



# AAR 2015 Call for Proposals

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## General Call Instructions

### Meeting Location

The 2015 AAR and SBL Annual Meetings will be held November 21-24, in Atlanta, Georgia. Registration and the Exhibit Hall will be located in the Hyatt Regency. Academic sessions will be held in the Hilton Atlanta, Hyatt Regency, Marriott Marquis, Sheraton Atlanta, and the Westin Peachtree Plaza. The Employment Center will be located in the Sheraton Atlanta. Registration and housing for the Annual Meeting will open in late March.

### 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 [Program Administration Proposal, Evaluation, Review, and Submission \(PAPERS\) System](#). The deadline for proposal submission is **5:00 PM EST, Monday, March 4**.

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 the [general Call for Papers](#) or [Call of a specific Program Unit](#) that interests you.
- **Step 2:** Determine which type of proposal you wish to submit.
  - o **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](#).
  - o **Papers session proposal** — A proposal of a complete session of different papers on a theme, complete with 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 [Program Administration Proposal, Evaluation, Review, and Submission \(PAPERS\) System](#).
  - o **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 1,000 word proposal and 150-word abstract. Paper sessions require a separate 1,000-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 **Monday, March 4**. **Most Program Units have elected to use the online [PAPERS system](#) only.** A [Participant Form](#) is required

for any proposal submitted outside of the online [PAPERS system](#). Carefully note any audiovisual equipment you require before you submit your proposal.

- o **PAPERS**: Submit your 1,000-word proposal and 150-word abstract via the [Program Administration Proposal, Evaluation, Review, and Submission \(PAPERS\) 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 so you do not have to submit a separate participant form. For help using the [PAPERS system](#), please consult the [PAPERS User Manual](#) or if you still require assistance, email [support@aarweb.org](mailto:support@aarweb.org).
- o **E-mail**: Submit your 1,000-word proposal and 150-word abstract within the BODY of ONE single e-mail to the contacts listed in the [Program Unit's call](#) (usually the Chairs). Click [here](#) to open the Participant Form for E-mail Submission. 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.
- o **E-mail with Attachments**: Submit your 1,000-word proposal, 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). Please click [here](#) to open the Participant Form for E-mail Attachment Submission for your participant form. 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 **April 1, 2015**.

### **Participation Requirements at the Annual Meeting**

Membership is not required to submit a proposal in response to the Call for Papers. However, **all participants accepted to the program must be current (2015) AAR members and registered for the Annual Meeting by June 15, 2015.**

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 Papers. This includes submitting the same proposal to two separate Units or two different proposals to two different Units.

### **Wildcard Sessions**

[Wildcard sessions](#) are intended to be experimental, creative, or exploratory sessions that address an area of interest that does not naturally fall within the purview of an existing Program Unit. These sessions offer members direct access to the Annual Meeting program outside of the normal Program Unit structure.

## Guidelines for Wildcard sessions:

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All Wildcard sessions are ninety-minutes in length and will be scheduled for Sunday afternoon at the Annual Meeting.

Wildcard sessions are accepted through [PAPERS](#) only.

Wildcard sessions must use one of the prearranged session proposal formats (papers session or roundtable).

Make sure the wildcard 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 as a Wildcard session and also to another Program Unit, it will be eliminated from consideration as a Wildcard.

The Program Committee evaluates all Wildcard Session proposals. Notification of program acceptance will be announced by **April 1, 2015**.

### Exploratory Sessions

All proposals for new Groups 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 4, 2015**. Notification of program acceptance will be announced by **April 1, 2015**. Exploratory sessions that are accepted onto the program are then invited to submit an application for new unit status by **December 11, 2015**.

### Ninety-Minute Sessions

The Sunday afternoon schedule for the Annual Meeting program consists of three ninety-minute sessions, scheduled for 1:00–2:30 PM, 3:00–4:30 PM, and 5:00–6:30 PM. In addition, the Tuesday morning schedule consists of two ninety-minute sessions, 8:30 AM–10:00 AM and 10:30 AM–12:00 PM. The AAR encourages creative and innovative proposals for these sessions. Some possibilities include: restricting a panel to two 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. Free wifi access will be available in some properties, but for bandwidth-intensive applications, please request "Internet Access" in the Other: box in the PAPERS system. In order to ensure quality, video presentations should be downloaded to a native device and not streamed over the internet when possible. **All AV requests must be received at the time of the proposal. Late requests cannot be accommodated.** See the [AAR Audiovisual Policy](#) for more information.

## **Questions about the Annual Meeting**

Concerns of a general nature may be sent to the AAR Executive Office to the attention of the following:

Director of Meetings  
825 Houston Mill Road NE  
Suite 300  
Atlanta, GA 30329  
Phone: 404-727-3049  
E-mail: [annualmeeting@aarweb.org](mailto:annualmeeting@aarweb.org)

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## African Diaspora Religions Group

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### Call Text:

1- For a possible quad-sponsored session with the Native Traditions in the Americas Group; the Indigenous Religious Traditions Group; the Religions, Medicines, and Healing Group: we invite paper or session proposals that focus on how conceptions of indigeneity and diasporic identity are implicated in efforts to heal individuals, communities, and nations in the context of loss, displacement, and historical trauma.

### 2- Solo session

The Symbolism of Water in the African Diaspora:

Vincent Harding's *There is a River* begins with the Guinea Coast, the Senegal and Gambia rivers, and Cape Verde. Harding writes, "On these shores, near the mouths of these rivers, we first saw the ships." Water has constituted African American identity in multiple ways. We seek papers that explore water as a diaspora symbol both of displacement and as a space of healing.

### 3- For a possible co-sponsored session with Native Traditions in the Americas Group:

The Trail of Tears: We invite papers or session proposals that address the impact of the Trail of Tears on Native and African American communities. We are interested in addressing the Trail of Tears as a site of loss of sacred knowledge, as a site of displacement and removal, and as a site that offers the possibility of recovery and transformation.

### Mission Statement:

This Group endorses the study of African diaspora religions beyond its traditional parameters to include broader geographies, histories, and cultures of people of African descent and the way they shaped the religious landscape, not only in the Caribbean and the Americas, but also in Europe and Asia. This study defines "diaspora" as the spread and dispersal of people of African descent — both forced and voluntary — through the slave trade, imperial and colonial displacements, and postcolonial migrations. This Group emphasizes the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to carry out its vision. Its 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 shaped and continue to shape the religious landscape of the Americas, Europe, and Asia.

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

### Method of submission:

PAPERS

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

Chair - Harding, Rachel E., University of Colorado, Denver, [rachel.harding@ucdenver.edu](mailto:rachel.harding@ucdenver.edu)

## African Religions Group

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### Call Text:

#### Statement of Purpose:

This Group provides a forum for the discussion of research on the multiple religious traditions of Africa, methodological issues in the study of the religions of Africa, and African religious responses to ethical and

social issues affecting the continent. The Group encourages the participation of African and non-African scholars in the leadership of the Group and in participation in its programs.

#### Call for Papers:

This Group encourages critical inquiry about religions originating in Africa as well as all those practiced there. Proposals should go beyond description; they should analyze the conceptual tools and methods employed. We invite individual papers, paper sessions, and roundtable proposals on the following five themes relevant to any region of the African continent (North, West, East, Central, Southern, and the Horn):

