sikh community (Panth) which continues to evolve in dynamic and diverse ways throughout India and the diaspora. In this volume, 40 international scholars from multiple disciplines cover the following topical areas: (1) The religious Sikh World (2) Global Sikh Communities and Geopolitical World (3) Articulating Sikh Ethics (4) Activism in the Sikh World (5) Exegetical and Literary Worlds (6) Music and Visual Art (7) Citizenship, Sovereignty and

the Nation State (8) Diversity and its Challenges to the Sikh World (9) Sikhs and Media: Cinema, TV, Internet and (10) Educational Initiatives

Harnessing Our Scholarly Privilege and Power for Public Good: Reproductive Justice and Religion—
Contact: Shana Sippy (shana.sippy@centre.edu) and Michal Raucher
(michal.raucher@rutgers.edu)

With particular awareness of the AAR's presence in Texas (or wherever we may be), this call for proposals seeks to respond directly to the realities of a post-Dobbs America. We hope to bring together scholars who work in a range of regions and on different religious traditions in order to share their knowledge and comparative perspectives that will deepen our understanding of the issues surrounding reproductive justice. In the planning phase, we seek to gather together scholars and activists who wish to think through and prepare some type of public program on the issue of Reproductive Justice for the annual meeting. We anticipate this session will be jointly sponsored by a number of different units and, depending on the response, may involve multiple sessions or additional programming.

We understand people have different concerns and questions they hope to address around these issues. During pre-conference planning, we hope to facilitate virtual conversations about the following topics among others:

- The location of the AAR/SBL meeting in Texas and practical responses
- Addressing safety, health, and security concerns of AAR/SBL participants
- Pedagogies for teaching about reproductive justice and abortion, along with strategies for supporting students in cases where they are in contexts where they are unable to access abortion resources
- The possibility of some sort of public programming or political action (fundraising for clinics, protests?)
- Facilitating opportunities for scholars of religion to learn from activists who are working on the ground, particularly those working in states with restrictive laws
- Possibly securing a grant to support these conversations and exchanges in a more sustained way

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a forum for highlighting the most recent and innovative scholarship in the area of Sikh studies. Our work draws from a broad range of methodological and theoretical approaches — history, postcolonial theory, performance theory, popular culture, philosophy, literary criticism, gender studies, etc. — by both established scholars as well as those new to the field. Seeking a balance between critical theory and substantive content, we seek to call into question key critical terms, challenge established frames of reference, and offer innovative and alternative ways in which Sikhs and Sikhism can be understood and studied in the academy.

Chairs:

- Nirinjan Khalsa, Loyola Marymount University

nirinjan.khalsa@lmu.edu

- Jasjit Singh, University of Leeds

j.s.singh@leeds.ac.uk

Sociology of Religion Unit

Call Text:

The purpose of the Sociology of Religion Unit of the American Academy of Religion is to generate cross-fertilization between the Sociology of Religion and Religious Studies. We are open to papers in all areas and therefore encourage submissions of any topic relevant to the sociology of religion. This year, we are particularly interested in the following topics:

Topics related to the AAR presidential theme of “La Labor de Nuestras Manos (The Work of Our Hands).”

Including religion in workplaces, labor within religious organizations, religion and labor unions, religion and direct action, gendered labor within religions, racialized labor within religions, communicating our work to the public, and more.

Religion, race, and ethnicity

Including racism, white supremacy, biracial or multiracial people and spaces, intersectional identities, religio-racial or religio-ethnic identifications, multiracial/multireligious coalitions, Latinx religions, and related themes.

Religion, materiality, and embodiment

Including artifacts, home shrines, dress, comportment, the body, technologies of the self, and more.

Public Understanding of Religion (Co-sponsored with the Religion and the Social Sciences Unit)

Including applied sociology of religion, scholars’ responsibilities to diverse publics, and more.

Religion and Politics (Co-sponsored with the Religion and Politics Unit)

Including issues such as abortion, healthcare, LGBTQ+ rights, religious freedom, immigration, education, guns, climate change, courts, crime, voting, and more.

Sociology of Religion and Science

Including views of science and science education, religion and atheism among scientists, comparative views of religious and scientific authority, etc.

Crisis in Quantitative Methods

What is quantitative data good for? It’s cited often, but its accuracy is declining due to very low response rates and increasing heterogeneity. Survey categories remain Protestant-centric, and the rise of the “Nones” is evidence of fossilized measures. What can we really say about (or with) quantitative data? What novel or experimental approaches could help resolve this crisis?

Review Process

All proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria: a descriptive title; a clearly formulated argument; clearly identified methodology and sources; engagement with relevant secondary literature; explicit articulation of an original contribution to the field; relevance to our unit's CFP; potential for co-sponsorships with other units. Further suggestions for AAR proposal writers can be found in Kecia Ali's "Writing a Successful Annual Meeting Proposal."

Publication

The Sociology of Religion Unit regularly co-sponsors panels with the peer-reviewed journal *Critical Research on Religion* (<http://crr.sagepub.com>), published by SAGE Publications. Presenters of promising papers in Sociology of Religion Unit panels may be invited to turn their papers into articles and submit them for peer review to *Critical Research on Religion*.

Mission Statement:

The Sociology of Religion Unit of the American Academy of Religion serves as a bridge between religious studies and the subdiscipline of sociology of religion. It functions as a two-way conduit not only to import sociological research into religious studies but also to export the research of religious studies into both the subdiscipline and the broader field of sociology. Only through a cross-fertilization transgressing departmental boundaries can there be breakthroughs in research in both fields. The unit has a wide conception of sociology of religion. It is open to a multiplicity of paradigms and methodologies utilized in the subfield and sociology more broadly: theoretical as well as empirical, quantitative, qualitative, and historical. By liaising with other Program Units, the Sociology of Religion Unit is able to bring the rich diversity of critical and analytical perspectives that are housed in the American Academy of Religion into mainstream sociology of religion. Conversely, it aims to provide scholars of the study of religion with a deeper understanding of the landscape of sociology of religion.

Statement on Diversity and Inclusion:

Diversity and inclusivity are core values of the Sociology of Religion Unit. For this reason, we encourage organizers of pre-formed panels to invite participants that are diverse in race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, age, religion, region, discipline, methodology, professional status, and type of institution. In addition, we especially welcome proposals that focus on communities that have been historically underrepresented, including African, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous, and non-Christian communities, as well as on regions outside North America and Europe. In panel and paper proposals, we also welcome a diversity of methodologies, including quantitative, qualitative, historical, and theoretical. When preparing your panel or roundtable proposal, please include the demographic data you provide to the AAR and explain how your panel's participants instantiate diversity.

Chairs:

- Di Di, Santa Clara University
ddi@scu.edu
- Dusty Hoesly, University of California, Santa Barbara
hoesly@ucsb.edu

South Asian Religions Unit

Call Text:

The Steering Committee of the South Asian Religions (SARI) Unit invites colleagues to submit proposals for the 2023 AAR Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas. SARI's mission is to provide a venue for new research on the many religious cultures, literatures, and histories of South Asia as they have developed in global contexts. We have a strong preference for sessions in which the papers cover a range of South Asian traditions, regions, and languages. Some themes already identified as potential papers sessions are listed below—please contact the associated colleagues for details about potential collaborations. Panels and papers are also encouraged that respond to the 2023 AAR Presidential Theme: "*La Labor de Nuestras Manos.*"

The SARI Steering Committee encourages full panel submissions (i.e., papers Sessions rather than single papers) with the exception of papers for the New Directions panel (see below). For the 2023 Annual Meeting, SARI has a flexible allotment of panel formats: three 2-hour sessions and three 90-minute sessions. SARI can also sponsor one additional paper session if it is co-sponsored with another Unit. In your proposal, you may specify your preferred panel format (120 or 90 minutes) but the time allotted for accepted panels varies based on the overall programming needs. We especially encourage roundtables as they tend to create more dynamic conversations between participants and audience members. If relevant, list any potential co-sponsoring Unit with your proposal.

All Papers Session Panel Proposals must be submitted through the PAPERS system on the AAR website. If you are looking for collaborators towards proposing a panel session, please feel free to reach out to colleagues on the SARI listservs and/or contact the SARI co-chairs Jenn Ortgren (jortegren@middlebury.edu) and SherAli Tareen (SherAli.Tareen@fandm.edu) for assistance or to email the colleagues listed below if there is a topic that is interesting to you.

New Directions in South Asian Religions

The SARI Steering Committee accepts individual paper submissions for the "New Directions in South Asian Religions" to provide space for new scholarship in our field. To be eligible, applicants must (1) be ABD doctoral students (or recent graduates) from a Ph.D. program in South Asian religions and (2) never have presented at the national AAR meeting. Accepted panelists will be mentored by a senior colleague with appropriately specialized expertise. To apply, email your proposal (and any other queries) to Bhakti Mamtora (bmamtora@wooster.edu) and Arun Brahmhatt (abrahmbhatt@stlawu.edu) convenors of the panel for 2023 AND upload your individual paper proposal in the AAR's PAPERS system, labeled as a "New Directions" submission.

The unit will also accept submissions on the following topics:

- Adivasi Religions: Traditions and Modernity: Maharshi Vyas, mvyas@umail.ucsb.edu
- Girlhood (and Boundary Crossing?) in South Asian Religions: Jenn Ortgren, jortegren@middlebury.edu
- Hindu and Christian Nationalisms: Tyler Williams, twwilliams@uchicago.edu
- Keywords: Translation Across European and South Asian Languages (roundtable): Francesca Chubb-Confer, chubbcof@whitman.edu; Tyler Williams, twwilliams@uchicago.edu
- South Asian Religions on Social Media: Iva Patel, pateli@augsburg.edu
- Current crisis, longstanding difficulties Religion and politics in Sri Lanka: Jessica Albrecht, jessica.albrecht@ts.uni-heidelberg.de
- Domesticity, Motherhood, Embodiment (co-sponsored with North American Hinduism): Aarti Patel, apatel10@syrr.edu
- Interreligious Interactions in South Asia: Arun Jones, arun.w.jones@emory.edu
- Teaching Caste (a pedagogy roundtable): Drishadwati Bargi, bargi003@umn.edu
- Teaching Minority Religions in South Asia: Elaine Fisher, emf@stanford.edu
- Engaging With Texts from the Margins: Eric Steinschneider, esteinschneider@ithaca.edu
- Animals, Rituals, and Power in South Asian Religions: Andrea Gutiérrez, andrea.gutierrez@austin.utexas.edu
- Digital Humanities and the Study of Hinduism (co-sponsored with Hinduism Unit): Ute Huesken, huesken@uni-heidelberg.de
- Queering South Asian Religions (co-sponsored with North American Hinduism): Arun Brahmhatt, abrahmbhatt@stlawu.edu
- Transnational Connections between the Middle East and South Asia, (co-sponsored with the Middle Eastern Christianity Unit, but please note that the call is for all religious traditions, not only Christian traditions): Deanna Ferree Womack, deanna.f.womack@emory.edu

"Trads": Masculinity Hate Politics in Transnational South Asian Contexts

Contact: Dheepa Sundaram (dheepa.sundaram@du.edu)

Potential co-sponsorship between North American Hinduism, Men, Masculinities, and Religions, Hinduism, and South Asian Religions Unit

This panel explores the hate politics, purity discourses, and identitarian grounding of groups that describe themselves as "Trads" or Traditionalists which operate in transnational contexts. While members of this group reject the Indian Constitution as a Western construct, many of its symbols are imported from the West—the white supremacist Alt-Right in the United States.

Harnessing Our Scholarly Privilege and Power for Public Good: Reproductive Justice and Religion: Shana Sippy, shana.sippy@centre.edu

With particular awareness of the AAR's presence in Texas (and wherever members may be),

this session seeks to respond directly to the realities of a post-Dobbs America.

Bringing together scholars who work on a range of different religious traditions and regions to share their knowledge and comparative perspectives, we hope to deepen our understanding of the issues surrounding reproductive justice. In the planning phase, we will gather together scholars and activists who want to think through and prepare some type of public programming on the issue of Reproductive Justice for the annual meeting. We anticipate this session will be jointly sponsored by a number of different units and, depending on the response, may involve multiple sessions or additional programming and actions.

Roundtable discussion of a recent book: Jenn Ortegren (jortegren@middlebury.edu) or SherAli Tareen (sherali.tareen@famdm.edu) We are hoping to make this a more common feature of SARI annual offerings, with the stipulation that the book to be discussed should touch on the diversity of South Asian religious traditions and/or the complexity of religion as a category in relation to South Asian religions.

Mission Statement:

This Unit's mission is to provide a venue for new and important research in the many religious cultures, texts, and histories of South Asia. Within the area of South Asia, all world religions exist in unique forms, from religions that originated in India – such as Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Tantra, and tribal religions – to religions that have taken on longstanding and distinctive forms in South Asia – such as Islam, Judaism, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism. The focus of our work is thus on the religious, cultural, and intellectual traditions generated in South Asia, but not limited to that geographic region, and changes that have occurred in those traditions over several millennia. Scholars of South Asian religious traditions explore the distinctive manifestations of these traditions within and beyond the subcontinent, their interactions, and their movements to and expressions in other parts of the world. This Unit encourages contextualizing religion within debates on a broad array of parallel and intersecting issues, such as (but not limited to) politics, secularism, literature, philology, globalization, modernity, colonialism and postcolonialism, history, society, media, popular culture, material and visual culture, and economics. Our scholarship often emphasizes sessions and papers that look at more than one tradition and thus frequently entail some degree of comparative approach. Our website is <https://sari.arizona.edu>. We also have a listserv, which is essential to the work of our Unit. Information on joining the listserv can be found on our website.

Chairs:

- Jennifer Ortegren, Middlebury College
jennortegren@gmail.com
- SherAli Tareen, Franklin and Marshall College
stareen@famdm.edu

Space, Place, and Religion Unit

Call Text:

We welcome individual papers, papers sessions, and roundtable proposals for topics exploring space and place as they relate to religion. We are always interested in papers and sessions that employ theoretically or methodologically self-conscious and innovative approaches to understanding space and place as they relate to, condition, and constitute aspects of religious life including belief, ritual, meaning, aesthetics, and experience. We welcome ethnographically-informed studies of sites and historically-informed studies of texts that shed light on the role of space and place in religious traditions. Space, Place, and Religion dedicates one of its sessions to religious spaces in Asia. Our Unit is committed to diversity and inclusivity; pre-arranged panels and sessions should reflect gender, racial, and ethnic diversity as well as the diversity of field, method, and scholarly rank.

In addition, this year we are particularly interested in the following topics:

Chinese Religious Spaces and Landscapes

Co-sponsorship with Chinese Religions Unit

- Construction/deconstruction/labor and urban politics of changing cities and labor dynamics within Chinese religious spaces.
- Chinese religious rituals in the natural world
- Contact Courtney Bruntz (courtneybruntz@gmail.com)

Ritual and Circular Space

Co-sponsorship with Ritual Studies Unit

Within the framework of a co-sponsored session with the Space, Place and Religion Unit, we also invite papers focusing on ritual and circular space in different religious and cultural traditions. What shared attentions, patterned interactions, processes of inclusion/exclusion, etc., do circular ritual spaces put into effect? How are such dynamics affected by matters of scale, by the means used to produce the circular spaces in question, by a presence or not of something in the center of the circle?

Religious Landscapes in Art and Literature

Co-sponsorship with Arts, Literature, and Religion Unit

Religious, or sacred, landscapes signify historically specific ways of representing place and serve as sources of cultural memory, ethical action, and social change. Religious landscapes are sustained or contested through ritual, pilgrimage, and festivals, and representations of these landscapes are preserved in museums, memorial sites, art, and literature. This panel will investigate the theme of religious landscapes in various artistic and literary forms from any time period and geographical location. Thematic approaches to this topic might include: contested landscapes; pilgrimage and the movement of bodies through space; the sacralization and de-sacralization of the landscape; myth and imagined landscapes; or religious landscapes and environmental ethics.

Cyberspaces as religious and ritual spaces

Techno-spaces of ritual, practice, doctrine, involving AI, virtual reality, etc.

Space, Place, and Geography in Post and Decolonial Theory
Co-sponsorship with Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism Unit
Especially but not limited to the consideration of borderlands.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is a forum for exploring religious sites and the spatial dimensions of religions. We feature ethnographically-informed studies of living sites, historically-informed studies of texts and artifacts, and analyses of architecture and landscape. Our work seeks to shed light on the role of space and place in religious traditions and communities or to examine religious activity (performance, ritual, and practice) in spatial contexts. This Unit recognizes that spaces and places, real and imagined/visionary, are constitutive elements in religious life; it is dedicated to investigating how they contribute to contemplative, ritualistic, artistic, economic, ethnic, or political aspects of religious life using a variety of approaches and methods. We expect to include at least one session focused on spaces and places in Asia, in addition to sessions focused on other themes, regions, traditions or advancing the theoretical analysis of space and place.