- African Values and Ethics on the Global Stage: As interest in ethical responses to global crises grows, what role can African values play? How can the application of such values help solve practical problems both within and beyond Africa? And how do we define certain values as "African?" We invite papers that respond to these questions by examining the content of African forms of ethical reflection and the contributions they can make in responding to a range of global challenges, including economic dislocation, health disparities, global warming, human rights, intellectual property rights, military conflict, resource depletion, etc. We also invite papers that explore the scholarly methods for examining such topics in African ethical contexts. How can we identify and best appreciate such values, for instance, and what are the ethics involved in classifying and examining them?
- For a co-sponsored session with the Religions, Social Conflict, and Peace Group; the Lesbian-Feminist Issues and Religion Group: we ask for papers for a session entitled "Gendered Violence in Africa: The Place of Ritual and Ethics in Justification, Protest, and Adjudication". We seek papers on all forms of gendered violence in Africa, whether against women, girls, boys, or men, and/or LGBTIQ persons. Among these forms we include domestic abuse, rape, pimping, sexual harassment, sex-trafficking, stalking, wartime violence, and violence against sexual minorities, whether in prisons or public, in church or secular contexts, for ritual or judicial purposes, etc. We invite proposals that explore distinctions and connections between institutional and interpersonal violence and address a broad range of instances in which gender and violence intertwine. In all cases, we seek some tie to religious or ethical reflection in African contexts.
- Masculinities and Religion in Africa: The study of gender and religion in Africa has so far focused mostly on women. Yet in recent years, men and masculinities have emerged as a new field in African Studies, raising a number of issues. On the one hand, scholars have problematized and interrogated dominant forms of African masculinity for their role in issues such as HIV and AIDS, violence, and the oppression of women. On the other hand, this focus has exposed ways that men, too, are affected by patriarchal norms and struggle with the expectations of modernity. We welcome papers that address constructions and transformations of masculinity in African cultural, social, and political contexts, examining the complex ways in which religious discourses, practices, and politics intersect with the diverse modalities of masculinity in contemporary Africa. (For a possible co-sponsorship with the Men, Masculinities and Religion Group)

#### Pre-Arranged Panel:

- The African Religions Group will also quint-sponsor a panel on Birgit Meyer's forthcoming book, *Sensational Movies: Video, Vision and Christianity in Ghana* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), in collaboration with the World Christianity Group; the Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group; the Anthropology of Religion Group; and the Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism Group. Selection of panelists will be pre-arranged so that they may read Meyer's book as provided by the press in advance of the meetings in order to comment on it. Prof. Meyer will summarize her book's argument, and at least one panelist will comment on the methodological aspects of Prof. Meyer's book. We are soliciting no papers for this session but encouraging our members and other interested parties to attend for what will be a truly multi-disciplinary discussion focused on religion and Africa.

Mission Statement:

This Group provides a forum for the discussion of research on the multiple religious traditions of Africa, methodological issues in the study of the religions of Africa, and African religious responses to ethical and social issues affecting the continent. The Group encourages the participation of African and non-African scholars in the leadership of the Group and in participation in its programs.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Hellweg, Joseph, Florida State University, [jhellweg@fsu.edu](mailto:jhellweg@fsu.edu)

Chair - Nyangweso, Mary, East Carolina University, [mwangila@aol.com](mailto:mwangila@aol.com)

## Afro-American Religious History Group

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Call Text:

The Afro-American Religious History Group invites proposals that explore the relationship between religious identity and racial identity in the Americas. For our 2015 meeting, we are especially interested in proposals that address the following:

- The South (as a geographical region and conceptual category), including papers that focus on Atlanta in particular.
- The implications of new media (e.g. digital humanities, visual ethnography, virtual archives, etc.) for historical research methods
- Women and Queer/LGBT subjects as makers of religious history, and gender and sexuality, more generally.
- Histories of black “megachurches”
- The transnational and diasporic horizons of African American religious history
- Humanist and secularist traditions in black life
- Incidents and histories of violence against marginalized bodies—including, but not limited to, police brutality, incarceration, religious violence, hate crimes, sexualized violence, and/or militarized, state-sanctioned violence. This might also include analysis of commemoration, social rituals, justice work, artistic practices, and peacemaking efforts that respond to violence. We are particularly interested in intersectional approaches to queer/gender/sexuality studies and African American religious history (for a potential quad-sponsored session with the Religion, Social Conflict, and Peace Group; Religion and Sexuality Group; Queer Studies in Religion Group).
- Religion and social activism, as well as the relationship between the scholar of religious history (and scholarship on the past, more generally) and social movements in the present (e.g. Vincent Harding, the Institute for the Black World)
- The Civil Rights movement and new iterations of public protest, with special attention to reconsiderations of the Montgomery Bus Boycott on the occasion of its 60th anniversary (for a possible co-sponsored session with the Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr. Group).

Successful proposals will clearly identify where the project fits within the call for papers and speak to its broader implications on African American religious history.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Sorett, Josef, Columbia University, [js3119@columbia.edu](mailto:js3119@columbia.edu)

Chair - Manigault-Bryant, LeRhonda, Williams College, [rhon.manigault-bryant@williams.edu](mailto:rhon.manigault-bryant@williams.edu)

## Animals and Religion Group

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Call Text:

This Group addresses issues in the study of animals and religion and seeks to engage religion scholars with the emergent field of animal studies. We welcome theoretically informed paper and panel proposals on all topics related to these themes. We especially seek proposals on the following topics in 2015:

- 1) The Value of Animals in Religious Studies and in the Academy: papers that address the value of religious studies for animal welfare (pursuant to the AAR 2015 Annual Meeting theme of "Valuing the Study of Religion")
- 2) Animals in Islam (for a possible co-sponsored session with Study of Islam Section)
- 3) Postcolonial Studies and Animals (for a possible co-sponsored session with Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Group; the Religion and Ecology Group)
- 4) Esotericism and Animals (for a possible co-sponsored session with Western Esotericism Group). Animals have always been a very significant presence in western esoteric discourses and practices, yet, strangely enough, they have not received much attention by scholars so far. We will have a preference for proposals dealing with the actual presence of animals in rituals and practices (as companions or as tools). However, discussions of the symbolical or allegorical presence of animals in texts and discourses will also be considered.
- 5) Animals and Gender
- 6) Animals in War
- 7) The Religious/Ethical Significance of Animal Fables
- 8) Panel responding to Aaron Gross's new book *The Question of the Animal and Religion*
- 9) Panel responding to Frans de Waal's new book *The Bonobo and the Atheist*
- 10) Connecting to new places using animals (for a possible quad-sponsored session)

Review Process:

Proposals are first reviewed anonymously by the entire steering committee, including co-chairs. The co-chairs then look at the names of submitters to consider factors such as the number of times the scholar has presented in the section and the diversity of the sessions. Papers are generally accepted on the basis of merit, fit, and the frequency with which an individual has presented (with preference for scholars who have not presented in the consultation in the last five years). We strive for balance in gender representation when looking at sessions collectively but not necessarily at the level of an individual session. We especially encourage submissions from traditionally underrepresented minorities.

Mission Statement:

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

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Ambros, Barbara, University of North Carolina, [bambros@email.unc.edu](mailto:bambros@email.unc.edu)

Chair - Clough, David, University of Chester, [d.clough@chester.ac.uk](mailto:d.clough@chester.ac.uk)

## Anthropology of Religion Group

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Call Text:

We invite proposals from the full range of anthropological theories and methods that explore diverse traditions, regions, and periods.

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

We especially encourage individual and panel submissions that address:

- 1) the spirit of this year's theme, *Valuing Religion*, such as anthropologies of value and/or the value of anthropology in the study of religion; 2) flirtations and fetishes in the field and the impact of these upon the ethnographer and the ethnographer's work; 3) the value of alternative scholarly forms, not only beyond dense academic prose, but also beyond writing (what emerging and/or underused forms of ethnography can be brought to bear on the evocation, representation, and interpretation of local, moral, interpersonal worlds?) This could include, but is not limited to, the value of film and visual methods in the anthropological study of religion. Preferably, presentations will incorporate demonstrations of alternative methods. We are interested especially in proposals on film in the study of ritual, especially with regard to the use of film in fieldwork or ethnographic filmmaking, for a potential joint session with the Ritual Studies Group.; 4) sensuous scholarship - à la Paul Stoller, David Howes, and others - in which the scholar-researcher's body and bodily experiences are incorporated into the work, moving beyond an instrumental use of the body as the means by which the scholar-researcher's brain is transported to and from the field; 5) ethnographies of internet, virtual, and digital communities; 6) personhood and conceptions of the self in theology and anthropology; 7) religious virtuosity, innovation, experimentation, and creativity.

- The Anthropology of Religion Group will also quint-sponsor a panel on Birgit Meyer's forthcoming book, *Sensational Movies: Video, Vision and Christianity in Ghana* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), in collaboration with the World Christianity Group; the Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group; the African Religions Group; and the Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism Group. Selection of panelists will be pre-arranged so that they may read Meyer's book as provided by the press in advance of the meetings in order to comment on it. Prof. Meyer will summarize her book's argument, and at least one panelist will comment on the methodological aspects of Prof. Meyer's book. We are soliciting no papers for this session but encouraging our members and other interested parties to attend for what will be a truly multi-disciplinary discussion focused on religion and Africa.

**Mission Statement:**

This Group draws together scholars who utilize the methodological tools and theoretical perspectives of anthropology in the study of religion as a social and cultural phenomenon. Given the increasing importance of anthropology and ethnography for the academic study of religion, we serve the academy as a forum for sustained discussion and critique of anthropological approaches that can connect scholars working on diverse traditions, regions, and eras who otherwise might not have the opportunity to learn from each other.

Interested members are encouraged to join our (low volume) list-serv: <http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/AAR-Anthropology/info>

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Zwissler, Laurel, Central Michigan University, [lzwissle@chass.utoronto.ca](mailto:lzwissle@chass.utoronto.ca)

Chair - Mote, Donna S., Sewanee: The University of the South, [dsmote@mac.com](mailto:dsmote@mac.com)

## Arts Series

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**Call for Papers:**

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

For any questions, please contact [annualmeeting@aarweb.org](mailto:annualmeeting@aarweb.org).

**Method:**

PAPERS

**Process:**

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

## Arts, Film, Literature, Media, Popular Culture, Visual Culture, and Religion Cluster

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### Call Text:

The Birth of a Nation--A Century Later

The year 2015 marks the centenary of the release of D.W. Griffith's troubling cinematic masterpiece, *The Birth of a Nation*. Based on Thomas Dixon's racist novel *The Clansman*, Griffith raised the stakes of the cinematic arts through highly developed editing approaches and other technical advances. At the same time, the film retains many of the racist portrayals found in the novel. This raises questions about the relations of aesthetics and ethics, about visual representation, and about the ongoing connections of race and religions in the United States. This session will explore the film, its cultural context, and its aftermath by exploring related artistic productions and cultural movements connected with the film.

### Mission Statement:

Because religious practice is deeply embedded in the everyday aesthetic lives of people, careful analysis of these aspects of culture have become crucial for the academic study of religion. Several program units of the AAR have responded to this need, and this Cluster seeks to find overlaps and differences in methodology, subject matter, media analysis, and historical investigations between ways of approaching the material and artistic mediations of religious life. These four Program Units (Arts, Literature, and Religion Section; Religion and Popular Culture Group; Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group; and Religion, Media, and Culture Group) collectively examine the ways humans engage the sacred through various media including, but not limited to film, literature, television, architecture, the fine arts, and a wide variety of material objects.

Anonymity: Other (please explain below)

### Method of submission:

Other

We are not inviting submissions for this session.

### Leadership:

Chair - Plate, S. Brent, Hamilton College, [splate@hamilton.edu](mailto:splate@hamilton.edu)

## Arts, Literature, and Religion Section

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### Call Text:

The Arts, Literature, and Religion Section seeks proposals that address a range of interconnections between religious and creative practice and understanding, with a preference for the topics below. We are especially interested in panel proposals and in modes of presentation that go beyond paper reading. Successful proposals will clearly articulate the primary thesis of the presentation and its contribution to the field. Proposals will integrate creative praxis and religion in meaningful ways. Throughout this call, "the South" refers both to the American South and the Global South. The Section especially seeks proposals on New Religion(s) of the South; The Gothic; the work of David Morgan (celebrating the 10th anniversary of *The Sacred Gaze*); The Dirrrrrty South; Religion and the Globalized World: Spatialities and Temporalities; Southern Senses/Sensing the South; arts, literature, and religion and their responses to climate change; local artists/authors; religious praxis as art (with special attention to local practitioners); explorations of the

indigenous (with local residents); re-readings of *Gone with the Wind*; popular images of the South in popular imagination; religion & art in everyday life; critical approaches to religion in Southern Hip Hop.

We would also be interested in papers that examine illness narratives or other aspects of the interrelationship between disability, religiosity, literature, and art for a possible joint session with the Bioethics and Religion Group and the Disability Studies Group.

**Mission Statement:**

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

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

Chair - Pierce, Yolanda, Princeton Theological Seminary, [yolanda.pierce@ptsem.edu](mailto:yolanda.pierce@ptsem.edu)

Chair - Carp, Richard M., St. Mary's College of California, [rmc8@stmarys-ca.edu](mailto:rmc8@stmarys-ca.edu)

## Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Group

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**Call Text:**

We welcome individual papers and panel proposals that address: [1] the 50th anniversary of the 1965 Immigration Act. How have cultural practices been transformed in the North American legal context? How have views and constructions of Asians and their religions changed since the passing of transformative immigration legislation (e.g., the emergence of the “model minority” or “mindfulness”?). Proposals will be considered for a possible quad- sponsorship with the Law, Religion and Culture; the Religion and Migration; the North American Hinduism Program Units; [2] Asian North American communities in the South and their relationships to racialization, religion, and the public sphere, including (but not limited to), the events in Ferguson, MO; [3] pedagogical practices, theories, and methods that reflect/affirm/critique Asian North American religiosity. We also invite creative and innovative formats for paper presentations to reflect alternative pedagogical practices; [4] exploratory discussions on work-life balance specific to Asian North American scholarship and ministry.

We also welcome proposals that address transnational religious experience and the history of Asian North American communities in the metropolitan city of Atlanta, and any other critical aspects of Asian North American religions, culture, and society.

**Mission Statement:**

This Group (hereafter referred to as ANARCS) is one of the primary vehicles for the advancement of the study of the religions and practices of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States and Canada. As an integral player in the development of the emerging field of Asian-American religious studies, ANARCS has

cultivated the work of junior and senior scholars from an impressive array of disciplines, including the history of religion, sociology, theology, philosophy, ethics, anthropology, psychology, education, and American and ethnic studies. ANARCS encourages new perspectives on Asian North American religious practices and faith communities, as well as innovative theoretical work that extends the concepts of empires, diaspora, transnationalism, globalization, im/migration, orientalism, adaptation, acculturation, race, ethnicity, marginalization, oppression, and resistance. In addition to this list of concepts, ANARCS explores theoretical, philosophical, and theological concepts, such as aesthetics, beauty, and love. ANARCS seeks to foster and mentor scholars (junior, senior, and nontraditional) by meeting for preconference sessions, gathering for meals, and maintaining a robust listserv.

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:  
Chair - Singh, Devin, Yale University, [devin.singh@yale.edu](mailto:devin.singh@yale.edu)

Chair - Bundang, Rachel A. R., Convent and Stuart Hall, [rbundang@alumni.princeton.edu](mailto:rbundang@alumni.princeton.edu)

## Augustine and Augustinianisms Group

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Call Text:  
Augustine Theorizing the Many Facets of Human Poverty and Need

Many of Augustine's texts lead the reader to approach some experience of human limit, powerlessness, or need and require a decision about what one does with that perception. Recent scholarship also has revealed how much time and effort Augustine expended on behalf of the destitute. Papers are invited that *not only* identify various poverties (mental, physical, or spiritual) as they appear in Augustine's life and works *but also* examine how he thought about them or with them. Contributions from a variety of disciplines and perspectives are most welcome.

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

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:  
Chair - Kolbet, Paul R., Yale University, [kolbet@aya.yale.edu](mailto:kolbet@aya.yale.edu)

## Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities Group

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Call Text:

In 2015, the Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities Group anticipates organizing three sessions. The first will feature a colloquy by invited panelists to celebrate the life and work of Randall Bailey (Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, GA), jointly sponsored by three program units: the African American Biblical Hermeneutics Section (SBL), the Queer Studies and the Bible Section (SBL), and the Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities Group (AAR).

The second, for which there is an open call for papers, will have as its theme, "Gospel Music of the American South." We invite proposals that explore the distinctive forms of gospel music that have developed in the American South and how they have shaped or been shaped by traditions of spirituality, biblical interpretation, theological reflection, or socio-political perspectives within the black church. Proposals featuring performed music especially welcome. (For a possible quad-sponsorship with the Christian Spirituality Group; the Music and Religion Group; the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements Group).

For the third session, proposals are solicited for papers exploring any of the following themes: (1) localized interrogations of identity using biblical books, themes, and tropes; (2) the deployment of the Bible in the generation of naming traditions and taxonomies within racial, ethnic, and indigenous communities; (3) the search for meaning and the engagement of biblical material through the lived experiences of subaltern and marginalized populations; (4) the Bible as interlocutor in the construction of ideas about public space, personal adornment, and food; and (5) the role of the Bible both in the inscription of racial, ethnic, and indigenous boundaries and in the reification of ideas about "otherness."