Chairs:

- Katie Oxx, Saint Joseph's University, Philadelphia
koxx@sju.edu
- Brooke Schedneck, Rhodes College
schedneckb@rhodes.edu

Special Session

Call Text:

A limited number of special sessions are approved by the Program Committee each year. These are intended to be experimental, creative, or timely sessions that address an area of interest that does not naturally fall within the purview of one or more existing Program Units OR that address a current issue/event of interest to multiple AAR constituencies. The Program Committee occasionally approves special sessions for sessions that would be one-time only or special to the year or location. Special Sessions may only be submitted through PAPERS by **March 1, 2023**. Under exceptional circumstances, special sessions may also be proposed to address a pressing issue that arises after the proposal deadline.

Guidelines for special sessions:

- Special sessions are accepted through PAPERS only.
- Special session proposals must provide a rationale based on the criteria above.
- Special sessions must use one of the prearranged session proposal formats (papers session or roundtable).
- Make sure the special session does not cover an area already covered by an existing program unit. If a proposal fits within an established program unit's mission, the proposal will be forwarded to that unit. If a proposal is submitted both as a special session and also to a program unit, it will be eliminated from consideration as a special session.

The Program Committee evaluates all Special Session proposals. Notification of program acceptance will be announced by early April.

Chairs:

- Whitney Bauman, Florida International University
whitneyabauman@mac.com
- Amy Defibaugh, American Academy of Religion
adehibaugh@aarweb.org

Study of Islam Unit

Call Text:

This Unit encourages individual paper, paper session, and roundtable proposals in all areas of Islamic studies. Successful proposals will reflect theoretical and methodological sophistication and engagement with existing scholarship, along with innovative examination of Muslim practices, texts, and material culture in diverse contexts and geographies. We encourage the submission of coherent pre-arranged sessions involving multiple scholars, and these could include roundtable or other creative presentation formats.

As an explicit requirement of our Unit, a successful pre-arranged session or panel proposal must incorporate gender diversity. Diversity of race and ethnicity, theoretical method, and rank are also highly encouraged.

If your proposal is accepted and you agree to be on the program, we expect you to show up to participate in your session at the Annual Meeting, barring unforeseeable exceptional circumstances. Please note that the Islamic studies program Units have a policy according to which no-shows may be barred from the program for the following year.

For the 2023 meeting in San Antonio, we are also especially interested in paper and/or panel proposals on:

- In light of Amir Husain's presidential theme of "La Labor de Nuestras Manos," we would like to encourage submissions reflecting on the state of Islamic Studies, and the boundaries and approaches in the field. In particular, we are interested in reflections on how the study of Islam within Religious Studies compares to the study of Islam in other academic areas; the incorporation of critical theory within Islamic Studies; the relationship between colonialism and the history of Islamic Studies in the West, as well as the study of Islam beyond the Western academy; the evolving place of constructive or theological work within Islamic Studies; the economics of Islamic Studies, including job markets and institutions of higher education; and the role of public-facing scholarship.
- Also in connection with the presidential theme, we'd like to encourage submissions about Latino/a Muslims, as well as Islam and Muslims in the American Southwest.

- New trends and developments in Islamic Philosophy. We are particularly interested in research that examines time-periods, regions, and languages that are typically overlooked; Islam's women philosophers and Muslim feminist philosophy; Islamic Neoplatonism; and Muslim occultism.
- Critical engagements with the category of “ambiguity” and how it is deployed in the study of Islam.
- We also seek papers for a possible co-sponsored session on comparative Hindu and Islamic philosophy (for co-sponsorship with Hindu Philosophy or Islamic Mysticism units).
- Graduate Student session: This special session will offer graduate students the opportunity to present for 5 minutes on their dissertation research, followed by short responses from other panelists and open discussion. If you are an advanced graduate student and interested in talking succinctly about your research in this session, please submit a paper proposal through the PAPERS system with the abstract and proposal the same text and length (maximum 150 words) and indicate that your submission is for this special session format at the top of the proposal.
- As always, we encourage submissions on topics of general interest, such as the Qur'an and hadith, law and ethics, philosophy and theology, mysticism, ritual, gender and sexuality, race and politics, modernity and globalization, and other areas. Furthermore, we encourage proposals dealing with Shi'ism within and across these areas, as well as other forms of Islam that have been rendered marginal or peripheral.

Mission Statement:

This Unit is a home for the academic study of Islam within the AAR. This Unit encompasses various approaches and subjects, from Qur'anic studies to modern reform movements and from textual research to sociology. The Unit also has enduring interests in pedagogical issues associated with the teaching of Islam and prioritizes, through two signature sessions, mentoring of early-career scholars. The purpose of the Unit is both to provide a forum for dialogue among differing approaches and projects within Islamic studies and also to provide opportunities for the discussion of work that affects the overall field of the study of religion. We normally meet for five to seven sessions at each Annual Meeting. We often coordinate our work with other Islam-related AAR Program Units, including the Contemporary Islam Unit, the Islam, Gender, Women Unit, the Islamic Mysticism Unit, and the Qur'an Unit.

Chairs:

- Zaid Adhami, Williams College
za2@williams.edu
- Elliott Bazzano, Le Moyne College
bazzanea@lemoyne.edu

Study of Judaism Unit

Call Text:

This Unit welcomes proposals for individual papers, papers sessions, and roundtables dealing with Judaism, Jews, and Jewish studies broadly conceived – from late antiquity to the present, in multiple global settings, and employing various methodologies – that address topics of concern to the broader community of religious studies scholars. Pre-arranged session or panel proposals should represent a diversity of gender, race, ethnicity, and academic rank.

We are open to any proposals related to the study of Judaism, although for 2023, we are particularly interested in the following topics:

- Hands, in conversation with the 2023 AAR presidential theme of “La Labor de Nuestras Manos”
- Judaism, Latinidad, and/or Spanish languages and literatures, in conversation with the 2023 AAR presidential theme
- Judaism and the category of the human
- Rest, labor, and care in Jewish thought, practice, ritual, and theory
- Judaism and reproductive rights
- Pre-arranged panels or roundtables putting into conversation two or more recently published books (2020-2023) of significance to the study of Judaism
- 2023 is the 40th anniversary of the film *Yentl*, the 50th anniversary of *The Way we Were*, and the 55th anniversary of *Funny Girl*. We invite proposals of individual papers, panels, or roundtables that re-consider Barbra Streisand as icon and director, including revisiting the themes of gender, religion, race, sexuality, and class in her films (co-sponsored by Religion, Film, and Visual Culture and Queer Studies in Religion).

Mission Statement:

The goal of this Unit is to develop and expand the relationship between the study of Judaism and the broader study of religion. We work to meet this goal in three primary ways: • Methodologically • Topically • By cosponsorship with other Program Units First, this Unit engages in active conversation with the methodologies common to the study of religion by exploring the historical, social, aesthetic, political, and philosophical 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 studies 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. In the future, we look forward to continuing to work with various AAR – and whenever possible, SBL – Program Units.

Chairs:

- Andrea Dara Cooper, University of North Carolina
adcooper@email.unc.edu
- Shari Rabin, Oberlin College and Conservatory

srabin@oberlin.edu

Tantric Studies Unit

Call Text:

We invite papers on the following topics:

- Scholars and Practitioners, continued. Possibly with Contemplative Studies unit. Sundari Hurwitt Johansen sjohansen@ciis.edu
- Mantra Extraction (*mantroddhara*) Across Tantric Traditions. Adam Krug adamkrug108@gmail.com
- Tantric “Maker Culture.” Jason Schwartz khecara36@gmail.com
- Consumption of Ritual Substances. Patricia Sauthoff sauthoff@ualberta.ca
- Pedagogy *within* Tantric Traditions. Jason Schwartz khecara36@gmail.com

Preformed paper panels are strongly encouraged and may be structured to fill 2.0-hour or 1.5-hour session meeting times. Paper proposals may engage any topic or concern, with the above being only some of the possibilities.

We encourage our members to consider the diversity of traditions, geographical areas, and disciplines as well as the diversity of participants, responders, and presiders when putting together panel proposals. Please also take into consideration whether your panel would benefit from being co-sponsored with another Unit or Units of the AAR.

Mission Statement:

This Unit brings together scholars who utilize a range of methodological and theoretical perspectives in their studies of the complex religious, social, and cultural phenomena known collectively as tantra. “Tantra” refers to a range of esoteric religious traditions that developed in India and were disseminated throughout Asia during the first millennium CE. These diverse traditions have used mental and bodily disciplines, devotional and ritual practices, and gendered cosmologies, and have created elaborate artistic as well as sociopolitical systems. The collective study of tantra has led to several important conclusions: • The demonstrated diversity of tantric practices and ideologies demands a plurality of methods, theories, and interpretative strategies by scholars • These richly varied tantric traditions became, by the twelfth century CE, central to many Asian religious and sociopolitical systems, including those of India, Nepal, Tibet, Mongolia, Cambodia, Japan, and China • Various traditional Asian forms of tantra have been brought to the Western world since the early twentieth century and are undergoing a vital process of reinterpretation and appropriation Our goal is to provide a venue for scholars of different areas of tantric studies to collaborate across traditional boundaries of religious traditions (e.g., Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism), present-day nation-states, geography (e.g., India, Tibet, China, Japan), and academic disciplines (e.g., history of religions, anthropology, art history, linguistics, sociology). We seek to be a cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary enterprise. Tantra as a set of practices – a religious technology – and as a set of doctrines explaining, justifying, and rationalizing those practices, in fact, exists across religious, national, and geographical boundaries. For example, an adequate understanding of Japanese Tantric Buddhist practice and doctrine

requires not only locating it in an East Asian Buddhist context but also in an Indian and South Asian context where the juxtaposition of Buddhist and Hindu tantras can fruitfully reveal aspects that might otherwise remain obscured. Similarly, by setting Buddhist materials in relation to Hindu traditions – both of which might otherwise be seen either as uniquely Hindu or Buddhist – will be highlighted as part of a broader, shared tantric discourse. This Unit will also allow scholars to present new methodologies for the study of tantra and help to bridge more traditional academic approaches, such as textual-based and fieldwork-based studies. We seek to further the study of tantra as a global, transnational phenomena and as an important new religious movement. Finally, the Unit will also explore new perspectives for studies of gender, power, identity, and sexuality that are so germane to modern religious scholarship.

Chairs:

- Anya Golovkova, Lake Forest College
agolovkova@lakeforest.edu
- Glen Hayes, Bloomfield College
glen_hayes@bloomfield.edu

Teaching Religion Unit

Call Text:

The Teaching Religion Unit critically examines pedagogical theory and practice. We particularly value proposals that combine scholarship of teaching and learning *and* innovative teaching practices. For 2023, paper and panel proposals that address the following themes are especially welcome:

Honoring bell hooks

To honor the life and work of bell hooks, the Transformative Scholarship and Teaching Unit, Teaching Religion Unit, and Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Unit are seeking proposals on her influence for thinking about and teaching religion. In her book *Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks examines education as the practice of freedom and argues for teaching students to transgress oppression. How do we structure our classrooms and our pedagogical strategies to use our power justly? How do we offer liberatory education that is inclusive and empowers students for critical consciousness and action? How might we broadly reimagine educational settings and strategies? Proposals for a demonstration of a teaching strategy are encouraged.

Stifled Pedagogy: Teaching Religion and Sexuality in an Era of Censorship

The Religion and Sexuality Unit and the Teaching Religion Unit seek papers for a co-sponsored session exploring "Stifled Pedagogy: Teaching Religion and Sexuality in an Era of Censorship." We invite proposals that offer frameworks for understanding contemporary challenges within and outside the religious studies and theology classrooms, such as political challenges to reproductive rights, undermining of trans rights, debates about "divisive concepts" and "critical race theory," and academic freedom. How is teaching about religion informed by particular institutional, state-wide,

or other restrictions or debates? What pedagogical and/or political strategies are worth considering in response to these realities? We especially welcome proposals that blend theoretical frameworks with practical or demonstrable cases.

Decolonizing Assessment

There has been a growing momentum in the scholarship of teaching and learning about decolonizing syllabi and teaching—that is, working to de-center “canonical” voices, sources, and modes of learning that are tied to colonial legacies, racism, sexism, and other realities. But what would it look like to decolonize assessment in our classrooms? How might scholar-educators draw from emerging ways of conceptualizing decolonization to reimagine “evaluation”? And, what would it take to transform our institutions so as to allow such forms of assessment to take root? Proposals might also consider ways to decolonize peer teaching assessment and/or how peer assessment or collaboration may be helpful in the decolonizing process.

Preparing for Careers in Teaching Religion

The Teaching Religion Unit and the Graduate Student Committee invite proposals for a co-sponsored session on “Preparing for Careers in Teaching Religion.” This session will be a skills-based offering tailored to address the needs, experiences, questions, and hopes of graduate students, some of whom are already teaching and looking ahead toward careers as teachers in classrooms and communities. This session invites presentations that share best practices or some advice for teaching as/with graduate students and will include break out groups for more in-depth conversations (and networking!). Potential topics addressed might include: designing accessible syllabi and/or lesson plans; reflections on the job market and teaching portfolios; how to apply for jobs in various institutions if teaching is your primary interest; how to write a teaching statement; “ungrading” and different types of grading methods; and diversifying assignments (especially final projects) beyond the research paper.

For possible co-sponsorship with the Law, Religion, and Culture Unit

On the consequences of recent laws regulating education (like the Stop Woke Act in Florida), with particular relation to the impact of such legislation on teaching religion and the role of religion in crafting such legislation.

Teaching Religion Abroad

We invite proposals for a workshop designed to promote best practices, introduce innovative ideas, and answer questions for AAR/SBL members interested in taking students on short- or long-term faculty-led study abroad programs. Participants will spend five minutes speaking to a specific component of the study abroad experience (planning an itinerary, pros and cons of working with a provider company, tying learning objectives to site visits, successful assignments, challenges of pilgrimage vs. secular travel, fundraising, etc.) before breaking into small groups for discussion and consultation. We invite proposals from experienced study abroad faculty leaders who can speak to one of these or other topics. We also encourage proposals that include

clear ties to scholarship of teaching and learning.

Open Access Textbooks

Our Unit welcomes papers that foster open discussion about and analysis of Open Educational Resources (OER). Many educators, including those teaching in community college settings and elsewhere, are being encouraged to move away from expensive textbooks towards the use of no-cost instructional materials. What are best practices for assessing OER? How might we, as an academy of educators and subject-matter experts, work together to create more high-quality, no-cost, and open instructional material to support our students?

Teaching Across Career and in the Contemporary Academy: A Conversation with AAR Teaching Award Winners

This pre-arranged roundtable will feature past winners of the AAR Teaching Award with a focus on topics such as: what it means to be a "seasoned" teacher in this time of change in the academy; what it means, as a teacher, to make an exit from the academy; and, any wisdom winners can offer new teachers about teaching across career. This session will also include reflections about the teaching in relation to DEI as well as the academy since/after COVID. This will be a roundtable session centered around discussion rather than formal presentations.

Publishing on Teaching

In this pre-arranged panel, representatives from journals focused on the scholarship of teaching as well as scholars with substantial experience publishing about teaching in a variety of formats will discuss the ins and outs of pedagogical publishing as related to the fields of religious studies and theology.

Open Call

We invite proposals for individual papers and panel sessions 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. We also regularly host an annual session on "Teaching Tactics," which features lightning-round presentations (5-7 minutes total) of a specific teaching technique, assignment, etc.

Mission Statement:

This Unit critically examines pedagogical theory and practice. We invite proposals that join innovative teaching practice with the scholarship of teaching and learning. Preference will be given to presentation formats that model engaged, interactive, and experiential pedagogy.

Chairs:

- Kate DeConinck, Keene State College
kydeconinck@gmail.com
- Almeda Wright, Yale University
almeda.wright@yale.edu

Theology and Continental Philosophy Unit

Call Text:

The Theology and Continental Philosophy Unit invites individual paper proposals, panel proposals, and roundtables on any of the following topics (if you would like to submit proposals for topics not on this list, we will consider all proposals). We also encourage proposals to combine aspects of the topics listed below:

- The Anarchist Turn: Recent work by James Martel, Catherine Malabou, Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin and others in relation to questions of religion
- engagements with the work of Gil Anidjar
- the non-philosophy of François Laruelle and questions of religion
- Queer philosophy of religion: questions of methodology, social reproduction, moral panics, and queer philosophy of religion beyond apologetics
- Contemporary engagements with and mutations of medieval philosophy and theology
- recent work on political theology and the katechon

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to further discussions at the intersection of post-Kantian philosophy in its various permutations with historical and contemporary theological reflection. While we remain centered on continental European thought (even beyond the borders of the continent) on the philosophical side, the term “theology” in our parlance extends to critical reflection on a range of religions worldwide, and we are particularly interested to expand our offerings in Judaism, Islam, and marginalized traditions (such as witchcraft) in coming years. Contact the Program Unit Chairs if you seek further information on the Unit’s activities.

Chairs:

- Marika Rose, University of Winchester
marika.rose@winchester.ac.uk
- Anthony Paul Smith, La Salle University
anthonypaul.smith@gmail.com

Theology and Religious Reflection Unit

Call Text:

The Theology and Religious Reflection Unit invites proposals for individual papers and panels considering (but not limited to) the following themes. We are especially interested in papers that take innovative approaches to what counts as ‘theology and religious reflection,’ papers and panels focusing on religions and practices other than Christianity, and roundtables exploring different presentation formats.

‘The theological’ beyond theology: as ‘the theological’ circulates in a variety of contexts and discourses outside theology in the university or the academic study of religion, what

do we make of this development? What is 'the theological' beyond theology offering, opening up, or occluding?

On a related note, what is the future of theology? Here, we are especially interested in papers and panels focusing on the end of theology, from a variety of different directions.

Those directions might include

- Theology and failure
- Theology and silence
- The eschatological or different forms of pessimism and futurism
- Thinking with art and the imagination and/or with literature and science fiction, especially but not only with regard to ecological themes
- Secular theology or the religious 'nones'
- Questions of theology and language, looking beyond 'formal' or academic theology to the limits of language and representation

We are also interested in papers examining religious and/or theological scholarship on the power of delusion and denial, especially with regard to climate change, as well as on papers exploring religion and climate grief. What does the study of religion have to offer regarding these catastrophic effects and evasions?

Papers exploring the relations between mysticism and the secular. Is mysticism a category of the secular? What does mysticism offer the secular that religion does not? How does the mystical within the secular operate?

Panel proposals or papers focusing on recent work in religious reflection and disability studies, including Mary Dunn's *Where Paralytics Walk and the Blind See* (Princeton, 2022)

Thinking with Azusa: the revival of interest in Azusa Street in a number of works, including especially Keri Day's *Azusa Reimagined* (Stanford, 2022) suggests the continuing richness of Azusa Street as a historical, ethical, and philosophical site of encounter and entanglement in American religious and racial history. What does thinking with Azusa mean today?

Entanglement has emerged as a constant theme in the humanities in recent years. What do we hope entanglement might do for us? Does using entanglement as an analytic lens bring limitations with it, or have the potentials of entanglement for expanding the horizons of our scholarship not yet been realized? How does entanglement mobilize visions, narratives, and relationships within our scholarly work?

Papers for a possible panel celebrating the work of Michael Serres, in honor of his book *Religions* (Stanford, 2022) and his death in 2019

Papers for a possible panel on Biko Mandela Gray's *Black Life Matter* (Duke, 2022)
A possible pre-arranged panel on Lucia Hulsether's *Capitalist Humanitarianism* (Duke,

2023)

In relation to next year's presidential theme, *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*, we are especially interested in proposals that arise or are informed by labor perspectives, especially perspectives related to migrant labor and borders, as well as proposals that experiment with multilingual (Spanish-English) delivery.

Mission Statement:

The Theology and Religious Reflection Unit is committed to fostering broad, interdisciplinary conversations in the study of religion and theology. We aim to cultivate a site of intersection and engagement for scholars working in various religious contexts who also have interests in the wider aspects of mutual interest in our field (theological, theoretical, methodological, political, ethical). Our Unit promotes constructive work that typically includes an emphasis on critical engagement as well as conceptual and social transformation.

Chairs:

- Abdul Rahman Mustafa, University of Paderborn
abdulrahman.mustafa@googlemail.com
- Linn Tonstad, Yale University
linn.tonstad@yale.edu

Theology of Martin Luther King Jr. Unit

Call Text:

Music, Justice, and King

(60 minutes) The MLK unit is interested in the music as a category for liberation and social justice. Music was integral in the life of Martin Luther King, Jr. He was surrounded by musicians and grew to have a great appreciation for the power of music to mobilize and inspire. From spirituals to freedom songs, from gospel to jazz, King understood music as a source of hope. Within the larger civil rights movement, too, music was an important element in the lives of social activists and demonstrators. The Martin Luther King, Jr. unit invites papers that consider the role of music and the arts in civil rights movement. We are interested in the influence of music as category of interpretation in the civil rights movement, especially in the life Martin Luther King, Jr. More broadly, however, we seek papers that provide new resources or ways of thinking about the spirituals, jazz, and, gospel music as significant freedom tools as evidenced among freedom fighters in this period. To this end we invite papers that:

- Offer methodological approaches that center music as an interpretative category in the civil rights movement.
- Explore music and embodiment, namely how music is produced in and by the body and how the body responds to music
- Engage the musicality of the Black sermonic tradition in King and/or the broader movement: how song is interjected into sermons and/or how sermons themselves often take on a musical, lyrical quality when given
- Engage freedom song, gospels, jazz, or other genres of music in the life of MLK.
- Explore the important of musicians in the life of MLK.

- Consider the relationship between music and social resistance.

Women and the Movement

(90 minutes) The MLK Unit, in conjunction with the Black Theology unit, invite papers or organized paper sessions that take up the question of women and gender in the civil rights movement. Without question, women were essential in the life of Martin King Jr. and the wider civil rights movement. This session is interested in various methodological approaches toward an investigation of gender and the civil rights movement. What might an engagement between Black and womanist theologies, as well as Black studies, yield toward new ways of reading King and the wider campaign. What new insights, from women authors, can we gain about gender, class, and sexual identities that provide fresh ways of reading the civil rights movement, especially MLK. We are especially interested in papers that:

- Explore the women around King.
- Investigate the influence of women thinkers, activists, and preachers on King.
- Engage King from the standpoint of critical theory using women theorists.
- Employ a womanist theological lens to interrogate King's theology.

Mission Statement:

The work of this Unit is focused on creating conversations around the unique contributions of Martin Luther King Jr. to the Christian theological tradition in the twentieth century and to the religious, cultural, political, and economic consequences of his work. We are particularly interested in the many facets of the Civil Rights Movement, of which King was a significant part. These explorations have included a focus on the role of women in the movement, the economic dimensions of King's work, and his use of both the theological traditions and rhetoric of the Black Church. In all of our sessions we are interested in fostering inter- and multidisciplinary approaches to this project.

Chairs:

- Leonard McKinnis, University of Illinois
leonardm@illinois.edu
- Montague Williams, Point Loma Nazarene University
montaguewilliams@pointloma.edu

Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Unit

Call Text:

Thank you for your contributions to the Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Unit in Denver 2022! It was an exceptional year; attendance of scholars from Tibetan and Himalayan religions has increased tremendously. This was due to the generous Travel Grant funded by the Khyentse Foundation.

We are pleased to announce that this Travel Grant will run again next year, but it will now be administered by the Initiative for Tibetan, Himalayan, and Buddhist Studies in the American Academy rather than the AAR. Applications for the travel grant will require acceptance to an AAR panel. More information will follow in January 2023.

We are pleased to announce that you do not need to be an AAR member to submit a proposal to the annual meeting; however, you do have to have membership to present at the annual meeting. As co-chairs, we understand that there are principled reasons to boycott Texas for its elected officials' assault on human rights, including the rights of women and LGBTQ+ people. We urge caution to anyone who is pregnant and considering traveling to Texas or to any other state where reproductive rights have been eroded or do not exist. We also recognize that there are principled reasons to continue to engage with and to travel to places such as Texas. The AAR, for its part, has stated that it is locked into contracts for approximately 10 years with various convention centers, and that to cancel a single conference would be to bankrupt the organization and to threaten its continued existence. In sum, we suggest that one extend understanding and respect both to those who for principled reasons choose to boycott events in places such as Texas, and to those who, also for principled reasons, choose to take part.

Proposals are welcome on any theme or topic related to Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Unit for next year's American Academy of Religion annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas. The presidential theme for 2023, suggested by Amir Hussain is *La Labor de Nuestras Manos/ The Work of Our Hands*. Hussain wrote, "I have worked for the past 25 years in Los Angeles, and will deliver my presidential address in San Antonio. In both cities, Spanish is the dominant language, but often isn't recognized as such. I think that I am the fourth scholar of Islam (after Wilfred Cantwell Smith, John Esposito, and Jane McAuliffe) and the first Muslim to be elected as president. I want to say a few things about the study of Islam in particular, but also to connect that more generally to the work that we do in the study of religion and think more broadly about what it is that we do when we do the work of our hands. Part of this involves looking at both the study of religion and the study of theology, and the often-false dichotomy that is set up between the two. In that vein, I want to talk about some of the really interesting work being done in Islamic studies in constructive Muslim theology. But I also want to talk about the actual work that we do as scholars of religion, which often isn't the production of scholarly monographs that are sometimes only read by a handful of people, but work that affects thousands. This connects both to the public understanding of religion, and the alternatives to traditional tenure-line roles in the academy." Proposals do not need to relate to the presidential theme but the AAR will be particularly interested in panels that address it.

Please contact the organizers directly if you are interested in joining their proposed panel sessions:

Within and Between Human and Non-human Natures: Reflections on Trans-corporeality in Tibetan Buddhism

Organizer: Devin Zuckerman dcz3fj@virginia.edu

A panel exploring the ways Tibetan Buddhist communities and cultures have used bodily substances and fabricated material objects (relics, pills, smoke, ritual devices, etc) to

portray the “transcorporeal” – the connections, fluidities, and porous boundaries within and between human bodies and non-human environments.

Revisiting “Ris-med” (provisional title)

Organizer: Andrew Taylor, The College of Saint Scholastica, ataylor9@css.edu

Even as most scholars have concluded that there was never a nineteenth-century *ris med* “movement” per se, the category has nevertheless become increasingly influential in Tibetan, Tibetan exile, and Tibetan Buddhist communities. How has *ris med* operated in different discursive contexts? What is the future of *ris med* discourse? How might the project of Kongtrul, Khyentse, and other nineteenth-century luminaries be better conceptualized? How might *ris med* be useful (or not) in engaging other theories of pluralism?

Celebrating Tibetan and Himalayan Women (provisional title)

Organizer: Jed Forman jed.forman@simpson.edu

This panel will explore important female figures in Tibetan and Himalayan history. We invite proposals about various prominent women, including key religious, political, or literary figures. We are especially interested in analyses of works about or authored by women who were religious figures.

A panel in honor of Anne Klein’s scholarly career contributions to Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, Women’s Studies, and Contemplative Studies.

Organizer: Michael Sheehy sheehy@virginia.edu

Discussion will foreground the multiple epistemologies at work in Klein’s publications from Geluk discourse between Sautantrika and Madhyamaka in *Knowledge and Liberation* (1987) and *Knowing, Naming, and Negation* (1997) to the situatedness of gender in *Meeting the Great Bliss Queen* (2008) to the logic of the nonconceptual in *Unbounded Wholeness* (2006) to epistemologies of perfection in her forthcoming, *Being Human and a Buddha Too* (2023).

The Construction of Orthodoxy/Orthopraxy in Tibet | Organizers: Michael Ium, michael.ium@utoronto.ca or Ngawang Sonam, tns5hv@virginia.edu

This panel seeks to explore the construction of orthodoxy and orthopraxy in Tibet as historical processes. What are the various contexts (social, religious, historical, political) that have impacted the ways in which orthodox doctrines and correct practices have been articulated? What strategies have been employed to create, maintain, and defend these traditions? How might de-constructing these processes impact the ways in which scholars of Tibetan religion today engage in and understand their own research?

Keep in mind that the topics in our call do not exclude other possible panel topics. So if you don’t have everything lined up just yet, you can still contact people, put out a call for your panel via listservs, etc.

The Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Unit has a Tier 2 session allotment for the current

five-year term (2019-2023). This grants us two 2-hour sessions, with one additional 2-hour session for co-sponsorship.

The establishment of temples and Buddhist centers in the Tibetan diaspora (co-sponsored with Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Unit)

Consider submitting your individual paper *in addition* to its inclusion in a fully formed panel, if you would like your individual paper to be included for a possible “new research” session formed out of individual submissions.

Mission Statement: This Unit’s mission is to create an environment that promotes discussion among scholars taking diverse approaches to the study of Tibetan and Himalayan religions. Our identity and cohesion derive from the fact that we deal with a delimited geocultural space, but the intellectual excitement comes from the fact that we are specialists in different historical periods and cultural areas, from the fact that we are interested in different religious traditions, and from the fact that we have different methodological approaches to the study of religion. In particular, we encourage scholarship that approaches Tibetan and Himalayan religions through a wide range of approaches: Multidisciplinary focus – we are committed to methodological diversity and to promoting scholarship that challenges the traditional disciplinary dichotomies through which the field has defined itself, such as text/practice, written/oral, philology/ethnography, and humanistic/social scientific study. Transregional focus – we encourage a holistic approach to the study of Tibet and the Himalaya as a region, albeit a diverse one. One of the most important features of religious traditions in our field – perhaps in every field – is the degree to which they are inextricably connected, and it is only through the exploration of such interconnections that the phenomenon of religion in the Tibeto-Himalayan region can be understood. Such interconnections often cut across ethnonational boundaries. Focus on cultural history – in recent times, the study of Asian religions has taken a quite drastic cultural/historical turn. Nowhere is this more evident than in the study of Tibetan and Himalayan religions. A previous generation of scholars was concerned principally with elite religious institutions – and more specifically with their doctrinal/philosophical texts. Today scholarship is much more diverse. A new generation of scholars is concerned, for example, with folk religious practices, religion and material culture, the politics of religious institutions, the representation of Tibetan religions in the media, and the historical construction of the field itself. This Unit is committed to fostering such a multifaceted approach to the cultural history of Tibet and the Himalayas.

Chairs:

- Brandon Dotson, Georgetown University
brandon.dotson@wolfson.oxon.org
- Nicole Willock, Old Dominion University
nwillock@odu.edu

Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture Unit

Call Text:

The Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture Unit seeks papers or a panel proposal on the following themes:

Paul Tillich and Delores Williams in Dialogue

The Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture, Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society, and Black Theology Units, in recognition of the 2022 passing of the prominent Womanist theologian Delores Williams, invites paper proposals that consider the extent of her contribution to the academy in both her scholarship and teaching vis-à-vis the work of Paul Tillich, which she engaged with very heavily during her career at Union Theological Seminary. We invite paper proposals exploring the intersections of and/or tensions between Williams' Womanist theology and the thought of Tillich in terms of any of the following: culture and correlation; theology and aesthetics; the nature of sin and evil; survival and courage; salvation; Christology; the Black radical tradition and the Jewish prophetic tradition; the ministerial vision and the Jewish prophetic tradition; the nature and work of the church; racial narcissism and estrangement. We especially welcome papers considering Williams' teaching on the aforementioned topics, as there has never been a formal conversation on her pedagogy.

Tillichian Cartographies and Hip-Hop Aesthetics

The Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture and the Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop and Religion Unit seeks paper proposals for a cosponsored panel on the contemporary cultural and artistic scene's disclosure of intersections between Paul Tillich and religious sensibilities expressed within Hip-hop. The music of Kendrick Lamar would be a case in point. We invite papers exploring new cartographies in Tillichian thought that center a scholarly use of Hip-hop as a cultural resource for thinking and rethinking through Tillichian theological and methodological approaches in the study of religion. We are especially interested in papers that address the following issues: Hip-hop, culture, and correlation; theology of culture and embodiment; theology and aesthetics; complex subjectivity, estrangement, and the "New Being"; Christian existentialism and the Black radical tradition; racial narcissism and Black existentialism.

Mission Statement:

This Unit fosters scholarship and scholarly exchanges that analyze, criticize, and interpret the thought or impact of Paul Tillich (1886–1965) and that use his thought — or use revisions of or reactions against his thought — to deal with contemporary issues in theology, religion, ethics, or the political, social, psychotherapeutic, scientific, or artistic spheres of human culture. We cooperate with the North American Paul Tillich Society (a Related Scholarly Organization of the AAR), which is linked with the German, French, and other Tillich societies. Papers at our sessions are published in the Society's quarterly Bulletin without prejudice to their also appearing elsewhere.