#### Mission Statement:

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

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

#### Leadership:

Chair - Page, Hugh Rowland, University of Notre Dame, [hpage@nd.edu](mailto:hpage@nd.edu)

## Bible, Theology, and Postmodernity Group

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#### Call Text:

In keeping with the major theme of "valuing religion" at the 2015 Annual Meeting, the Bible, Theology, and Postmodernity Group welcomes paper and panel proposals that re-examine the value of the term "postmodernity" itself. We welcome papers that re-examine genealogies, themes, or possibilities in postmodern theology, and inquire about their continued relevance. We welcome papers that reflect, once again, on the turn to biblical themes and writers in postmodern theology and into their continuing importance. Given recent materialist turns toward linguistic constructions of reality and postcolonial critiques of "postmodernity" as a Eurocentric phenomenon, is the postmodern moment in theology already past? Are we "post-"postmodern? And if so, what's on the horizon?

We also invite papers that think constructively on biblical stories and themes in contemporary cinema. How

might we consider contemporary (postmodern) film as a resource for thinking about biblical texts, constructing theology, or cinema as a modes of postmodern theology?

We also invite papers to discuss Mayra Rivera's forthcoming book *Poetics of the Flesh*.

### ***Kierkegaard and the Staging of Desire: A Discussion of Carl Hughes' Book on Rhetoric and Performance in a Theology of Eros***

In conjunction with the Kierkegaard, Religion and Culture Group, we are hosting a pre-arranged panel discussion on Carl Hughes' *Kierkegaard and the Staging of Desire* (Fordham University Press, 2014). In this book, Hughes argues that for Kierkegaard, theology is desire and that Kierkegaard uses rhetorical language and a sense of place and performance to "stage" desire for God, particularly in discourses in which the Christian liturgy is central. In doing so, Hughes' study raises questions about the meaning of said desire and its object for Kierkegaard, and about the significance that Kierkegaard places upon the dramatic or theatrical in communicating desire for God. Hughes' study, however, also has implications for the constructive theologian and religious thinker today, who might easily ask what it means to desire God against the backdrop of modernity and postmodernity; why the Bible is significant for articulating such desire; and what it means to perform that desire in a modern and postmodern context in which the ones doing the desiring or affected by the desiring are not homogeneous.

#### Mission Statement:

This Group encourages dialogue between constructive theologians and biblical scholars, dealing with themes of interest to both disciplines in the wake of postmodernity. We encourage creative proposals that work at the intersection of biblical studies, contemporary philosophy, and theology.

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

#### Leadership:

Chair - Erickson, Jacob, Drew University, [jacobjrickson@gmail.com](mailto:jacobjrickson@gmail.com)

Chair - Grau, Marion S., Graduate Theological Union, [mgrau@cdsp.edu](mailto:mgrau@cdsp.edu)

## **Bioethics and Religion Group**

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#### Call Text:

In light of the location and theme of 2015 Annual Meeting, the Bioethics and Religion Group invites submissions in the area of religion and public health. We encourage projects that explore religious bioethics beyond the traditional health care setting, such as: the social, economic, and environmental determinants of health; religion's influence on health; conscientious objection to vaccinations; and responses to pandemics (e.g., Ebola). Interesting proposals in other areas of religion and bioethics will also be considered.

We are also interested in papers that examine illness narratives or other aspects of the interrelationship between disability, religiosity, literature, and art for a possible joint session with the Arts, Literature, and Religion Group and the Religion and Disability Studies Group.

Mission Statement:

This Group offers a unique venue within the AAR for addressing the intersections of religion, bioethics, and health/healthcare related matters. It encourages creative and scholarly examinations of these intersections, drawing on such disciplines as 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 exploration of contemporary bioethical issues.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Norling, Marcella, Orange Coast College, [mnorling@ccd.edu](mailto:mnorling@ccd.edu)

Chair - Randels, George D., University of the Pacific, [grandels@pacific.edu](mailto:grandels@pacific.edu)

## Black Theology Group

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Call Text:

The Black Theology Group invites papers on the topics identified below as well as other topics that advance the discipline of black theology. Although proposals for individual papers will be given due consideration, we also encourage proposals for prearranged sessions on these or other topics of interest to black theology.

- Sacred Texts: From The Bible to *Beloved*

We invite papers that address the contributions of sacred and literary texts to both traditional and expansive ways of looking at black theology. We seek proposals that demonstrate how texts have advanced the struggle for black freedom and well-being and have been used creatively by black religious interpreters to support these goals of black life. We seek papers that will promote dialogue between black theology and sacred texts broadly understood, such as black biographical texts (e.g., life texts of Fredrick Douglas, Anna Julia Cooper, etc.), science fiction (e.g., Afro-futurism, Octavia Butler, etc.), black literary texts, non-Abrahamic sacred text traditions, and African sacred texts (Odu, Yoruba Coming Forth Day, Ancient Egyptian, etc.).

- Black Theology, The Arts, and Popular Culture

Visual and performing arts, popular culture, black sonic traditions, and black bodies are increasingly being used as source materials for black theologians. We invite papers that advance alternative theological thinking or address the relationship between black theology and the arts, cultural productions, and theological aesthetics.

- Black Theology as Method and Social Movement

We invite papers that put forth sources and creative methods that advance black theology as a theological method and/or social movement. On the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of James Cone's *God of the Oppressed*, we invite papers that address the social impact of black theology as prophetic discourse and as public theology, its contribution to social activism, its relationship to decolonial and postcolonial analysis, its contributions to issues of violence against black bodies, and its establishment of liberation as the content of Christian theology.

In partnership with the Ethics Section, we will co-sponsor a prearranged session celebrating the twentieth anniversary of Victor Anderson's *Beyond Ontological Blackness: An Essay on African American Religious and Cultural Criticism*. This panel will be prearranged, proposals will not be considered. Advance inquiries, however, are welcome via email to the group chairs.

We will participate in a prearranged quad-sponsored author-meets-critic session on Reggie Williams's *Bonhoeffer's Black Jesus: Harlem Renaissance Theology and an Ethic of Resistance* (Waco: Baylor, 2014). Critics: Jennifer McBride, J. Kameron Carter, Keri Day, Clifford Green. The session is quad-sponsored with the Theology and Religious Reflection Section; the Bonhoeffer: Theology and Social Analysis Group; the Christian Theological Research Fellowship. This panel will be prearranged, proposals will not be considered. Advance inquiries, however, are welcome via email to the group chairs.

#### Mission Statement:

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

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

Proposals have a much greater chance of acceptance if they make very clear the central thesis and main line(s) of argument of the proposed paper.

#### Leadership:

Chair - White, Andrea C., Emory University, [andrea.white@emory.edu](mailto:andrea.white@emory.edu)

Chair - Clark, Adam, Xavier University, [clarkadam@xavier.edu](mailto:clarkadam@xavier.edu)

## Body and Religion Group

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#### Call Text:

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

This year we are particularly interested in several topics:

Architectural bodies (Structural bodies, situated bodies, urban bodies, temple bodies, architecture as body)

Body spaces (Bodies in and as space, bodies modifying space, and space modifying bodies)

Body as ultimate concern

Bodies in the branding of religion (Bodies as advertisement of the message, bodies as message)

Body and social forms of protest. (Martyrdom, messages mediated through/by bodies, presences/absences of bodies in protests; bodies as sites of resistance, bodies as motivators/inhibitors of protest; bodies, protest and religious language; how religious language directs bodies to act in protests.

Body and work, spirituality of labor, sanctity of body, evolution of the religious body

Bodily Touch and modes of knowledge  
Body fitness, bodies and fitness

Mission Statement:

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

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

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Pati, George, Valparaiso University, [george.pati@valpo.edu](mailto:george.pati@valpo.edu)

Chair - Bado, Nikki, Iowa State University, [nikkibf@iastate.edu](mailto:nikkibf@iastate.edu)

## Bonhoeffer: Theology and Social Analysis Group

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Call Text:

We invite global readings of Bonhoeffer that place attention to race, gender, sexuality, and/or pluralism in conversation with core themes in Bonhoeffer's work, such as Christology, ecclesiology, and discipleship. We also invite papers that explore the place of the aesthetic in Bonhoeffer's life and thought or the generative power of Bonhoeffer's life and thought for artistic expression.