Chairs:

- Michele Watkins, University of San Diego.
mwatkins@sandiego.edu
- Kirk, McGregor, McPherson College
macgregk@mcpherson.edu

Traditions of Eastern Late Antiquity Unit

Call Text:

Environments and Landscapes

For this session, we invite paper proposals that address how late ancient eastern traditions address the environment and landscapes, broadly conceived. Proposals might explore how texts or artifacts depict natural environments, human interactions with nature, and representations of landscapes, animals, and/or archeological sites. We encourage papers that employ diverse methodological frameworks such as insights from eco-criticism and/or environmental humanities.

Contending with Scholarly Legacies: Orientalism in the study of the ancient eastern Mediterranean (co-sponsored by the SBL Syriac Studies program)

For this joint session, we invite proposals that critically assess/evaluate the ways that our fields (broadly defined) have been shaped by agendas and assumptions of significant orientalist scholars of the previous centuries.

Open Call

An open session for which papers on any topic germane to the subject area of the Program Unit may be proposed. We particularly encourage papers from graduate students, new AAR members, and minoritized scholars.

Mission Statement:

This program unit focused on Late Antiquity in the East aims to provide a home for the study of religious traditions that are rooted in Mesopotamia, Persia, and western Asia, particularly those parts that were outside the Roman cultural reach such as Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, and Mandaeism. While the unit will focus on late antiquity, many of these traditions, and particularly their extant texts come to us from much later periods, and this scholarly issue will be part of our discussions. In addition, many of the traditions that were born in this time and place also spread to other parts of the world, and the study of them in those forms and contexts also has a place within this program unit, as does investigation of their response to the rise of Islam in the region. In addition, this unit's focus is not exclusively on those traditions that developed uniquely in this region, but also those which, when transplanted there, had significant evolutions in that milieu that differ from their counterparts in other times and places (e.g. Christianity, Judaism). We likewise encourage research which focuses on the interaction between the various communities and traditions of this place and time.

Chairs:

- Sara Ronis, Saint Mary's University, Texas

sara.ronis@gmail.com

- Abby Kulisz, McMaster University
alkulisz@iu.edu

Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogy Unit

Call Text:

Co-sponsored with Psychology, Culture, and Religion unit

“Psychological, Religious, and Pedagogical Engagement with “DEI” Paradigms in the Classroom and Beyond”

What does it mean to successfully engage diversity, equity, and inclusion in a classroom or institutional setting in a way that is transformative? This panel invites critical engagement from psychology, religion, and pedagogical perspectives in relation to both the value and limits of DEI paradigms for rectifying power imbalances and other issues in pedagogical spaces. What does transformative pedagogy in relation to DEI concerns look like? How might DEI paradigms contribute to equitable and inclusive change or does the focus on DEI let institutions and/or faculty off the hook for deeper work on decolonizing the academy?

Co-sponsored with Teaching Religion Unit

Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Unit

“Honoring bell hooks”

To honor the life and work of bell hooks, we are seeking proposals on her influence for thinking about and teaching religion. In her book *Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks examines education as the practice of freedom and argues for teaching students to transgress oppression. How do we structure our classrooms and our pedagogical strategies to use our power justly? How do we offer liberatory education that is inclusive and empowers students for critical consciousness and action? How might we broadly reimagine educational settings and strategies? Proposals for a demonstration of a teaching strategy are encouraged.

Co-sponsor with Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Unit

“Embodied Pedagogies: Teaching Asian American Religions”

The Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogy and Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society (ANARCS) units are seeking panel or roundtable proposals that highlight creative pedagogies in teaching Asian American religions. What learning outcomes result when we step outside of the expected lecture format? How can active learning activities engage a diverse group of students or address specific challenges that might arise in teaching Asian American religions? Conversely, are there instances when embodied pedagogies may not be appropriate or effective? We would especially welcome analyses and presentations that invite audience engagement and response as “students” in the classroom.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to provide a forum for exploring transformative scholarship and

pedagogy across religious traditions and scholarly disciplines, challenging the traditional boundaries between scholarship and activism while experimenting with alternative approaches to teaching and the production of knowledge.

Chairs:

- Michael Fisher, San José State University
michael.fisher@sjsu.edu
- Laura Stivers, Dominican University of California
laura.stivers@dominican.edu

Vatican II Studies Unit

Call Text:

Sacrosanctum Concilium: Emblem of Conciliar Reform after 60 Years

The renewal of Vatican II was experienced most immediately and visibly through the reform of the liturgy. Similarly, resistance to this reform continues to be the harbinger of all other debates surrounding the role and perception of Vatican II in contemporary Catholicism. As we mark the 60th anniversary of *Sacrosanctum concilium* in 2023, we invite paper proposals addressing: the implementation of the liturgical reform of Vatican II, especially in multi-cultural and racially diverse Catholic contexts, in its historical and contemporaneous expressions, and from Latin and Eastern rite Catholic perspectives; the relationship between criticism of the liturgical reform and criticism of Vatican II in militant Catholic groups, including reactions to pope Francis' motu proprio *Traditionis Custodes*; the ecclesiology implied in the Constitution on the Liturgy and the work of the post-conciliar commission for the reform of the Roman Rites; the influence Catholic reforms on the renewal of the liturgy in other Christian churches, including the role of the Consultation on Common Texts and the Common Lectionary.

Rahner's World Church and Decolonization Today

In his 1979 essay, "Towards a Fundamental Theological Interpretation of Vatican II," Karl Rahner contends that the council must be understood as the "first official self-actualization" of the church as "world church," while acknowledging that the it must become inculturated throughout the world to realize this identity in the fullest sense. His thesis includes an interpretation of the changing epochs of Christian history. We invite proposals that explore the continuing significance of Rahner's interpretation for understanding Vatican II and its reception; Vatican II's rethinking of the church-world relationship; the nature of epochal shifts and disruptions in human history and their implication for the social location, self-understanding, and mission of Christianity; the growing importance of decolonization for the full inculturation of the church in the contemporary context.

Mission Statement:

This Unit gives scholarly attention to the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), one of the most significant events in the history of the Catholic Church – an event that had

wide-ranging implications for other faiths, other Christian churches, and for the wider world alike. This Unit has a double focus: first, 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, and the history of the reception of the Council, and the redaction history of the different documents of the Council; second, a strong theological one on both to the hermeneutical issues connected to methods of interpreting conciliar teaching and its ongoing reception in a changing context. By looking more closely at the past, our Unit hopes to promote greater conciliarity and synodality in the Christian churches in the present. In this second mandate of its presence within the American Academy of Religion, the Vatican II Studies Unit turns its attention to the reception of Vatican II within the various social and cultural contexts of the Americas and elsewhere, and to its continuing influence in the changing context of twenty-first century global Christianity.

Chairs:

- Dries Bosschaert, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
dries.bosschaert@kuleuven.be
- Kristin Colberg, College of Saint Benedict, Saint John's University
kcolberg@csbsju.edu

Wesleyan and Methodist Studies Unit

Call Text:

The Wesleyan and Methodist Studies Unit invites proposals on the topic of Pneumatology in the Wesleyan-Methodist Traditions. Proposals may be historical or theological in approach. The unit is interested in papers that explore:

- The role of pneumatology in the shaping of Wesleyan-Methodist identity.
- The place of pneumatology in Wesleyan-Methodist revivalism and the emergence of new movements, such as the Holiness Movement and Pentecostalism.
- Theologies of Wesleyan-Methodist pneumatology in various time periods, geographical locations, denominations and movements, and among various theologians in the tradition.
- The social contexts in which Wesleyan-Methodist pneumatologies emerged.
- The connections between pneumatology and liturgy and worship in the Wesleyan-Methodist traditions.
- The contributions of Wesleyan-Methodist pneumatology to the Christian tradition and global Christianity.

The Wesleyan and Methodist Studies Unit invites proposals on the topic of Global and Postcolonial approaches to Wesleyan/Methodist church history. The unit is interested in papers that explore:

- Exploring how the fields of global Christianity and postcolonial studies help us to

reconceptualize and develop new approaches to the study of Wesleyan/Methodist history.

- Interrogating which communities have been put at the 'center' and 'periphery' of Wesleyan/Methodist history.
- Uncovering the resources Wesleyan/Methodist history provides for a decolonized and global approach to the history of Christianity more broadly. Analyzing ways in which decolonial methodology, particularly decolonial historiography challenges the triumphalistic nature of some historical narratives within the Wesleyan-Methodist context.
- Exploring how a decolonized or global approach changes the teaching of Wesleyan/Methodist history.

Mission Statement:

This Unit seeks to promote the critical understanding and appropriation of Wesleyan and Methodist 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.

Chairs:

- Jung Choi, Duke University
jchoi@div.duke.edu
- Cindy K. Wesley, University of Northern Colorado
cindy.wesley@unco.edu

Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit

Call Text:

Sisters in the Wilderness – Honoring the life and scholarly legacy of womanist theologian Delores Williams and the 30th Anniversary of *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist Godtalk* (Orbis, 1993)

Our unit is arranging a co-sponsored panel with the Black Theology unit and Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions, honoring the scholarly legacy of the late Delores Williams, a trailblazing womanist theologian. We recognize the significance of Williams' works and particularly highlight the 30th Anniversary of the publication of *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist Godtalk*. This is an invited panel with closed submissions.

Engaging or Challenging Diaspora Religions Through Literature, Storytelling, or Archival Narratives (Co-sponsored panel shared between the African Diaspora Religions, Afro-American Religious History, Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit, African Religions, The Women and Religion Unit, the Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching and Activism)

Our units propose a panel focused on literature, poetry, orality, and archival sources related to African, African Diaspora, or Afro-American religions. Iconic texts from authors such as Zora Neale Hurston, Toni Morrison, Gloria Anzaldua, and Gloria Naylor, among others, engage with faith, spirituality, embodiment, ancestry, mourning, fellowship, borders/border crossings, and other issues, questions, and challenges. We invite papers that explore the power dynamics reflected in such texts, the provenance of the same, the benefits and challenges of working with these kinds of sources.

OPEN CALL

The Womanist Approaches to Religion & Society Unit welcomes papers that highlight one or more of the following topics:

- In recognition of the 2023 Annual Meeting location in San Antonio, Texas, engage the relationships between Hispanic/ Latinx/Chicano/a, and Black communities concerning intergenerational issues such as electoral politics, artistic expressions, leadership, activism, and religion
- Womanist Responses to the newest volume, *Walking through the Valley: Womanist Explorations in the Spirit of Katie Geneva Cannon* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2022), edited by Emilie Townes, Stacey Floyd-Thomas, Alison Gise Johnson, and Angela Sims
- Comparative Africana Womanisms in conversation with African Diasporic, Global, and Interreligious Perspectives
- Black Women's Visual Arts, Black Women's Cultural Productions, Black Women's Cultural Creations (e.g., Shonda Rhimes, Issa Rae, Lena Waithe, Regina King, Ava Duvernay), and Contemporary representations of Black women in film (e.g., *Woman King*, *Black Panther II: Wakanda Forever*, *Till*, *I Wanna Dance With Somebody*), television (e.g., *Star Wars Obi-Wan Kenobi*, *Abbott Elementary*, *The Chi*), and theatre
- Black women's Labor and Activism concerning climate change and environmental justice (in connection to the 2023 Presidential theme of the AAR Annual Meeting, "Labor of Hands").

Mission Statement:

This Unit provides a forum for religious scholarship that engages theoretically and methodologically the four-part definition of a Womanist as defined 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.

Chairs:

- Melanie Jones, Union Presbyterian Seminary
melaniechantejones@gmail.com
- Valerie Miles-Tribble, American Baptist Seminary of the West
macsvmt@gmail.com

Women and Religion Unit

Call Text:

While all submissions are welcome, we are particularly interested in paper and panel proposals that respond to the following topics.

Gender, Labor, and Migration In response to this year's theme *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*, the Women and Religion Unit invites proposals that critically analyze the intersection of gender, labor, migration, and religion in any geographical location. Proposals may engage with the following questions: How do scholars of religion engage with gender and sexuality as an analytical tool when studying migration? What roles would religion play in migrant communities and labor movements as these communities and movements seek out gender and sexuality justice?

Religious Hybridity and Trans Understandings of Religion*

- a. We invite proposals that challenge the categories of religion, faith, and spirituality and offer new perspectives on these categories, particularly through religious syncretism, hybridity, and transnational, transgender, and transsexual approaches.
- b. We also seek out proposals that critically engage in women's lived experiences of transnational, transgender, cross-racial, and/or transsexual solidarity for justice and a new understanding of religion emerging from this engagement.

Intersectionality as a Method in the Academic Studies of Religion

We invite panels and papers that critically engage with the question of how religion can meaningfully be considered at the intersection of race, gender, and class. Does it matter which religion might be added to the intersection? How do feminist approaches to religious studies and women's lived experiences define women and gender as categories intersecting with race and class? What other analytical tools besides intersectionality would scholars and activists consider when studying religious communities and their social movements?

Harnessing Our Scholarly Privilege and Power for Public Good: Reproductive Justice and Religion

Contact: Shana Sippy (shana.sippy@centre.edu) and Michal Raucher (michal.raucher@rutgers.edu)

With particular awareness of the AAR's presence in Texas (or wherever we may be), this call for proposals seeks to respond directly to the realities of a post-Dobbs America. We hope to bring together scholars who work in a range of regions and on different religious traditions in order to share their knowledge and comparative perspectives that will deepen our understanding of the issues surrounding reproductive justice. In the planning phase, we seek to gather together scholars and activists who wish to think through and prepare some type of public program on the issue of Reproductive Justice for the annual meeting. We anticipate this session will be jointly sponsored by a number of different units and, depending on the response, may involve multiple sessions or additional programming.

Renewing Women's Voices in Religion: Sexual Politics, Symbols and Metaphors, and the Erotic We welcome paper and panel proposals that critically reconstruct sexual politics grounded

in various understandings of the erotic from women pioneers in religious studies and critical gender and racial theories. For instance, proposals may illuminate the complex intersection of the ethical, the political, and the spiritual in women's social movements by revitalizing Marcella Althaus-Reid's *Indecent Theology* (i.e., french kissing God), Gloria Anzaldúa's *nephantla*, amina wadud's queering Islamic studies, and many other examples of groundbreaking scholarship on race, gender, class, and sexuality.

Proposals may critically engage with "queering" as a method to study the critical intersection of contemporary social issues and religion (i.e., religious symbols and metaphors). We also welcome proposals to reconstruct the meanings of the erotic, for example, as seen in Sharon Patrician Holland's *The Erotic Life of Racism* and in M. Jacqui Alexander's *Pedagogies of Crossing*: the erotic as a deep yearning for wholeness and capacity to desire justice and peace.

Israel/Palestine: the UN Resolution to Commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Nakba On November 30, 2022, the UN General Assembly approved a resolution to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the *Nakba*, a term used to describe the forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of [Palestinians](#) in the lead-up to the establishment of the state of [Israel](#) in 1948. In response to the UN resolution, we invite paper and panel proposals that critically examine the intersection of religion and gender in the history of Israeli-Palestinian relations, Palestinian youth movements, peace activism, and the commemoration of *Nakba*. Comparative religious or interfaith approaches to conflict and peacebuilding in the Israeli-Palestinian context as well as transnationally comparative studies of the Palestinian liberation movement and other popular liberation movements (i.e., Black Lives Matter, Hong Kong movement, etc.) would be welcomed, too.

Asian American Feminist Theologies for Just Racial Relations

This panel discusses antiracist resources informed by Asian/North American feminist theology and biblical scholarship. Although scholarly books and articles on Asian American theology (broadly defined) in response to the current ethical, political, and cultural issues have been prolific, there have been no to few concerted efforts to interrogate or dismantle anti-Asian racism inseparable from anti-black racism and white settler colonialism that have often undermined the communal spirit and livelihood of Christianity. In the current political climate, COVID-related anti-Asian hate and racial conflict, which all intersect with gender and sexuality-based violence, require theological, moral, and political inquiries. Hence, this panel notes the current paucity of work with critical discussions on the multiple facets of racism from Asian American feminist theological perspectives. Panelists deepen the inter/transdisciplinary approaches concerning how to dismantle racist theological teachings, biblical interpretations, liturgical presentations, and the Christian church's leadership structure.

Pre-arranged panel. Contact co-chairs for any inquiry about this panel.

Abortion and Religion: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives

Based on *T&T Clark Reader in Abortion and Religion* (2023), this panel examines cultural and theological responses to abortion as background for understanding a diversity of ethical

positions in contemporary Christian, Jewish, and Muslim writings. Politicized debates about abortion are often presented in terms of binary rhetoric of pro-life versus pro-choice; however, the panel shows how that binary often breaks down when abortion is seen from different religious perspectives and in light of the voices of women themselves. While abortion is a global phenomenon, the panel focuses on the U.S. context. American abortion politics and culture wars have been dominated by Christian voices; nevertheless, Jewish and Muslim abortion ethics engage many of the same issues from different cultural and religious perspectives. Finally, the panel presents important examples of recent social scientific studies about the relationship of religion and abortion in the diverse cultural, racial, and economic fabric of American society. Pre-arranged panel. Contact co-chairs for any inquiry about this panel.

"Gender, Sexuality, and Protest: The Iranian Protests and Beyond," Co-sponsored by Liberation Theologies unit; Religion, Social Conflict, and Peace unit; Women and Religion unit, Political Theology unit

The 2022 protests in Iran over the death of Mahsa Amini while in custody of the country's 'guidance control' (or, 'morality police') represent a new experience in the voice of youth, especially women, in articulating religious and secular theories of resistance. Its practical and intellectual impact continues to be felt in Iran and globally, especially through the amplification of the Kurdish protest slogan "Women, Life, Freedom!". This session is dedicated to understanding the dynamics of gender and sexuality in activism and political change. Proposals are encouraged that touch on the role of women in protest with regards to the movement in Iran and internationally, as well as gender, women and the public role of the religious/secular at large. Other possible areas include:

- Gender and sexuality as lens to think about protest, globally
- The relationship between protest and religion
- Non-oppositional ways of considering "loyalty" and "dissent"

Engaging Diaspora Religions Through Literature, Storytelling or Archival Narratives

(Co-sponsorship between the African Diaspora Religions, Afro-American Religious History, Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit, African Religions, The Women and Religion Unit, the Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching and Activism) Our units propose a panel focused on literature, poetry, orality, and archival sources related to African, African Diaspora, or Afro-American religions. Iconic texts from authors such as Zora Neale Hurston, Toni Morrison, Gloria Anzaldua, and Gloria Naylor, among others, engage with faith, spirituality, embodiment, ancestry, mourning, fellowship, borders/border crossings, and other issues, questions, and challenges. We invite papers that explore the power dynamics reflected in such texts, the provenance of the same, and the benefits and challenges of working with these kinds of sources. Do we understand and interpret faith differently depending on whether we rely on oral history or literature? Do archives permit access to faith?

Mission Statement:

The Women and Religion Unit seeks to promote inclusivity and excellence in scholarship. We have been intentional about including participants/presenters from interdisciplinary

approaches and encouraging non-traditional ways of sharing scholarly work on the intersection of women's and gender studies and religious and theological studies. In making selections for the annual sessions, we work collaboratively with other program units of AAR 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 and religion can be advanced.

Chairs:

- Boyung Lee, Iliff School of Theology
blee@iliff.edu
- Tracey McEwan, University of Newcastle,
Australia tracey.mcewan@uon.edu.au

Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Unit

Call Text:

WOCSTA welcomes submissions of individual presentations, organized panels, and roundtable discussions that are in keeping with the Unit's purpose. We encourage non-traditional formats that encourage conversation and engagement. Possible topics may include:

- Abortion and reproductive justice in the present political moment: facilitating opportunities for scholars of religion to learn from activists who are working on the ground, particularly those working in states with restrictive laws
- Marginalized solidarities (abortion/immigration/violence against persons of color; queer trans community)
- Decolonizing faith-based practices/ decolonizing institutional practices
- The fragility of hegemonic subjectivities: how do those with power mobilize narratives of victimhood to consolidate power? (eg white women's tears; brahminical fragility)
- Self-care; self-compassion, self-generosity, self-love: how do we imagine embodied pedagogies of care (how do we teach care, how do we bring care into our practice of teaching; how do we address the dissonance between articulated ethics of care that we teach and what we model)

Possible co-sponsored panels:

Honoring bell hooks

To honor the life and work of bell hooks, the Transformative Scholarship and Teaching Unit, Teaching Religion Unit, and Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Unit are seeking proposals on her influence for thinking about and teaching religion. In her book *Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks examines education as the practice of freedom and argues for teaching students to transgress oppression. How do we structure our classrooms and our pedagogical strategies to use our power justly? How do we offer liberatory education that is inclusive and empowers students for critical consciousness and action? How might we broadly reimagine educational settings and

strategies? Proposals for a demonstration of a teaching strategy are encouraged. *Possible Co-sponsorship with Religion & Ecology Unit / Religion and Human Rights Unit* Keeping in mind the presidential theme “*La Labor de Nuestras Manos*” and our meeting location in Texas, we invite papers that consider the following:

- Religion and human rights “on the ground”: we seek proposals on the conversation and practice of human rights within grassroots communities, especially in dialogue with religious thought and scholarship of religious studies
- The co-creation of “sacred spaces” in the community-engaged work of scholars, laborers, and activists; how do practices of rest and resistance foster such spaces?
- Ecology and resilience: How might faith traditions and practices that emphasize relations with the natural world bolster our capacity to build just and flourishing communities and eco-systems? How does the ‘work of our hands’ to achieve climate justice bolster our capacity to build just and flourishing communities and ecosystems?
- Intersectional approaches to climate change and environmental justice. We are especially interested in considering intersectional vulnerabilities; centering survival for people of color and the global South in climate justice efforts.

Engaging Diaspora Religions Through Literature, Storytelling or Archival Narratives

(Co-sponsorship between the African Diaspora Religions, Afro-American Religious History, Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Unit, African Religions, The Women and Religion Unit, the Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching and Activism) Our units propose a panel focused on literature, poetry, orality, and archival sources related to African, African Diaspora, or Afro-American religions. Iconic texts from authors such as Zora Neale Hurston, Toni Morrison, Gloria Anzaldua, and Gloria Naylor, among others, engage with faith, spirituality, embodiment, ancestrality, mourning, fellowship, borders/border crossings, and other issues, questions, and challenges. We invite papers that explore the power dynamics reflected in such texts, the provenance of the same, and the benefits and challenges of working with these kinds of sources. Do we understand and interpret faith differently depending on whether we rely on oral history or literature? Do archives permit access to faith?

Mission Statement:

This Unit fosters intellectual exchange in the fields of religious studies and theology as they are developing in diverse communities of color from a gendered analysis. While the AAR features Program Units from diverse communities of color, we provide a space for conversation between communities of color. This Unit does not assume a prior “women of color” identity, but centers a woman of color analytic that deconstructs the intersecting logics of gender and race. At the same time, we do not hold to a “post-identity” framework and are also concerned with the status of women of color in the academy, the politics of pedagogy, and the relationship between women-of-color-centered activism and scholarship. Understanding identity as performative and shifting, we make the very category of “women of color” itself a site for political and intellectual engagement.

Chairs:

- Sailaja Krishnamurti, Queen's University, Kingston, sailaja.krishnamurti@queensu.ca
- Deborah Rogers, Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School

drogers@crcds.edu

World Christianity Unit

Call Text:

In discussing his presidential address, *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*, for the 2023 American Academy of Religion conference to be held in San Antonio Texas, Amir Hussain states, "I also want to talk about the actual work that we do as scholars of religion, which often isn't the production of scholarly monographs that are sometimes only read by a handful of people, but work that affects thousands." In our call for papers, the World Christianity Unit desires to consider *La Labor de Nuestras Manos* as it connects to both to the public understanding of religion and the lived realities of people across the globe, and from the perspectives of a multiplicity of academic disciplines, including anthropology, sociology, history, and theology. One area of exploration is the idea of a boundaryless Christianity. As we begin to exist in a post-COVID-19 world, how has the use of technology reshaped how individuals and communities engage with and practice religion? What has been gained or lost in moving beyond place-based and geographical tied religious expressions? What are best practices for fostering a boundaryless faith and how does this bolster and equip practitioners for the realities they encounter in a world dealing with wars, natural disasters, inflation, and a continued effect of a global pandemic?

Second, building on the president's engagement with Islam, the World Christianity Unit seeks to also explore the connection between Islam and World Christianity. On this topic, as well as that of boundaryless Christianity, much work has already been done within our field, including with respect to the ways in which mission and migration have complexified Christian communities around the world. Given the reality that several nation states and communities must grapple with the reality of a Christian and Muslim majority, Christian Majority/Muslim minority, or Christian minority/Muslim majority, what is the role of religious practitioners, peace makers and interreligious dialogue in these contexts? What are some of the innovative interreligious partnerships that are being fostered and how do they facilitate the flourishing of beliefs, people, and communities?

Third, typical engagement between Christianity and crime has been framed with a moralistic/punitive lens, with attention given to how a person or community engages in "right behavior" or "pays for their crimes." As a unit we want to interrogate the moralistic/punitive lens—recognizing that it has historical, colonial, racial, economic and religious underpinnings that give rise to various systems and structures that can result in the presence of these "deviant behaviors." How is this seen in the US and globally? What are the restorative frameworks that can be employed with regard to Christianity and Crime and its impact of practitioners? One example to consider might be the impact of

Desmond Tutu's role in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, and its relationship to the ongoing struggles for justice for indigenous people in Canada and Norway.

Fourth, a potential co-sponsorship with the Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Unit titled, Navigating Language: (In)visibility and Power amongst Latinxs: In his usage of the Spanish Language for his presidential theme, *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*, Hussain highlights not only the significance of language, but also the power and privilege it holds. In the field of World Christianity, there is an important continuing conversation regarding the need for scholarship to be published in more than one language. As a unit, in thinking of a potential co-sponsorship with the Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Unit, we seek to consider the additional areas the field of World Christianity needs to be decolonized. How is this process already being done at the grassroots level, and what can we as scholars of religion learn from these dialectic processes?

Mission Statement:

This Unit 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.

Chairs:

- Janice McLean-Farrell, New Brunswick Theological Seminary
jmclean-farrell@nbts.edu
- Briana Wong, Phillips Theological Seminary
briana.lynn.wong@gmail.com

Yoga in Theory and Practice Unit

Call Text:

We invite proposals on the following topics. Please contact the organizing scholar listed next to each topic for more information (if you feel your work might fit into more than one category, please feel free to contact for organizers together):

- Christian-based yoga (Contact: Allyson Huval, allysonhuval@gmail.com)
- Vernacular yoga (Contact: Aalekhya Malladi, aalekhya.malladi@emory.edu)
- Early Modern yoga (Contact: Shaman Hatley, shaman.hatley@umb.edu and Alba Rodriguez, alba.rodriquez@email.ucr.edu)
- Contemporary Indian yoga (Contact: Patricia Sauthoff, sauthoff@ualberta.ca and Christopher Chapple, christopher.chapple@lmu.edu)
- South Asian and East Asian comparative bodily practices and/or yogic bodies more generally (Contact: Seth Ligo, sethligo@gmail.com)

We are also open to full-panel proposals on any other topic falling under the purview of Yoga Studies.

Mission Statement: This Unit seeks to elucidate the religious and sectarian representations of yoga in South Asian history and the profoundly fascinating contemporary yoga culture that has emerged in the past century. Among other topics that are addressed in our Unit is the emergence of modern yoga out of the encounter between Indian and European cultures in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In connection with this, it examines the relative pervasiveness of spiritual and religious ideologies in manifest or latent forms within the contemporary yoga scene, and the overarching sociological relevance of yoga within global culture. We also examine changing paradigms with respect to the nature and function of yoga in the larger South Asian religious context. Our goal is to provide a venue in which the body of scholars working in this area can collectively evaluate this extremely timely material. We actively pursue scholars from Europe, Asia, and other areas that have worked at length on these issues, so as to bring an important international component to the Unit.

Chairs:

- Anya Foxen, California Polytechnic State University
afoxen@calpoly.edu
- Christopher Patrick Miller, Arihanta Academy
christopher.miller@arihanta-academy.com

Yogācāra Studies Unit

Call Text:

We have outlined a set of panel topics that we are particularly interested in soliciting proposals for. If you would like to participate in a panel on one of these topics, please contact the person listed. Anyone is also welcome to propose a panel or a paper on a topic not listed here. Panel proposals are more likely to be accepted than individual paper proposals, so it is best to try to find other scholars and to jointly make a panel proposal on your topics. Feel free to contact the unit co-chairs (Douglas Duckworth, duckworth@temple.edu or Joy Brennan, brennanj@kenyon.edu) with any questions.

- Korean Yogacara. Contact Sumi Lee (sumiring@gmail.com)
- Yogacara Influence on Religious and Philosophical Movements in East Asia. Contact Ron Green (rgreen@coastal.edu)
- A roundtable on Jingjing Li's recently published book: *Comparing Husserl's Phenomenology and Chinese Yogacara in a Multi-Cultural World*. Contact Joy Brennan (brennanj@kenyon.edu)
- The Liberative Potential of the Imagination in Yogācāra. Contact Davey Tomlinson (david.tomlinson@villanova.edu)
- Avidyā (Ignorance) in Yogācāra and Other Traditions of Thought, Buddhist and Non-Buddhist. Contact Chih-Ying Wu (chihying_wu@berkeley.edu)

Mission Statement:

The Yogācāra tradition within Buddhism provides the seminal basis for many forms of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Yogācāra was the preeminent Buddhist school for many centuries

in India, East Asia, and Tibet. Even after its relative decline as a distinct tradition, its teachings continued to provide the basis for both the theory and practice of subsequent Buddhist Mahāyāna schools throughout Asia, and it has seen a resurgence in the 20th and 21st century in Asia, including in China, Hong Kong, Japan, and among Tibetans.

Chairs:

- Joy Brennan, Kenyon College
brennanj@kenyon.edu
- Douglas S. Duckworth, Temple University
douglas.duckworth@temple.edu

Seminars

Anglican Studies Seminar

Call Text:

Following our discussion of a provocative set of invited papers in Year 1 that focused on the historical legacies shaping Anglican ecclesiologies in various contexts, we are issuing an open call for papers in Year 2 of this five-year initiative that surface the *biblical* and *theological factors* shaping Anglican practices of church in diverse locales. Within the worldwide Anglican Communion, Anglicans engage the Christian scriptures and the heritage of Christian theology (Anglican and more broadly) in diverse ways. This has led to significant ecclesiological differences and has called into question whether there is anything like an “Anglican identity” or if it is simply true that there are multiple Anglican identities. If it is the latter, the question of what, if anything, unites Anglicans in the face of these diverse identities has become an urgent and neuralgic one, one that this seminar will investigate through the interdisciplinary methods of Anglican Studies. Papers that emphasize de- and postcolonial dynamics at work in the formation and maintenance of “operative ecclesiologies,” particularly in understudied regions of the Communion, are especially welcome.

Please note that those whose proposals are accepted must commit to submitting their paper for pre-circulation by Monday, October 16, 2023. Seminar members and others wishing to attend will have access to these papers, which will be briefly summarized at the meeting but will not be presented by their authors. Instead, they will be discussed among the panelists, seminar members, and session attendees. Please note that, due to AAR/SBL policies pertaining to participation, **those whose proposals are accepted must commit to attending the 2023 Annual Meeting in San Antonio.**

Mission Statement:

The Anglican Studies Seminar holds that Anglican Studies requires a sustained study of the intersections of post- and de-colonialism, imperial legacies, and globalization with the ongoing evolution of Anglican identity in specific locations marked by their particular economic, social, cultural, and historical conditions. The Seminar pays detailed attention to context; its work disrupts extant assumptions about the Anglican tradition being a monolithic, monocultural entity. Accordingly, the Seminar focuses on the “operative ecclesiologies” of Anglican churches at the national or provincial level. That is, we are

interested in how the contextual realities of Anglicans in concrete locales shape the ways in which church is practiced by Anglicans, whether they answer to standard ecclesial and theological conceptualizations or not.

Seminar members are committed to a globalized study of Anglicanism, conceived broadly, and to investigating various operative ecclesiologies, locally and contextually. We foster interdisciplinary conversations that enable scholars to speak to multiple aspects of Anglicanism. The seminar's findings will be of interest to scholars working in a range of disciplines. Moreover, close examination of the processes of decolonization that inform lived Anglicanisms will supply the wider field of religious studies with a set of thickly described case studies of post-colonial decolonization. It is the intention of the Steering Committee to publish research resulting from the Seminar and make it accessible to an interdisciplinary audience.