In addition, together with the Theological Interpretation of Scripture unit of the SBL, we invite papers investigating aspects of Bonhoeffer as a theological interpreter of Christian scripture. Submissions may explore Bonhoeffer's own exegetical practice and its application in particular cases, examine the role of exegesis in the construction of his own distinctive theological positions, or perhaps consider Bonhoeffer's understanding of scripture and its consequences for contemporary debates about theological exegesis.

We will participate in a prearranged quad-sponsored author-meets-critic session on Reggie Williams's *Bonhoeffer's Black Jesus: Harlem Renaissance Theology and an Ethic of Resistance* (Waco: Baylor, 2014). Critics: Jennifer McBride, J. Kameron Carter, Keri Day, Clifford Green. The session is quad-sponsored with the Black Theology Group; the Theology and Religious Reflection Section; the Christian Theological

Research Fellowship. This panel will be prearranged, proposals will not be considered. Advance inquiries, however, are welcome via email to the group chairs.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - McBride, Jennifer, Wartburg College, [jennifer.mcbride@wartburg.edu](mailto:jennifer.mcbride@wartburg.edu)

## Buddhism in the West Group

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Call Text:

The Buddhism in the West group provides a venue for new studies on Buddhism in non-Asian locales and further communication and exchange between scholars working on Buddhism outside of Asia. It offers a forum within which to clarify the intellectual and methodological underpinnings of research on Buddhism in the West and consider new possibilities in methods and theoretical approaches.

Possible topics for this year include:

Development versus distortion in Western Buddhism

Buddhist diaspora

Monasticism in the West

Developments and transformations in Buddhist institutions in the West

Contemplative studies

Buddhism and secularism

Ethics in contemporary mindfulness movements

Buddhist chaplaincy and care in hospitals, prisons, etc.

New models, conceptions, and interrogations of authority

Revising the history of Buddhism in the West

Particular field studies

Rethinking theoretical models of American Buddhism

The history and impact of Asian religions and the religions of Asian Americans in the Pacific Rim and the North American West (for possible quad-sponsorship with the Buddhism in the West Group, the Japanese Religions Group, and the North American Hinduism Group)

Other appropriate topics will be considered.

Mission Statement:

This Group seeks to:

Provide a venue for new studies on Buddhism in non-Asian locales

Further 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

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:  
Chair - McMahan, David, Franklin and Marshall College, [dmcghan@fandm.edu](mailto:dmcghan@fandm.edu)

## Buddhism Section

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Call Text:

The Buddhism Section welcomes proposals for panels, individual papers, and roundtables in all areas of Buddhist studies. To facilitate greater exchange among the various subfields within Buddhist studies, we are particularly interested in sessions that confront enduring problems in the study of Buddhism, raise important methodological issues, or bring fresh materials or perspectives to bear on themes of broad interest. Proposals that adopt innovative formats and/or take advantage of options such as ninety-minute sessions are also of particular interest.

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

Individual paper proposals are also encouraged. Each year, the Section hosts at least one session composed of the best individual paper submissions. Sometimes this takes the form of an omnibus panel, though these are as often thematized by the Steering Committee, insofar as it is possible.

All proposals are welcome and given careful consideration. The following themes have been proposed for the 2015 meeting. Please contact the listed organizers if you wish to contribute.

- Authorship of Mahayana Sutras (Jeff Schroeder, [jeff.schroeder@duke.edu](mailto:jeff.schroeder@duke.edu))
- Buddhist Love Stories (Vanessa Sasson, [vanessa.sasson@mcgill.ca](mailto:vanessa.sasson@mcgill.ca))
- Esoteric Buddhism in Medieval Japan (Eric Proffitt, [proffitt@gmail.com](mailto:proffitt@gmail.com))
- The Scientific Educations of Tibetan Monks (John Dunne, [jdunne@emory.edu](mailto:jdunne@emory.edu))
- Formations of Doctrine in Buddhist Modernity (Jimmy Yu, [jyu2@fsu.edu](mailto:jyu2@fsu.edu))
- S.N. Goenka's Movement and Legacy (Daniel M. Stuart, [dan.stuart@gmail.com](mailto:dan.stuart@gmail.com))
- Radical Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia (Roy C. Amore, [amore@uwindsor.ca](mailto:amore@uwindsor.ca))
- "The Dos and Don'ts of Mindfulness Meditation" or "The Ins and Outs of Mindfulness Meditation" (Caifang Zhu, [caifangzhu@hotmail.com](mailto:caifangzhu@hotmail.com))

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Wedemeyer, Christian K., University of Chicago, [wedemeyer@uchicago.edu](mailto:wedemeyer@uchicago.edu)

Chair - Meeks, Lori, University of Southern California, [meeks@usc.edu](mailto:meeks@usc.edu)

## Buddhist Critical—Constructive Reflection Group

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Call Text:

The Buddhist Critical-Constructive Reflection Group explores how Buddhist thought and practice can address contemporary issues and how Buddhist modes of understanding can inform or be informed by academic studies (in Religious Studies, Philosophy, Ethics, Theology, Sociology, Economics, etc.). We invite paper or panel proposals on the following topics (or other topics) as they pertain to our mission to engage in Buddhist critical and constructive reflection: (A) moral injury and other forms of trauma, such as injury to conscience and feelings of shame after moral transgressions, and psychological harm caused by social injustice or domestic violence (with particular interest in diverse religious scriptural and cultural understandings of moral injury outside the Christian tradition) for a co-sponsored session with the Moral Injury and Recovery in Religion, Society, and Culture Group and the Warfare in Ancient Israel Group (SBL); (B) conflicts and forms of exclusion deriving from racial, socio-economic, political, sexual, and gender-based difference; (C) religious pluralism; (D) Buddhism professors as practitioners.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Ives, Christopher, Stonehill College, [cives@stonehill.edu](mailto:cives@stonehill.edu)

Chair - Burford, Grace G., Prescott College, [gburford@prescott.edu](mailto:gburford@prescott.edu)

## Buddhist Philosophy Group

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Call Text:

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

Buddhism and Pragmatism (contact: Jonathan Gold, [jcgold@princeton.edu](mailto:jcgold@princeton.edu))

Buddhist *dṛṣṭi*: on Beliefs and Views (contact: Charles Muller, [acmuller@l.u-tokyo.ac.jp](mailto:acmuller@l.u-tokyo.ac.jp))

Buddhist Hermeneutics (contact: John Campbell, [jrc4aa@virginia.edu](mailto:jrc4aa@virginia.edu) or Jake Davis, [jhdavis@vijja.net](mailto:jhdavis@vijja.net))

Intersubjectivity and Alterity (contact: Jake Davis, [jhdavis@vijja.net](mailto:jhdavis@vijja.net) or Roy Tzohar, [roytzo@post.tau.ac.il](mailto:roytzo@post.tau.ac.il))

Kierkegaard and Buddhism: For a co-sponsored session with the Yogācāra Studies Group and the Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture Group, we invite proposals that address methodological and substantive issues concerning Kierkegaard and Buddhism. Possible topics include comparative approaches to issues such as the nature of the self/non-self, the scope and limits of the first-person perspective, the role of suffering in understanding the human condition, and the possibility or impossibility of seeing Kierkegaard's implicit ontology and Buddhism in phenomenological terms.

Nietzsche and Buddhism (contact: Andre van der Braak, [a.vander.braak@vu.nl](mailto:a.vander.braak@vu.nl))

Philosophy and Tantra in Late Indian Buddhism (contact: Davey Tomlinson, [dtomlinson@uchicago.edu](mailto:dtomlinson@uchicago.edu))

Translating Buddhist Philosophy (contact: Dan Arnold, [d-arnold@uchicago.edu](mailto:d-arnold@uchicago.edu))

Women and Buddhist Philosophy (contact: Karin Meyers, [karin.meyers@ryi.org](mailto:karin.meyers@ryi.org))

If you are interested in organizing a panel on a topic that is not listed, please contact the Co-Chairs listed below for information on other members intending to develop proposals on the same topic.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Nance, Richard, Indiana University, Bloomington, [richard.nance@gmail.com](mailto:richard.nance@gmail.com)

Chair - McClintock, Sara L., Emory University, [slmcli@emory.edu](mailto:slmcli@emory.edu)

## Childhood Studies and Religion Group

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Call Text:

- 1) "Religion and Children's Rights": The First Twenty-five Years of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. What's changed? What needs fixing? What would be different if the U.S. were a signatory?
  