Chairs:

- Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook, Claremont School of Theology
skujawa-holbrook@cst.edu
- Scott MacDougall, Church Divinity School of the Pacific
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Artificial Intelligence and Religion Seminar

Call Text:

Scholars of religion and theology add a crucial voice to the ethics of artificial intelligence. In keeping with this year's conference theme, we seek papers that address how religion and theology together might provide a social justice oriented lens through which to explore artificial intelligence. We will have two sessions. One session will focus on theory and one on A.I. experiments.

For our theory session, we seek papers that focus on general A.I. and social justice. What is meant by general A.I.? How might we conceive sentience, theologically? Since the divine is often associated with sublime, could a machine generate new experiences of divine-like presence or intervention using Ai Art? Might AI help evolve an (semi-)autonomous spirituality that breathes new life into our world? Longtermism and Effective Altruism seek social justice for a future that surpasses inequality through the development of a society of plentitude using artificial intelligence, but these approaches have also been criticized by some. We seek papers that address these movements. We encourage proposals that address racialized, gendered, sexed, and/or differently abled perspectives. We welcome original papers that pose new questions.

Additionally, we seek proposals that show experiments using artificial intelligence in the study of religion. Scholars that are finding new applications for A.I. are encouraged to submit an abstract proposal even if their project is ongoing. Follow-up reports on projects already presented are likewise welcome.

Please note that this paper uses the AAR full-papers program, in which papers are made available before the meeting. Accepted proposers should expect to produce article-length papers (4000-7000 words) that will be due by mid-October 2023.

Mission Statement: Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) is a topic with widespread cultural impact. It is likewise becoming increasingly relevant to religion. Several attempts at using A.I. to understand biblical texts or to model religious practices have yielded fascinating results. But A. I. increasingly is becoming part of the lives of religious people from home A.I. devices, to the application of A.I. by religious groups and organizations, to the prospect of a future superintelligent A.I. that may pose existential threats to humanity or provide solutions to seemingly insoluble problems. Artificial Intelligence is a topic that will increasingly impact religion and religious people as well as individuals who find spirituality in places that are intersecting with digitalization, including popular culture sites such as sport, and music.

Changes may be coming from widespread unemployment to the virtual elimination of death itself. These are issues within the purview of Religious Studies and Theology that require systematic analysis. This the seminar deals with the application and analysis of Narrow A.I. as well as the potential of General A.I. We seek scholars interested in experimental applications of artificial intelligence to religious studies and theology as well as the analysis of current and future implications of A.I. for religion and spirituality. This unit is a resource for engaging the importance and relevance of A.I. as it intersects with religion, theology, and spirituality. We seek to contribute to the larger cultural and multidisciplinary discussion about these issues as A.I develops.

Chairs:

- Randall Reed, Appalachian State University
reedrw@appstate.edu
- Tracy J. Trothen, Queen's University, Kingston_
trothent@queensu.ca

Buddhist Pedagogy Seminar

Call Text:

The Buddhist Pedagogy Seminar welcomes papers on any aspect of pedagogy for teaching Buddhism in a semester-long course or as part of a world religions class. For our last, 2023, meeting we would like to solicit roundtable proposals as well as individual paper proposals. The roundtable moderator/organizer will send one proposal that includes the discussion topic and each discussants' subjects. The discussants do not need to send a separate proposal.

Aligned with the presidential theme related to Islamic studies, we particularly would like to investigate teaching about the dialogue between Buddhism and Islam, comparative studies between them, relationships between Buddhists and Muslims, or other relevant themes. We also welcome reflections concerning but not limited to:

- Radical pedagogy
- Ungrading
- Ritual and art
- Experiential Learning
- The use of visual media (film, TV shows, comic books, commercial, etc.)

For any inquires related to proposal submissions, please contact Gloria Chien at chien@gonzaga.edu.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Buddhist Pedagogy Seminar is to promote critical reflection on how our teaching and presentation of Buddhism enhances understanding of Buddhist traditions, practices, and values. Our seminar will facilitate discussion and support research about pedagogically effective approaches to teaching Buddhism. We will focus on a variety of pedagogical challenges within the field over the course of five years, including but not limited to, the religious or secularized use of Buddhist meditation practices in everyday life, modern public understanding of Buddhism shaped through current events, hotly debated ethical issues, and scholarship about teaching Buddhism. This seminar invites discussion about teaching Buddhism in today's classroom, how Buddhism has been taught historically, how different media about Buddhism can supplement classroom instruction, and how insights from Buddhist traditions can enrich pedagogy in other fields. Although we envision the seminar appealing primarily to those in Buddhist Studies, we believe it will be beneficial for instructors and scholars outside of the field who teach about Buddhism in their courses. We are committed to supporting important work in the nascent field of Buddhist pedagogy. Our goal is to grow this field and provide it with a robust arena in which scholars engage in dynamic conversations.

Chairs:

- Gloria I-Ling Chien, Gonzaga University
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- Trung Huynh, University of Houston
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Collective Karma and Karmic Collectives: Conversations without Borders Seminar**Call Text:**

Encountering the ground: Indigenous frameworks and karma cluster concepts
Karma, broadly understood as the idea that actions are world making, is deeply rooted in many religious communities, not just the Buddhist ones. For example, a 2021 PEW survey finds that, in India the majority -- Hindus 77%, Muslims 77%, Jains 75%, Buddhists 64%, Sikhs 62%, and Christians 52% -- believe in karma. Although similar surveys are yet to be conducted in Southeast Asian and East Asian religious communities, informal conversations with scholars in relevant traditions and a thorough review of secondary literature suggest a similar prevalence of karmic thinking and practices in these cultures. Despite the significance of karmic cluster concepts on the ground, scholars have yet to gain a decent understanding of how and why karma-related concepts function in the daily lives of these practitioners, outside the discourses presented in canonical texts. More problematically, Western individualism -- i.e., the longstanding, unexamined presumptions that the individual is the agent of action, the bearer of rights, locus of reason and affect -- has thus-far pigeonholed scholarly understanding of karma within an individualistic framework.

To remedy this collective oversight and to uncover these marginalized worldviews that

enact collective karma and actualize karmic collectives, our proposed Seminar offers an inviting space for scholars of all religions to investigate collectively a cluster of concepts -- i.e., karma and its related terms in diverse socio-historical contexts -- which we call "karma cluster concepts." There are two parameters that define the scope of our work. Firstly, the scope is delimited by its focus on karma cluster concepts. We investigate how these concepts interweave and organize societies, cultures, personal and social affect, moral reasoning and practices, oral and literary narratives, and imaginations across a wide range of contexts. Secondly, the Seminar focuses on collectivity rather than individuality. We examine cases where karma cluster concepts are enacted and embodied as a collective affair.

In this inaugural year, we open the Seminar with an analysis on "karma cluster concepts" from indigenous frameworks. That is, rather than investigate karma only in silos (e.g., within a specific tradition, geographic region, or temporal specification), we approach karma through an investigation of "cluster concepts." Here are some examples: interpersonal karma, intersubjective karma (including humans, animals, spirits), universal karma, karmic affinities, and karmic imaginaires as a means to form and transform society. Cluster concepts allow us to understand karma holistically, across traditional boundaries. In-depth examinations of the uses and functions of the constellation of karma-related concepts in the daily life of marginalized groups such as women, the elderly, the racialized other, and the outcaste, promises more than uncovering alternative visions of living together in peace. More importantly, as feminist scholars have long argued, these marginalized groups, because of their very marginality, holds epistemic vantage of how the unjust systems fail them and how to build up more equitable practices and institutions. In the age of climate crisis, their vantage points are crucial not only for our cherished principles of equality and justice but also for mustering political will to initiate meaningful collective actions so we can live otherwise.

This first Seminar welcomes scholars who wish to (1) share their expertise on such karma cluster concepts, and (2) generate working discussions to frame the various concepts presented. Some of the methodological questions we wish to address include but are not limited to: what is the distinction between karmic causes and karmic results? What are the philosophical foundations for agent- vs. event-causality? What are some better practices to avoid the secularist bias? How do scholars nurture long-term inter-religious dialogue and cross-disciplinary collaboration?

As a launching point for the presentations and discussions, we ask panelists to read a few secondary sources regarding karma as individual or collective, with emphasis on the latter (Walters 2003; Bokenkamp 2007; Bronkhorst, 2011; Appleton 2014; Brown 2020).

Papers are limited to brief (8-10 minute) presentations that highlight specific examples of indigenous concepts of karma. During Q&A, the panelists and audience, collectively, brainstorm new approaches to uncover similar concepts and practices.

We seek diverse perspectives and welcome applicants working in various regions, religious traditions, disciplines, and time periods. We also encourage innovative proposals that allow specialists of different fields to present on shared or connected themes. We are especially interested in proposals from graduate students, contingent faculty, scholars of color, scholars of LGBTQ communities, scholars with disabilities, and scholars from other underrepresented groups.

Mission Statement:

This Seminar investigates karma as shared or communal. Past scholarship has uncritically privileged an individualist approach to karma and has overlooked the centrality of sociokarma in non-canonical sources and lived experiences. Thus, we invite scholars to work together to uncover these marginalized voices “without borders” (across religious traditions, regions, disciplines, and methods). So, how do we bridge conversations without borders? Through a perspective that we call “karma-cluster concepts,” i.e., karma and its related terms in diverse socio-historical contexts.

We invite scholars who can contribute to a fuller picture of the following questions: (1) when, how, and why the debates about individual and collective karma arose in canonical sources and in scholarship; (2) how karma is interpreted in noncanonical texts such as minor commentaries, code of conducts, poetry, theatre, plays, and other forms of storytelling; (3) how collective karma is employed as tools of social engagement (e.g., eco-karma, racial karma, national karma); (4) how karma animates the spiritual practices of marginalized groups such as low-rank ascetic women, working-class lay followers including elderly women, gender and sexual minorities, and people with disabilities; (5) how karma weaves together a world where spirits, ancestors, animals, trees, rocks, rivers ... are agentive; (6) when, how, and why karma drops out of the moral repertoire of a group or a culture; and (7) assessing contemporary philosophical and tradition-based advancements of collective karma as responses to urgent issues.

Let’s recover the widespread importance of karma-cluster concepts and diversify the mainstream narratives of karma.

Chairs:

- [Susanne Kerekes, Trinity College](#)
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- [Jessica Zu, University of Southern California](#)
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Constructive Muslim Thought and Engaged Scholarship Seminar**Call Text:**

For the 2023 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, the Constructive Muslim Thought and Engaged Scholarship Seminar will be organizing two pre-arranged sessions. The steering committee will invite a number of scholars to participate in two roundtable discussions. Following the five-year plan of the unit, the seminar will dedicate one session to "structural challenges to constructive Muslim thought and engaged scholarship" and another to the "institutional possibilities and limits for constructive Muslim thought." Nevertheless, if a scholar is interested in joining the seminar as a

roundtable discussant, the steering committee would encourage them to contact the unit chairs with an expression of interest and demonstration of past and/or current work in the field of constructive Muslim thought and engaged scholarship.

Mission Statement:

This seminar is aimed at exploring the developing academic discourse of constructive Muslim thought as a disciplinary field. Constructive Muslim thought is a broad and rich field of critical inquiry that involves both knowledge production and praxis. The constructive Muslim discourse is the cumulative result of the pioneering work of Muslim feminist scholars, postcolonial thinkers, decolonial thinkers, ethicists, scholars of Islam and critical race theory, among many others. Structural critique, ethical discernment, and community engagement are integral aspects of this broad body of scholarship. The organizers of this seminar argue that this expansive array of work can be construed as constituting an emergent new field within the academy, namely “constructive Muslim thought,” which runs parallels with, but is distinct from the study of Islam and Muslims. The seminar is envisioned as a space for scholars of the study of Islam and Muslims and academic practitioners of engaged scholarship from out of the Islamic tradition (broadly conceived) to share and develop their research in conversation with one another. Specifically, over the course of five years, the seminar will critically examine two key topics at length: 1) the methodological directions and epistemological interventions that are emerging within the constructive Muslim discourse, and 2) the systemic and institutional challenges that the constructive Muslim discourse faces within academe broadly and between the disciplinary categories of theology and religious studies, more specifically. By providing a scholarly space to meet, the seminar aims to support the discourse conceptually and to grow the discipline structurally.

Chairs:

- Martin Nguyen, Fairfield University
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- Najeeba Syeed-Miller, Chicago Theological Seminary
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Contextualizing the Catholic Sexual Abuse Crisis Seminar

Call Text:

Sexual Abuse and New Approaches to Religion and Sexuality

This year’s seminar seeks papers that use the problem of sexual abuse as a point of critical engagement for (re)thinking broader landscapes of religion and sexuality, both in relation to Catholicism and beyond it. To that end, we especially seek papers that are comparative in their approach, or explore this theme in relation to non-Catholic religious traditions. Within Catholic Studies, the problem of clergy sexual abuse has made clear the need to attend to lived Catholic forms of sexuality. Scholars have tended to take canon law regarding clerical celibacy, or prohibitions against extra-marital sex, as a stand in for Catholic behavior. The study of clerical abuse now makes it clear, however, that clerical

and lay Catholics, over time, have engaged in varied and complicated sex lives. Abusive behavior constitutes only a corner of these lives.

For this seminar, we seek papers that will help us to theorize and disentangle the “sex” and the “abuse” in clergy sexual abuse, via scholarship on the history and anthropology of Catholic sexuality. Areas we need to know more about, to this end, include: children’s sexuality, moral and aesthetic understandings of “good” and “bad” sex, LGBT+ and queer Catholic cultures, and the sex lives of nuns and priests. We also ask: what are the consequences of using “abuse” as our entry point for considering sexuality and sex in these rich and varied forms?

We are further aware that the study of religion and abuse has opened up parallel horizons of inquiry, regarding religion and sexuality, in relation to non-Catholic traditions. Thus we propose this year’s seminar as an opportunity to open up the discussion of abuse, religion, and sexuality beyond the Catholic tradition. To this end, we seek papers exploring these types of entanglements across different religious traditions, with a preference for projects that engage research in other fields.

For possible co-sponsorship with the Catholic Sex Abuse group: on religious sexual abuse more generally, with attention to legal issues (including courtroom performance of religious expertise, the role of expert witnesses in court, and media framings of the religious). Accepted proposals will lead to 10-15 page papers due October 15, 2023, to be pre-circulated to our seminar mailing list one month before the AAR annual meeting in San Antonio.

Mission Statement:

Contextualizing the Catholic Sexual Abuse Crisis is a five-year AAR seminar (2019 - 2024) working towards greater understanding about clergy sexual abuse and the range of questions that it raises. Attention to clergy abuse must become normative for any treatment of modern Catholicism to not itself be complicit in the abuse and its concealment.

Please note the following guidelines on our values and norms:

- Seminar presenters are required to submit their full papers by the middle of October, to be pre-circulated to all attendees via the AAR Papers system. This allows for more conversation and deeper reflection at the conference.
- Proposals should be made with an eye towards publishable work.
- The seminar seeks collaborative and multidisciplinary research, including through historical, ethnographic, theological, legal, political, psychological, and ethical frameworks.
- We are especially interested in proposals that press consideration into new anti-racist, anti-colonial, feminist, or queer directions.
- We encourage methodologies that uplift the voices of survivors, especially victims from African American, indigenous, and non-Anglo parishes.
- Over the full five years of sessions, the seminar will also examine sexual abuse in contexts beyond the Catholic church, both in other religious communities and secular institutions.

- We are committed to supporting research from scholars at all career stages, including doctoral candidates and independent scholars.
- The seminar encourages all of its members to participate in and propose papers to related program units, including Roman Catholic Studies, Religion and Sexuality, Childhood Studies, Ecclesiological Investigations, Religion and Violence, North American Religions, Religion in Europe, and Ethics.

Chairs:

- Brian Clites, Case Western Reserve University
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- Kathleen Holscher, University of New Mexico
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Energy, Extraction, and Religion Seminar

Call Text:

The Energy, Extraction, and Religion Seminar invites paper proposals that broadly align with the Seminar’s efforts to center coloniality and racial capitalism in the study of religion. We especially welcome proposals for brief (five-to-seven minute) presentations that:

- dialogue with the 2023 presidential theme, “La Labor de Nuestras Manos,” to critique forms of academic knowledge production that rely on extraction and extractive methods, and/or advance counterhegemonic ways of knowing and collaborating in the study of religion;
- commemorate the 50th anniversary of Charles Long’s AAR presidency, by thinking with Long’s generative ideas about the nexus of matter, modernity, and religion as well as his enduring work on the roots of religion in colonization and racialization;
- assume a spirit of transdisciplinary collaboration to discuss the significance of “energy” in the study of religion, theorize about the relationship between matter and energy, and develop conversations that connect religion and theology with the energy humanities and environmental humanities.

To facilitate a collective model of knowledge production, these brief provocations will be pre-circulated among panelists and presented at the Annual Meeting with prepared and impromptu responses.

Mission Statement:

This seminar provides an intellectual space to foreground relations, dynamics, and critiques among religion, energy, and extraction. For scholars in a variety of humanistic and social scientific disciplines, extractivism provides a conceptual rubric through which to re-conjoin analyses of racialization and exploitation with concerns about ecology and sustainability. This is particularly the case in the environmental and energy humanities. In light of multidisciplinary scholarly discourses on extractivism, this seminar aims to conscientiously link social and ecological justice questions as a matter of theoretical and methodological rigor; to explicitly and directly attend to racial capitalism and coloniality

as constitutive of environmental crises; to facilitate and improve dialogue between religion scholars and the environmental humanities, focusing attention on the religious dimensions of energy intensive and extractive cultures; and engage in reflexive analyses of the study and constructions of religion in, with, and through cultures of energy and extractivism.

Chairs:

- Evan Berry, Arizona State University
evan.berry@asu.edu
- Terra Schwerin Rowe, University of North Texas
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Foucault and the Study of Religion Seminar

Call Text:

We invite papers for the second year of our seminar on Foucault and the Study of Religion. Following our first Foucault Seminar in 2022 and exploratory session in 2021 on Michel Foucault's posthumously published *Confessions of the Flesh* (2018), we seek to gather scholars engaging the work of Foucault and the study of religion from a number of approaches and traditions.

Methodologically, this can include critical analyses of Foucault's use of religious sources, including his engagement (or lack thereof) with primary or secondary literature in his published works. It may include analyses or approaches to particular forms of religious thought and practice from Foucault's theoretical and philosophical perspectives, as well as research carried out in a critical-genealogical spirit in the same or adjacent religious sources that Foucault takes up.

We encourage submissions that raise questions around Foucault's engagement with traditions beyond Catholic Christianity including: Jewish traditions, Foucault's brief engagements with Islam in Iran, parallels and discontinuities between the "ethics of the care of the self" in western antiquity and South- and East-Asian traditions, among other possibilities. We are interested in exploring the ways that Foucault may help us challenge notions of "tradition" and "religion" that have been so central to both the study of religion and religious life more broadly. Over the five years of our seminar, we hope to co-sponsor panels with other AAR program units.

2023 Call for Papers include (but are not limited to):

- Foucault and methodology in the study of religion: how does the study of religion offer methods by which we can better understand the work of Michel Foucault, and vice versa?
- Foucault and comparative monasticisms, perhaps in relation to Buddhist, Hindu, or other Asian traditions
- Foucault and Islam, including but by no means limited to Foucault's engagements with Iran, political Islam, and notions of revolutionary subjectivity.
- Religion, Enlightenment, and critique, including the construction of "religion" in critical philosophy and theology from the modern period to the present, or in relation to Foucault's use of parrhesia.

- Religion and the early Foucault, including early engagements with phenomenology and psychoanalysis, or material from the “archeological” period of the 1960s.
- In light of the 2022 Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, we invite papers on Michel Foucault and the relation between religion, sexual ethics, and sexual law: including the role of religion in the *History of Sexuality*; the formulation of Christian sexual ethics in v4 (and their significance today); religious formulations of sexuality, legality, and abnormality; formulations of sexual ethics and sexual laws across religious traditions; and, understanding Dobbs through Foucault and religion.
- Proposals related to the 2023 presidential theme *La Labor de Nuestras Manos*; possibly including this “labor” in relation to the ethics of “work on oneself,” critique, and resistance to domination.
- Proposals for a possible co-sponsored session with the Augustine & Augustinianisms Unit, including proposals which continue to engage *Confessions of the Flesh* from different perspectives. This may include the framework of “sexuality” across the four extant volumes of the *History of Sexuality*, or further themes and sources in ancient and modern Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and South- and East-Asian traditions (amongst others), for example.

Mission Statement:

The Foucault and the Study of Religion Seminar is dedicated to collaborative research in a public setting, gathering scholars of religion whose research engages theoretical and historical approaches to the work of Michel Foucault. Foucault's work has been transformative for scholarship in the humanities and social sciences over the last fifty years. We aim to continue Foucault's tradition of public intellectual discourse in a way that illuminates the importance of the study of religion for understanding and critiquing his work on questions of gender, race, sexuality, and class. We hope to convene scholars of various religious practices and traditions to expand Foucault's critical approach and enliven the contributions of this research for the public domain.

We understand this work to be ongoing, developing the complex questions that emerge from Foucault's analytics of power, knowledge, and subjectivity central to many disciplines. The 2018 posthumous publication of his *History of Sexuality* volume on early Christian sexual ethics (*Confession of the Flesh*) foregrounds the need for such critical and constructive engagement by scholars with expertise across religious traditions and methodologies. We hope to bring together scholars within the AAR and SBL—particularly those in philosophy of religion, queer theory, black studies, feminist theory, religion and literature, diasporic studies, affect studies, African American religion, religion and ecology, and the histories of differing religious traditions (ancient and early modern)—in order to pursue work that is historically and theoretically rigorous, reflecting Foucault's own interdisciplinarity and the relevance his work has had across fields.

Chairs:

- Niki Clements, Rice University

niki.clements@rice.edu

- Daniel Wyche, University of Chicago
dwyche@albion.edu

Hagiology Seminar

Call Text:

The Hagiology Seminar is engaged in a multi-year call for contributions to a field-defining reference work for Comparative Hagiology. This volume, *A Companion to Comparative Hagiology*, introduces the field, its comparative and collaborative ethos, issues in theory and method, and provides a series of case studies on key themes. In this context, we adopt terms such as “saint,” “holy,” and “sacred” as broad and fluid heuristic devices that allow us to apprehend and compare discrete culture-specific historical data. This call for papers is centered around two of the themes that will comprise this volume. Scholars whose papers are accepted may be invited to contribute to the *Companion*.

We invite proposals on *Dangerous "Saints"*:

The nature of the “holy” or “sanctified” individual in society marks them as separate, powerful, and “other” from culture or society, setting these individuals in sometimes antagonistic and complicated relationships with normative religious and social mores. At times, the rhetoric of “sainthood” is applied to individuals perceived as dangerous precisely because doing so will set them apart, ideally diffusing part of their “power” and threatening traits. This session asks how the marking of “saint” opens up power relationships, reception histories, and subsequent relationships to the saint as places of inquiry for the hagiologist.

Some questions to consider:

- How does power function in the landscape of sainthood?
- What makes a saint dangerous, and are they always a danger? Or, what makes a dangerous individual a candidate for “sainthood”?
- How does one teach dangerous aspects of sainthood (ascetic, political, sexual, gendered) in the contemporary college classroom, where students struggle with mental health, body image, and other modern concerns?

We also invite proposals on *Secular "Saints"*:

Saints are often recognized by dynamics of veneration, emulation, and mediation of power. But the same dynamics can be seen in contemporary, secular society with the relationship between celebrity and fandom. Are celebrity and sanctity broadly analogous? This session asks how we might use the hagiological categories and approaches to better understand the phenomenon of “secular saints” and how this eventually informs the comparative study of the rhetoric of “sainthood.”

Some questions to consider:

- How do celebrities, politicians, scientists, athletes, and activists embody holiness by another name?
- How do secular “saints” mediate power to their devotees and to what end?
- What (if any) is the analytical purchase of mapping celebrities as saints and celebrity as sanctity?

Thesesessionswillbeexploratoryandcollaborativeinnature,astheyseektopracticeastyle of conference preparation and presentation that utilizes comparative practices and innovates along those lines. Presenters will share their papers with fellow panelists prior to the conference date and collaborate with one another.

Mission Statement:

This seminar is dedicated to exploring the “hagiographical” as a category that transcends the particular contextual boundaries of religious traditions, while functioning as a focused and sustained site of collaboration, pedagogical exploration, and theoretical foundation for better refining the Study of Religion. It takes up the question of “hagiography,” and, using a comparative method, interrogates its broad analytical utility. By inviting a wide-range of traditions and types of scholarship (textual, materially-oriented, ritually-conceived, oral, historical, and contemporary) into a diverse scholarly conversation and collaborative community, we seek to challenge the normative, Christian rendering of the term. We place the growing need for cross-fertilization at the center of our methodological approach, building it into our theme and function. Hagiology is an inquiry that has been marked by a range of interpretive strategies and vectors of influence, from early practitioners and emulators, to authors and compilers, to commentators and historians, to societies and contemporary practitioners, to re-imagined historical prominence. It has finally emerged as a dynamic area for comparative studies. Ultimately, this seminar will foster dialogue among scholars from a range of institutions and intellectual traditions. Its aim is to use the collaborative and comparative methods to resituate hagiology within the current religious studies context, and to explore how this field can best support, articulate, and inform the broader field regarding the importance of doing Hagiology in a productive manner that is commensurate with the prevalence of its material forms.

Chairs:

- Todd French, Rollins College
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- R. Brian Siebeking, Gonzaga University
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Intersectional Hindu Studies: Feminist and Critical Race Approaches to Research and Teaching Seminar

Call Text:

There will not be an open call for papers this year; rather, we will be pre-organizing a session on Islamophobia in Hindu Studies. As a group that centers feminist approaches, we will also be thinking about how we can respond to the obstacles being posed to Reproductive Justice throughout the United States and in Texas, in particular. Furthermore, we'll be thinking of ways to support members that might not feel safe traveling to Texas, as well as organizers on the ground, who are tirelessly working to provide abortion access and other forms of reproductive health care to the people of Texas.

Mission Statement:

This seminar centers the work of racialized researchers and teachers of Hinduism who use critical race theory (CRT) and intersectional feminist theory in our own work, and who are committed to challenging systemic inequality in academic spaces. We have three objectives: 1. To develop an intersectional critique of the formation and institutionalization of Hindu Studies as a field 2. To challenge the prevailing narratives about Hindus and Hindu Studies in the academy and in the global public sphere 3. To create a space for racialized scholars in Hindu Studies (and connected fields) to examine and share our own experiences in academia

Chairs:

- Shreena Gandhi, Michigan State University
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Language, Poiesis, and Buddhist Experiments with the Possible

Seminar

Call Text:

Our seminar investigates, over the course of five years, the *poiesis* of language—its capacity to create, bring into existence, and shape worlds, selves, and our shared sense of reality. To better grasp this potential of language, we approach Buddhist textual engagement foremost in terms of experiments with the *possibilities* of language (rather than under given textual categories, genre distinctions, tropes, etc.) and examine how these have contributed to making the form and content of Buddhism itself, along with adjacent traditions. In doing so we emphasize that both content and modes of expression should be examined as inextricably involved in the process by which Buddhism took on its distinctive character as well as its sense of what is possible. We approach literary forms as an *environment* that enables Buddhists to find their voice, subject matter, style, and self-representation.

For the 2023 AAR Annual Meeting we invite proposals on the theme:

Practices for transforming the real: language, imagination, and scholarly modes of engagement

This year, we seek to generate a mutually informing dialogue between Buddhist linguistic practices for making and transforming self and world, and scholarly modes of engagement with those practices. What relationships among language, imagination, and the real do Buddhist texts imply and enable? And what techniques for making or transforming self and world do these relationships make conceivable and practicable?

Conversely, how do scholars recognize when and how Buddhist texts are deployed to shape the real, and how might our answers to such questions change how we engage with Buddhist texts? As we seek to question the scholarly assumptions we inherit and inhabit, how might Buddhist practices involving language expand our imaginative and critical resources? How might we develop alternative modes of interpretation so as to encounter Buddhist texts in new ways?

We invite proposals that aim to address these questions through leading a close reading of a selection from a Buddhist primary text (we include both written and oral forms of language) or a text from an adjacent tradition that offers resources for reconsidering methods and approaches to Buddhist language. In your proposal, please identify clearly the textual selection you propose to read (and submit an excerpt) and demonstrate its relevance to the theme.

The format for 2023 will be a close-reading workshop taking place over two consecutive 90-minute sessions, divided by a half-hour break.

- Presenters will not give a paper; instead, they will introduce and lead a close reading of their text that addresses the seminar questions and theme outlined above, engaging in discussion with designated respondents and the audience along the way. Ample time will be devoted to each text selected to permit sustained discussion.
- Presenters will be required: 1) to precirculate their text excerpt and any supporting materials to all formal seminar participants (steering committee, respondents, and other presenters); 2) to post in advance via the AAR platform both a brief introduction to their text and their textual excerpt (in one or more languages, as germane to the text in question) and an English translation (unless the text was composed in English), which can be accessed by all AAR 2023 attendees; and 3) to display their text (and translation, if applicable) via the available AV setup or handouts.
- Collaborative work is encouraged and will be given special consideration.
- We plan to designate at least two respondents for every text. If you are interested in responding to a workshop text, please submit a proposal specifying that you are interested in a respondent role, and briefly explaining your interest in our seminar theme and questions.

Mission Statement:

The overwhelming capacity of language to shape our shared sense of reality for better or for worse has long been recognized by Buddhists, who have considered it both an obstacle and an opportunity for transformation and liberation. Such Buddhist approaches harbor the potential to help us rethink the potency of language in the interest of collective flourishing. Our seminar investigates how Buddhists have engaged with the *poiesis* of language—its ability to create anew and shape worlds and selves—and how this engagement, as a constitutive aspect of Buddhist thought and practice, has contributed to making the form and content of Buddhism itself. We explore a broad range of Buddhist language use, taking poetics as the exemplary but not exclusive ground where language is made poietic, while accommodating overlapping and contiguous forms of language, for instance, ritual utterance, gesture, linguistic patterns, etc.

Our mode of inquiry approaches Buddhist language use in terms of *experiments with the possibilities of language*. We emphasize that Buddhist content and modes of expression alike should be examined as inextricably involved in the process by which Buddhism took on its distinctive character and formed its sense of the possible; and we approach

Buddhist literary forms as an *environment* that enables Buddhists to find their voice, subject matter, style, and self-representation. Attuned to how Buddhists have formulated their views on these issues, the seminar aims therefore to develop a conceptual toolkit for the rigorous, ethical interpretation of Buddhist language as a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary endeavor.

Chairs:

- Nancy Lin, Institute of Buddhist Studies
nlin@shin-ibs.edu
- Roy Tzohar, Tel-Aviv University
roytzo@tauex.tau.ac.il

Mahabharata and Classical Hinduism Seminar

Call Text:

The Seminar's call for papers for its third year is on "Regional, Vernacular, and Performative *Mahābhārata* Traditions"

This session would be devoted to texts and traditions of *Mahābhārata* performances such as theater, dance, and recitation, and vernacular language textual traditions, with a focus on the religious uses of these traditions. Modern retellings in pulp, graphic, and film formats are also relevant to this area of inquiry.

In response to the 2023 Presidential Theme, we also include a call for proposals on the *Mahābhārata*'s depictions of serving or marginalized classes – the *dasis*, the *sutas*, the hunters and butchers and fisher-folk, emphasizing their roles as exemplars of wisdom and dharma. We are also interested in proposals that consider the literal and figurative "handcrafting" of *Mahābhārata*, by authors ancient or modern who contribute in original ways to leave their mark on retellings of epic narratives.

In an effort to encourage diversity in seminar participants, those who presented papers in our 2022 meeting are unlikely to have proposals accepted for the 2021 meeting. We seek to include the best proposals we receive.

Mission Statement:

The Mahābhārata and Classical Hinduism Seminar seeks to facilitate the academic exchange so necessary to progress through a format similar to a workshop, with pre-circulated papers. This seminar will bring together philologists, Indologists, ethnographers, scholars of performance theory and practices, and generalists taking on the daunting task of incorporating India's great epic into their coursework on Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, or Yoga. Over the course of the five-year seminar, we hope that these varied approaches will prove mutually illuminating and raise new questions. The seminar's scope includes not only the Sanskrit text, but also dramatic and fictional retellings, regional and vernacular versions, etc. We will select papers by asking the following four questions, which will change somewhat according to each year's topic: Does the paper shine a new light on some previously underappreciated aspect, episode, character, or form of the epic? Does the paper either represent or respond to the most current trends and arguments in Mahābhārata studies? Does the paper help to demystify

the Mahābhārata, helping non-specialists who are intimidated by its length and complexity to incorporate it into their teaching or scholarship? Does the paper provide a model for interdisciplinary practice (e.g., Does it bridge the gap between philology and new forms of critical textual analysis or between ethnography and history of religions?).