- 2) Children and the Embodiment of Religion. We are particularly interested in papers focusing on the physical reshaping of children's bodies to meet religious prescriptions (body modifications, how children's bodies are sexed, etc.).
  
- 3) Families in Migration. We invite proposals that examine the intersection between migration, women and children in any region of the world, including their religious practices and beliefs, reconstructions of religious identity, responses of religious organizations, and causes and contexts of their voluntary or forced migration (violence, economics, etc.) (For a co-sponsored session with the Women and Religion Group and the Religion and Migration Group).
  
- 4) "Child Theologies: Rethinking Doctrines and Practices with Attention to Childhood." We welcome papers from systematic or contextual theologians from all denominations and parts of the world who are interested in rethinking particular Christian doctrines and practices in the light of attention to children and childhood.
  
- 5) Children's Material Culture and Religion. How do children use toys, games, film, and other artifacts in building their religious worlds?
  
- 6) Religion and Education. We encourage proposals that explore the role of schools and religious education curricula in shaping children's ideas about religion and religious traditions.

Mission Statement:

This Group's overall aim is to investigate the complex and multifaceted relation between religion and childhood. The specific goals of the Group are as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:  
Chair - Ridgely, Susan, University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh, [ridgelys@uwosh.edu](mailto:ridgelys@uwosh.edu)

## Chinese Christianities Seminar

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### **Statement of Purpose:**

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

### **Call for Papers:**

Developing the overarching theme of “Chinese Christianities,” in the first year of the seminar, we welcome papers in the following areas:

- Theological and practical concerns that have resonated with or been transformed by diasporic and mainland Chinese Christianities
- Civil engagement of Chinese Christians with cross-regional issues (e.g., Chinese Christians in the global Anglican realignment, Hong Kong-Mainland China relations and the umbrella movement, Taiwan-Mainland China relations and the sunflower movement)
- Missions and ministries from Chinese of one region to Chinese of another region.

### **Method:**

PAPERS

### **Process:**

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

- Chair – Chow, Alexander, University of Edinburgh, [alexander.chow@ed.ac.uk](mailto:alexander.chow@ed.ac.uk)

## Chinese Religions Group

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### Call Text:

All proposals for both panels and papers are welcome and given careful consideration. Please contact the organizers if you wish to contribute to the following themes:

New religions in contemporary China - both indigenous and foreign.

Chinese burial practices

Transnational networks of Chinese religions

The 17th century Chinese Buddhist world and its connections to the Buddhist world of the Republican era

Constituting authority in Chinese religions

Academic legacies of the study of Chinese religions

Courtly politics and Chinese religions

### Mission Statement:

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

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

### Method of submission:

PAPERS

### Leadership:

Chair - Bryson, Megan, University of Tennessee, [megancbryson@gmail.com](mailto:megancbryson@gmail.com)

Chair - Benn, James A., McMaster University, [bennjam@mcmaster.ca](mailto:bennjam@mcmaster.ca)

## Christian Spirituality Group

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### Call Text:

The Christian Spirituality Group welcomes proposals in the following areas:

- The Life and Times of a Modern Mystic: We mark the centenary of the birth of Thomas Merton, 1915-68 (*for a cosponsored session with the Mysticism Group*) with proposals touching on Merton.
- The Spirituality of Teresa of Avila: We recognize the 500th anniversary of her birth with proposals related to her spirituality.
- Global Perspectives on Biblical Spirituality: We invite proposals for a session featuring diverse views on spirituality and the Bible, especially perspectives from beyond North America and Europe.

- Spirituality and Racial Reconciliation: Proposals may treat historical phenomenon, reflections on current events, or any other reflections on the role of spirituality and/or spiritual practices in resisting racism and/or working toward racial reconciliation.
- Spirituality in the Global Academy: We invite reflections on how spirituality as a field of study is being appropriated in higher education and theological education in places outside of North America and Europe.
- Spirituality and Preaching: We invite proposals addressing the relationship between spirituality and preaching.
- “Gospel Music of the American South”: We invite proposals that explore the distinctive forms of gospel music that have developed in the American South and how they have shaped or been shaped by traditions of spirituality, biblical interpretation, theological reflection, or socio-political perspectives within the black church. Proposals featuring performed music especially welcome (*for a possible quad-sponsored session with the Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities Group; the Music and Religion Group; the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements Group*).

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

Mission Statement:

This Group serves as a forum for scholars working in the interdisciplinary field of Christian spirituality. It is committed to the following:

Developing, refining, and demonstrating appropriate methodologies for the academic study of spirituality.

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

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

Articulating the connections between scholarship and spiritual practice.

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

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

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Robinson, Timothy, Brite Divinity School, [tim.robinson@tcu.edu](mailto:tim.robinson@tcu.edu)

Chair - Young, Glenn, Rockhurst University, [glenn.young@rockhurst.edu](mailto:glenn.young@rockhurst.edu)

## Christian Systematic Theology Section

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Call Text:

General Theme: "Who Is God, and How Does This God Come to Be Known?"

We invite constructive (not merely descriptive or historical) proposals that explore the doctrine of God and possibilities for knowledge of God. Who is this God Christians worship and how might we best characterize, name, or talk about God? Is this the same God that philosophers discuss? What can we say about God's relationship to all that is not God? What are the possibilities and limits of our human language actually gaining purchase on who God is? We seek proposals for individual papers, panels, or book discussions that relate to the general theme and especially to one or more of the following subtopics:

1. Names of God
2. Attributes of God
3. Passibility and impassibility, ancient and modern
4. Apophaticism/cataphaticism
5. Theism—Classical, "Open," and Otherwise
6. Knowledge of God as Participation
7. The relationship of the Hellenistic philosophical tradition to knowledge of the Christian God
8. The Possibilities and/or Limits of Analytic Theology

We are also interested in paper proposals that could lead to cosponsored sessions with the Interfaith and Interreligious Studies group, or with the Platonic Studies Group on topics (6) and (7).

Additionally, along with the Middle Eastern Christianity Group, the Eastern Orthodox Studies Group, and the Roman Catholic Studies Group, we are sponsoring a call for papers on the legacy of Chalcedon (451) to generate expert discussion on the Council of Chalcedon and its aftermath. The Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) marked a turning point in Church history and Christian theology on account of the schism that resulted from disputes over the statements of Christology promulgated by the council. That schism endures to this day. Although most Western Christians have little awareness of the Chalcedonian Council, its legacy directly impacts the Middle Eastern Christian communities who are divided among each other and from Western churches along Chalcedonian lines. The committees invite paper proposals from any reasonable discipline (church history, patristics, theology, sociology, etc.) and focused on any historical period or theological theme that can shed light on Chalcedon and its legacy. Special consideration will be given to proposals that link their research in some way to Middle Eastern Christian communities. Paper proposals must demonstrate methodological and theoretical rigor and suggest a coherent argument.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Coolman, Holly Taylor, Providence College, [htc@providence.edu](mailto:htc@providence.edu)

Chair - Stubbs, David, Western Theological Seminary, [david.stubbs@westernsem.edu](mailto:david.stubbs@westernsem.edu)

## Class, Religion, and Theology Group

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Call Text:

For a quad-sponsored session with the Liberation Theologies Group, the Religion and Cities Group, and the Theology and Religious Reflection Section, we are inviting papers that address the relevance of issues of class, religion, and theology to the academy and academics, including issues of academic labor and how class affects academic production more broadly conceived (in particular teaching and writing). In these papers we also encourage reflections on place. How do issues of class, religion, and theology shape up in the academy in relation to the various locations of academic production in large cities, towns, and rural areas?

The following announcements are not Call for Papers but a notice of our intentions for 2015. The names may change but this is an indication of our likely presenters.

Pre-Arranged Session for Class, Religion and Theology: Due to the widespread lack of clarity on class issues, we are planning to do this prearranged session for our solo session, addressing the fundamental issues one more time, focusing on the difference of class viewed as stratification versus class viewed in relational terms and how this plays out theologically and religiously. Ken Estey, Santiago Slabodsky, and Jung Mo Sung are willing to be part of this group, and we are in the process of inviting one more person.