Chairs:

- Arti Dhand, University of Toronto arti.dhand@utoronto.ca
- Bruce M. Sullivan, Northern Arizona University bruce.sullivan@nau.edu

New Directions in the Study of Religion, Monsters, and the Monstrous Seminar

Call Text:

For the fourth year of the New Directions in the Study of Religions, Monsters, and the Monstrous, we are interested in monsters and the human. When, how, and why are other people and the gods “monstrified?” How does racism intersect with the discourse of the monstrous? Conversely, when how, and why are monsters humanized? As part of these conversations, we’re especially interested in papers pertaining to the intersection of monsters and race. How does race become the site of monstrifying? Can monsters help transcend racial categories or do they reinforce them? Applicants may want to consider Karen and Barbara Field’s concept of “racecraft”—the construction of “race” through the practice of racism—as a lens to think about monstrifying. Is it appropriate to speak of monstercraft?

Papers outside these topics are also welcome and will be considered for a potential second panel themed more generally on monsters. As always, papers from minority scholars and scholars studying Asian, African, or indigenous American and Australian traditions are especially encouraged.

Mission Statement:

The Mission of the New Directions in the Study of Religion, Monsters, and the Monstrous Five-Year Seminar is to facilitate dialogue between different areas and methodologies within religious studies to arrive at a better theory of the intersection of religion, monsters, and the monstrous. Due to the diverse nature of our topic, we encourage proposals from any tradition or theoretical perspective. Each year of the seminar will focus on a different theoretical problem as follows:

Year One -- Taxonomy. The first task of the seminar will be to explore the taxonomy of “monsters” as a second-order category. What defines a “monster” and what are we talking about when we talk about monsters?

Year Two -- Theodicy: What role do monsters serve in explaining misfortune? Are monsters a source of injustice or do they create justice as agents of punishment?

Year Three -- Cosmology: How do monsters function to map out reality, including time and space?

Year Four -- Monstrification and humanization: When, how, and why are other people and their gods "monstrified?" How does racism intersect with the discourse of the monstrous? Conversely, when, how, and why are monsters humanized?

Year Five -- Phenomenology: How should we interpret narratives of encounters with fantastic beings? To what extent are reductionist readings of these narratives appropriate and helpful? Are there viable approaches beyond reductionism?

At the conclusion of the seminar, our findings will be published as an edited volume or otherwise disseminated to the scholarly community.

Chairs:

- Natasha Mikles, Texas State University
n.mikles@txstate.edu
- Kelly Murphy, Central Michigan University
kelly.murphy@cmich.edu

Origen and Origen Reception Seminar

Call Text:

The Origen and Origen Reception Seminar invites proposals to two 90-minute sessions.

- The theme of the first session is "The Reception of Origen among the Cappadocians and other early Greek Christians (4th-6th centuries)." For this session, we invite proposals for papers that deal with any part of Origen's influence upon or legacy within early Greek Christianity, especially those that consider the Cappadocian Fathers: Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, or Gregory of Nyssa.
- The second session will focus on "Origen and His Exegetical Influences." We invite papers that consider any topic or issue related to Origen's exegesis and its sources, whether particular biblical books and authors, prior exegetical traditions, or noteworthy exegetical methods.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Origen and Origen Reception seminar is to foster focused discussion about central themes in Origen's thinking and about the reception thereof. The seminar will include all aspects of Origen's thinking such as theology, philosophy, history, exegesis, and philology. The seminar is particularly interested in the reception of Origen of Alexandria's thinking in various times and places. Each session of the seminar will thus focus on a specific aspect of his thought and its reception in later traditions.

Chairs:

- Alexander Pierce, University of Notre Dame
ahpierce16@gmail.com

Religions, Borders, and Immigration Seminar

Call Text:

Religions, Borders, and Immigration seminar invites papers for AAR 2023 focusing on the following themes: the exploration of migrants' lived religious/spiritual experiences and religious/theological reflection emerging from the migratory lifeworlds; analysis of migrants' agency in communities of faith and society; the intersection of race and religion/spirituality in the context of forced migration; religious/theological reflections on migration due to environmental degradation and global political and economic instability; religious/theological analysis of connections between mobility and privilege; the intersections of religion/spirituality and populism as a cause of forced migration and as a religious/theological/ethical challenge for receiving societies.

The seminar is working toward publishing an interdisciplinary essay collection at the intersection of global migration and religion/spirituality/theology. We welcome various religious and methodological perspectives and, in particular, are looking for interreligious and intercultural engagements. Authors whose proposals are selected for presentation at AAR 2023, will be expected to submit their papers by November 10, 2023 for pre-circulation.

Mission Statement:

The overall purpose of this seminar is to promote interreligious and interdisciplinary collaboration on global migration from theological perspectives and how it begins to reshape the interpretations of the Ultimate reality, as it is envisioned in various religious traditions in dialogue with diverse traditions of ethics and pastoral responses to the refugee crisis. This seminar's focus or theme is on the intersection of borders, migration, religious practices and how all of those are being reenvisioned and reinterpreted through dialogical theological reflection in interfaith perspectives. The work of the seminar addresses one of most critical issues of our time, and we believe that religion plays an essential role in understanding the meaning of these changes. This new seminar will continue to encourage different and creative approaches, such as comparative theology and theologies of religious diversity, to explore the meaning of our times.

Chairs:

- Loye Ashton, Aoyama Gakuin University
loyeashton@gmail.com
- Kristine Suna-Koro, Xavier University
sunakorok@xavier.edu

Religious Reflections on Friendship Seminar**Call Text:**

The Religious Reflections on Friendship Seminar invites proposals for papers and panel presentations that address the intersection of religion/s and friendship from any scholarly perspective and religious tradition. We welcome papers that broaden contemporary perspectives on friendship and challenge dominant perspectives on friendship, as they bring friendship and religion into dialogue with contemporary issues,

needs, and challenges. Our focus in 2023 will be most specifically on the study of friendship from interreligious/interfaith perspectives.

The following themes, amongst others, may be engaged from the perspective of two or more religious traditions:

- Interfaith friendship
- Friendship and ethics
- Friendship and the arts
- Friendship and the land; friendship and nature
- Friendship, religious practice, and decolonization
- Theological and/or mystical perspectives on friendship
- Friendship, crisis, discernment, and dark nights of the soul
- Friendship within religious texts and/or historic time periods
- Friendship-informed pedagogies for the teaching of inter-religious/inter-faith studies
- Civic friendship, political friendship, prophetic friendship, activism, and the common good

Echoing 2023's presidential theme "*La Labor de Nuestras Manos*" (The Work of Our Hands) we also invite papers that consider the role of friendship practices and interfaith dialogue in the work that we do in the study of religion and theology including scholarly work, pedagogical practice, and alternatives to traditional academic roles.

Ideally seminar participants pre-circulate papers and come to the seminar's Annual Meeting session ready to discuss them. Papers should be submitted to co-chairs for pre-circulation by mid-October.

Mission Statement:

The purpose of this Seminar is to provide a broad forum in which the important but under-studied relationship of friendship can be studied, discussed, challenged, and ultimately enriched – from a variety of religious perspectives. Friendship is a relationship that is essential for flourishing. In times ripe with division and conflict, we assert that the study of friendship contributes towards furthering religious understanding and dialogue. Friendship as a religious topic, broadly and creatively defined, touches on matters of faith, ecclesiology, anthropology, history, politics, philosophy, ethics, race, gender, sex, class, and economics among others.

We welcome papers that explore friendship from different disciplines and theological/religious perspectives and are open to a variety of methodological approaches. Papers from the Seminar are eligible to be considered for inclusion in a published volume. Our first volume focused on multireligious reflections and will be published in Lexington Books Religion and Borders Series. A second volume will be based on interreligious reflections, with the publisher yet to be confirmed.

Chairs:

- Anne-Marie Ellithorpe, Vancouver School of Theology
aellithorpe@vst.edu
- Hussam S. Timani, Christopher Newport University

Teaching against Islamophobia Seminar

Call Text:

We seek papers from scholars in any discipline or subfield that address questions related to the theme “Islamophobia - Connecting the Global and the Local,” with a focus on teaching. An epidemic of anti-Muslim bigotry and racism has emerged not only in the United States and Europe, but globally. Often, however, these events that are important to engaged scholars may feel distant to our students.

We are soliciting submissions that address any of the following aspects of this theme and welcome related topics and inquiries that go beyond these questions as well:

- What are techniques and strategies that are effective for contextually locating Islamophobia that occurs outside North American cultural contexts?
- How do we begin to overcome the tendency of students to distance themselves from a shared responsibility for Islamophobia when they are confronted by either global or local instances of anti-Muslim bigotry?
- What are the competing challenges and advantages of using education about Islamophobia to stimulate interreligious dialogue?
- When addressing major news stories featuring anti-Muslim policies, what skills do students need to develop in order to move ‘beyond the headline?’ How might these skills be transferable or adapted to contexts where scholars are asked to address wider publics?
- What are the professional and scholarly risks and challenges we face when we name anti-Muslim bias in our educational setting or local communities? How do we begin to address these challenges or mitigate these risks?

Papers and other documents related to presentations will be pre-circulated to the seminar listserv. Please contact a member of the leadership of the seminar for access. Since materials will be pre-circulated, preference will be given to presentations that go beyond the traditional ‘paper-reading’ structure. We seek presentations that will dynamically introduce teaching modules, pedagogical practices, teaching reflections, slides, professional documents, or other materials during the time of the seminar.

Mission Statement:

The purpose of the Teaching against Islamophobia Seminar is to widen the network of scholars engaged in critical reflection about pedagogical and discursive praxes that address the global rise of anti-Muslim sentiment. This seminar thus focuses on the challenges and opportunities faced by engaged scholars combating Islamophobia. We invite critical and creative reflection on (1) the differences between teaching about Islam and teaching about Islamophobia in both the classroom and wider publics; (2) pedagogical strategies for such teaching should be tailored to different contexts; (3) specific challenges of teaching ‘against’ a concept instead of teaching ‘toward’ a more positive end; and (4) the ways in which Islamophobia and anti-Muslim bigotry function as a form of racism and why naming this bigotry as racism is important. As such, we encourage discussion not only on the transmission of new content knowledge about

Islamophobia, but also on the transmission of interpersonal and leadership skills necessary to engage in public life to resist bias, bigotry, and racism.

Chairs:

- Sajida Jalalzai, Trinity University
sajidajalalzai@gmail.com

Theological, Pedagogical and Ethical Approaches to Israel/Palestine Seminar

Call Text:

The Theological, Pedagogical, and Ethical Approaches to Israel/Palestine seminar is seeking papers that will interrogate the theological and religious aspects of approaches to Israel/Palestine studies. This year's panel welcomes proposals and questions related to the following themes:

- Jewish theological notions for and against a national homeland in Israel/Palestine
- Islamic theological approaches to the question of Palestine/Israel, Zionism, Arab and Palestinian nationalism
- Eastern Christian (Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, etc.) theological notions of the Holy Land, including Israel/Palestine, Jordan and wider Levant
- Western Christian theological hermeneutics in relation to the Holy Land, Crusades, Zionism, and Israel/Palestine
- Religious/Theological Studies, biblical archaeology, and the space of Israel/Palestine
- Political and 'Secular' Theologies and Palestine/Israel
- Religious tourism and various forms of pilgrimage in Palestine/Israel (Jewish, Islamic, Christian, Bahai, Druze, etc.)
- Competing notions of theological, religious and cultural indigeneity to Israel/Palestine
- Interfaith and religious pluralism in Israel/Palestine, pre-modern and modern
- Religion and Political Violence in Israel/Palestine
- Religion and Peace in Israel/Palestine

Chairs:

- Rebecca Alpert, Temple University
ralpert@temple.edu
- Jason Springs, University of Notre Dame
jspring1@nd.edu

Women's Caucus

2023 Women's Caucus Call for Proposals

Session #1: Feminist Liberation Theologians and "La Labor de Nuestras Manos."

In light of the 2023 AAR/SBL theme "La Labor de Nuestras Manos," the Women's Caucus, in collaboration with the Feminist Liberation Theologian's Network (FLTNT), invites papers investigating the intersection of women's daily experiences and the academy. How does the hierarchical dualism between public and domestic spheres manifest today within the academic contexts? How has the scholarship of women of color studying minority religious traditions often been unseen and undervalued? We are particularly interested in papers exploring the factors that perpetuate stereotypes and create taboos around the worth of women's scholarly works. What topics are shunned from academic discussions due to lingering patriarchal structures in the academy? How does the lack of engagement with topics such as childbearing, menopause, miscarriage, and motherhood contribute to economic injustices? Please note Women's Caucus Session #1 in the proposal submission.

Session #2: Religion and the Work of Women's Hands: Challenges and Solidarities

The AAR/SBL Women's Caucus invites submissions from graduate students and early career scholars of any age to present innovative research asking fresh questions at the intersection of gender and religion in light of the conference theme "La Labor de Nuestras Manos." ("The Labor of Our Hands"). Intersectional approaches incorporating class, race, ethnicity, gender, and/or sexuality are highly encouraged. Scholars may want to examine the dialectic between manual and academic labor. Respondents might analyze issues such as "women's work," maternal nurturing, agricultural labor, art, self-defense, "holding hands" in solidarity and collective action, sweatshop labor, child/eldercare, gardening, construction, or grocery store restocking within the framework of women and religion. How does religion construct such activities in ways that devalue, exalt, oppress or liberate them? Since the conference will be held in San Antonio, TX, proposals considering this location are particularly encouraged. Please note Women's Caucus Session #2 in the proposal submission.

Session #3: New Books on Gender and Religion

The AAR/SBL Women's Caucus invites proposals from scholars who have published books on gender and religion in 2022 and 2023. Authors will provide an overview of their books and share their research in theology, biblical studies, or religious studies, focusing on the intersection with gender, sexuality, and feminist and queer studies. These scholars will also share their experiences regarding strategies and mechanics for getting books on gender and religion published, make suggestions on how to overcome publication challenges in the guild, and offer advice to those seeking publication of their own book manuscripts. Because these are published books, this is not blind submission. For your proposal, please reply with the book title, book blurb, publisher, and a copyright of 2022 or 2023, along with a short bio. Please note Women's Caucus Session #3 in the proposal submission.

Session #4: Unpacking African Women Theologians' Decolonial Methodologies

This panel seeks to increase the biographical coverage of African women theologians who are noteworthy creators and innovators in the various fields of religion, spirituality, and religious activism. Women theologians on the African continent have addressed religious, environmental, socio-economic, political, health, gender equality, and other related issues that affect the African continent, yet traditional gender bias, economic status, domestic and occupational constraints, and racist, colonial, and class norms have obscured the noteworthy character of their lives and scholarly work. In order to appreciate and amplify the works of African women theologians, we seek proposals that contextualize issues of colonial bias and map how African women theologians overcome coloniality in their works. African women's activism and knowledge often employ storytelling and orality when engaging biblical, theological, historical, pastoral, and missiological perspectives on theology and ethics. Original research, including attention to primary sources such as interviews of living subjects, oral histories, transcriptions of existing recordings, and historical documents, is welcomed. Proposals must demonstrate strong analytical engagement with the challenge of intersectional issues related to coloniality and the decolonial

advances towards an all-embracing and life-affirming theologies.
Please note Women's Caucus Session #4 in the proposal submission.

Session #5: International Section, Women's Caucus

The AAR/ SBL Women's Caucus invites submissions from international scholars, particularly those residing outside of the United States, to present on the intersection of their work on women, gender, religion, and theology with the AAR's Annual Conference Theme for 2023: "*La Labor de Nuestras Manos.*" We are particularly interested in research that raises fresh questions identifying phenomena that have been obstructed, peripheralized, othered, and/or not adequately explored; draws on theory and praxis; introduces perspectives from underrepresented religious and spiritual traditions and considers the ways that scholarship outside the US makes important contributions to the US academic discourses on "the labor of our hands."

Please note Women's Caucus Session #5 in the proposal submission.

Mission Statement:

The Women's Caucus encourages and creates opportunities for academic activism in the field of Gender and Religion. It also provides a welcoming space for women at the AAR/ SBL national conferences for networking and support.

Chairs

- [Elizabeth Freese, Auburn Seminary](#)
efreese@drew.edu
- [Deborah Fulthorp, Grand Canyon University](#)
debbie.fulthorp@gcu.edu
- [Elaine Nogueira-Godsey, Methodist Theological School in Ohio](#)
egodsey@mtso.edu