Pre-Arranged Session for co-sponsorship with the SBL on Class, Religion, and the Bible: Participants may include Richard Horsley and Roland Boer from the SBL and Joerg Rieger and Keri Day from the AAR.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Rieger, Joerg, Southern Methodist University, [jrieger@mail.smu.edu](mailto:jrieger@mail.smu.edu)

Chair - Estey, Ken, Brooklyn College, [kestey@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:kestey@brooklyn.cuny.edu)

## Cognitive Science of Religion Group

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Call Text:

The Cognitive Science of Religion Group welcomes individual Paper Proposals, Papers Session Proposals, and Round Table Proposals on the specific topics below and on all topics related to the Cognitive Science of Religion. Preference is typically given to fully formed panels that are submitted as a Papers Session or Round Table Proposal.

GENERAL CALL FOR PAPER PROPOSALS

Topic: Experimental philosophy meets the Cognitive Science of Religion (the relationship between research, methodological considerations, and theories of both).

Topic: Applied dimensions of CSR research: The "So What?" Question (including on religion and violence for possible co-sponsorship with the Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Group).

Topic: Religion and Morality (including research from moral psychology).

Topic: Religion, Emotion, and Belief? (for possible quad-sponsorship with the Religious Experience in Antiquity Group (SBL); the Science, Religion, and Technology Group; the Religion, Affect, and Emotion Group);

How can recent approaches from the natural and social sciences help scholars of religion to better understand the religious experience of belief? Is belief a natural product of affective and cognitive processes? What role does emotion play in belief? Does the role of emotion and belief function differently in "science" and "religion"? How do religions use emotion to cultivate the believing religious subject? Is there room for a model of self and subjectivity that goes beyond self-cultivation, in which a subject is being acted upon (ethics of passion)? What are the distinct benefits and limitations to conceptualizing religious belief in these ways?

GENERAL CALL FOR PAPERS SESSION PROPOSALS

Please contact and submit your proposals for consideration to the Papers Session organizer, who in turn is responsible for inputting them into the Program Administration Proposal, Evaluation, Review, and Submission System (PAPERS).

Topic/Title: "Cross-Cultural and Cognitive Approaches to Changes in Sense of Self"

Papers Session Organizer: Jared Lindahl (Brown University), [jared.lindahl@brown.edu](mailto:jared.lindahl@brown.edu)

"Interest in either unexpected and sudden changes in sense of self associated with religious experiences, or in deliberately pursued changes in sense of self cultivated through religious practices. Changes in sense of self could include depersonalization, derealization, and other forms of dissociation (such as out-of-body experiences)."

Topic/Title: "Critical Review of The Attraction of Religion: A New Evolutionary Theory of Religion"

Papers Session Organizer: Jason Slone ([slonedj@tiffin.edu](mailto:slonedj@tiffin.edu)) and James Van Slyke ([james.vanslyke@fresno.edu](mailto:james.vanslyke@fresno.edu))

"*The Attraction of Religion: A New Evolutionary Theory of Religion* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015) is a collection of essays that proposes a new theoretical framework for explaining religiosity, a framework that draws on sexual selection theory in evolutionary psychology, a recently emerged field that integrates psychology and anthropology with evolutionary biology. The book champions the broad theory that religiosity is widespread because it helps people manage adaptive problems related to mating and reproduction -- by, for example, facilitating mate attraction, selection, and retention, and encouraging long-term pair-bonding, fidelity, and parental investment. This Papers Session will critically evaluate the book's claims."

Topic/Title: "Can we now hack the religious mind?" (for possible co-sponsorship with the Transhumanism and Religion Group)

Papers Session Proposal Organizer: Don Braxton, [don.braxton@gmail.com](mailto:don.braxton@gmail.com)

"Cognitive Science has made significant progress in explaining how the normal human mind produces religious ideas. What it has not done, and cannot do as a science, is offer advice on how to put that knowledge to use to improve human life. By contrast, transhumanism seeks explicitly to put scientific knowledge to work to improve human life beyond its normal functioning. This panel wants to place these two intellectual currents in dialogue to see how the mind, as cognitive science explains it, can be upgraded in terms of the quality of religious life. What counts as an upgrade is left to the panel participants to articulate and defend.

Papers are welcome on topics that include:

- How can we limit or eliminate the least desirable outputs of religion (e.g. tribal violence, science denial, etc.) in our world given what cognitive science tells us?
- How can we encourage the most desirable outputs of religion (e.g. prosocial behavior, self-esteem improvement) in our world given what cognitive science tells us?
- Are there novel forms of religion that might be possible with a little mind-tweaking? If so, what are they, and why do you think such novel forms are possible?"

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - White, Claire, California State University, Northridge, [clairejwhite81@gmail.com](mailto:clairejwhite81@gmail.com)

Chair - Chilcott, Travis, Iowa State University, [chilcott@iastate.edu](mailto:chilcott@iastate.edu)

## Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Group

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Call Text:

We are proud to announce that the Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence has joined with the *Journal of Religion and Violence*. Future submissions to the AAR program unit will be considered for publication in the journal.

For the 2015 national conference in Atlanta, we seek papers that examine the intersections of religion and violence, with attention to the conditions in which religion lends itself to the justification and/or promotion

of violence. Papers should demonstrate comparative or theoretical approaches. Below are recommended themes within this framework:

*Religion, Law and Violence*: a look into the role of international law, humanitarian law, and regulations of interventions such as in the Middle East. If you are interested in submitting to this theme, please contact Nathan French ([frenchns@miamioh.edu](mailto:frenchns@miamioh.edu)) and Gregory Reichberg ([greg.reichberg@prio.org](mailto:greg.reichberg@prio.org)).

*Ethnographies of Religion and Violence*: contemporary ethnographic analyses that track intersections between religious actors and violence, such as the role of religion in prisons, religious leaders in warfare, religiously motivated soldiers, or religious nationalists that foment violence. For possible organized panel inquiries, please contact Ryan Williams ([rjw202@cam.ac.uk](mailto:rjw202@cam.ac.uk)).

*Comparative Ethics of Violence beyond Texts*: We seek studies that trace the way that religious authority becomes enacted outside of traditional scriptural mandates, such as by cultural leaders, rituals and media. For possible organized panel inquiries, please contact Torkel Brekke ([torkel.brekke@ikos.uio.no](mailto:torkel.brekke@ikos.uio.no)).

*Martyrdom*: We invite examinations into martyrdom as a performative, disputed, and celebrated category. In addition to these themes, we are soliciting papers for four co-sponsored sessions:

1. *Children, Violence, and Religion*: This open session invites submissions that investigate violence by or toward children in "religious" contexts. Papers may address any form of verbal, psychological, or physical violence, real or imagined. In addition, such violence may represent a normative requirement for a given religious community, as in the case of child soldiers, child suicide missions, child sacrifice, or it may represent a despicable crime imputed to the religious Other, as in accusations of ritual murder of children by Christians in antiquity or Jews in medieval Europe. Papers may address evidence from any historical setting, from ancient to contemporary. This panel is co-sponsored by the SBL unit "Violence and Representations of Violence among Jews and Christians."
2. *Religion, Ecology, and Violence*: we seek papers that examine cases such as eco-terrorism, environmental conflicts around extractive economies in Africa and Latin America, and the relationship between Islamism and petroleum economies. This panel is co-sponsored with the Religion and Ecology program unit.
3. *Genocide in the Balkans*: we welcome papers that look at acts of genocide in the Balkans. This panel is co-sponsored with the Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide program unit.
4. *Cognitive Science of Religion and Violence*: analyses of religion and violence through cognitive science methods and approaches. Violence offers an opportunity to explore the applied dimensions of CSR research for possible co-sponsorship with the Cognitive Science of Religion Group.

In addition to these suggested themes and collaborations, we welcome other submissions that fall within our program unit's mandate.

#### Mission Statement:

Since the end of the Cold War, acts of religiously motivated violence have become prominent worldwide. Scholars from various disciplines have attempted to account for these incidents, noting a resurgence of anti-colonialism, poverty and economic injustice, the failures of secular nationalism, uprootedness and the loss of a homeland, and the pervasive features of globalization in its economic, political, social, and cultural forms. Yet the religious narratives that motivate these violent actors are too conspicuous to be ignored. Today, critics no longer debate whether people's use of religion has a role in violence; rather, the discussion has

turned to what kind of role it plays, and how this role affects the nature and scale of the conflict. This Group contends that the theories, methodologies, and scales for studying the expanding field of religion and violence remain under-explored and require interdisciplinary work and collaboration to provide greater insights into the thorny issues involved. The sociology, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, evolutionary psychology, cognitive science, economics, and political science of religion all have provided great insights into the nature of religion and violence over the last few decades and all are arguably interdisciplinary by nature. This Group provides a venue devoted specifically to interdisciplinary discussions of the subject. We hope to channel and enhance contributions from the historically delineated (albeit constructed) humanities, social sciences, and physical sciences. In that vein, we hope to hear papers presenting cross-disciplinary dialogue and research on the topic of religion and violence.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

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

Leadership:

Chair - Kitts, Margo, Hawaii Pacific University, [mkitts@hpu.edu](mailto:mkitts@hpu.edu)

Chair - Jerryson, Michael, Youngstown State University, [mjerryson@gmail.com](mailto:mjerryson@gmail.com)

## Comparative Religious Ethics Group

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Call Text:

This group encourages the submission of any individual paper, papers session, and roundtable proposals that make cultural and moral diversity central to ethical analysis. In order to facilitate substantive conversation during each session, this year we will participate in the AAR Full Paper Submission system. Full drafts of all accepted papers must be posted online several weeks prior to the Annual Meeting, and will be accessible to AAR members only. Participants will read all papers in advance, presenters will have ten minutes to summarize their argument, and the meeting time will be devoted to a comments and suggestions on those papers. Themes especially welcome this year include:

- How do we as scholars address the need for reflexivity or articulate our normative commitments in our scholarship?
  - How does one locate moral and normative action and speech in the context of the everyday?
  - How do religious communities respond to public issues of considerable moral import (such as global health, racism, abuses of the criminal justice system, immigration and discrimination) and what factors promote or hamper civic engagement?
- What are the consequences of living in a "Secular Age" for Comparative Religious Ethics?
- What are the relationships and tensions between forms of valuing (religious, moral, aesthetic, familial, political, and economic)?
- How does one compare the moral dimensions of yoga and other meditation or body practices? (For a potential co-sponsored session with the Yoga in Theory and Practice Group).

Mission Statement:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - McGuire, Beverley Foulks, University of North Carolina, Wilmington, [bevfulks@gmail.com](mailto:bevfulks@gmail.com)

Chair - Bucar, Elizabeth, Northeastern University, [e.bucar@neu.edu](mailto:e.bucar@neu.edu)

## Comparative Studies in Religion Section

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Call Text:

The Comparative Studies in Religion Section encourages thoughtful comparative research across different religious traditions and communities that yields insights into individual religious traditions, distinct individual and community experiences of religion, and the art and craft of religious studies itself. We solicit panel session proposals (not individual papers) that discuss comparison explicitly, rather than loose collections of

discrete papers from different traditions. In order to support this, we encourage paper session organizers to be in touch with the unit co-chairs to help formulate the strongest paper session proposals possible. In 2015, the unit invites paper sessions on any topic that will lead to a richer understanding and appreciation of comparison. In particular, we are looking for paper session proposals focused on the following: religious vs. secular; exorcism, contagion, and pollution; understandings of indigeneity; Martin Luther King, Jr. and comparative pacifisms (in anticipation of the meeting in Atlanta); How do we do comparison? (a session on comparative methodology); death with dignity; comparative religion in the workplace setting; lament/women's laments; the work of mourning.

We also welcome co-sponsored sessions. We are considering a co-sponsored session with the Western Esotericism Group on the following topic: Western esotericism has been considered by specialists as a culture-bound phenomenon, related to a specific cultural context, roughly corresponding to the Euro-American and Mediterranean geographical area and to the historical development of monotheisms. However, it would be interesting to consider in which way it could be compared to phenomena, movements, currents, and traditions from other religious cultures. Both theoretical proposals about possible approaches for comparative work on western esotericism and proposals on specific case studies are welcome.

#### Mission Statement:

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

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

#### Leadership:

Chair - McClymond, Kathryn, Georgia State University, [kmcclymond@gsu.edu](mailto:kmcclymond@gsu.edu)

Chair - Mortensen, Eric D., Guilford College, [ericdmort@yahoo.com](mailto:ericdmort@yahoo.com)

## Comparative Theology Group

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#### Call Text:

The Comparative Theology Group invites panel proposals on theological topics concerning two or more religious traditions. The Group prefers panel proposals over individual paper proposals as the latter are difficult to incorporate into panels and are therefore less likely to be accepted. The Group especially welcomes proposals relating to one of the following topics that were brought up in our business meeting: the use of military/martial imagery in relation to the divine; comparative theological reflection from the perspective of victims of religiously motivated violence; ambiguity in the rhetorics of divine healing and violence; comparative theological engagement with Eastern Orthodoxy; con-textual approaches to comparative theology (comparing ritual-liturgical practices or oral traditions); de-territorialization and the reconfiguration of religious boundaries in an age of globalization; the religious use of the internet for communication, mobilization, and/or indoctrination; the internet as a "text" for comparative theological reflection; comparative perspectives on issues relating to land and water; the role of interreligious/comparative theology in religious education; and comparative theology and religious authority.

We encourage prospective applicants to share ideas on the Comparative Theology Group listserv ("reply all") to form potential panels.

**Mission Statement:**

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

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Nicholson, Hugh, Loyola University Chicago, [hnicholson@luc.edu](mailto:hnicholson@luc.edu)

Chair - Johnston Largen, Kristin, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, [klargen@ltsg.edu](mailto:klargen@ltsg.edu)

## Confucian Traditions Group

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**Call Text:**

**Statement of Purpose:**

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

**Call for Papers:**

This Group invites proposals concerning any aspect of Confucianism from any geographical area. Topics of particular interest this coming year are:

- Confucianism/Buddhism Interactions during the Tang-Song Period
- How the Changes Changed: The History of Confucian Thought as Shown in Yijing Exegesis (contact Geoffrey Redmond at [GPRedmond@aol.com](mailto:GPRedmond@aol.com) or Hon Tze-ki at [hon@geneseo.edu](mailto:hon@geneseo.edu))
- New Confucianism and its Alternatives

- Confucianism and Authority
- Confucianism, Corruption, and Instrumentality
- Confucianism and Contemporary Political Discourse
- Confucianism and Death and Burial
- Confucianism and Textual Commentary
- Confucianism and the Construction of Gender through Text and Practice (contact Ori Tavor at [oritavor@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:oritavor@sas.upenn.edu))

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

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Huang, Yong, Chinese University of Hong Kong, [yonghuang@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:yonghuang@cuhk.edu.hk)

Chair - Lee, Pauline, Saint Louis University, [leepc@slu.edu](mailto:leepc@slu.edu)

## Contemplative Studies Group

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Call Text:

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

- Comparative study of contemplative practice, especially the contextual nuances of religiously-committed forms of meditation and contemplative prayer
- Contemplative reading in both historical and contemporary perspective

- Contemplative experience, cognitive science, and philosophy of mind
- Contemplative studies and ritual studies
- “Scholar-Practitioners: Coming out in and of the Academy” (for a possible cosponsored session with the Mysticism Group; June McDaniel, organizer)
- Yoga and neuroscience (for a possible cosponsored session with the Yoga in Theory and Practice Group)

We also welcome panel and paper proposals on any other topic related to contemplative studies.

**Mission Statement:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Komjathy, Louis, University of San Diego, [komjathy@sandiego.edu](mailto:komjathy@sandiego.edu)

Chair - Klein, Anne C., Rice University, [ack@rice.edu](mailto:ack@rice.edu)

## Contemporary Islam Group

**Call Text:**

For the upcoming 2015 meeting, we welcome proposals on any aspect of Islam in the contemporary world. We are especially interested in presenting research on the following themes:

1. Africa: We are looking for proposals that move beyond the boundedness or otherness of Africa in Islamic Studies, and that look at Islam in Africa in terms of regional (sub-Saharan, Indian Ocean) connections and/or theoretical contributions to the broader study of Islam.
2. Islam and Politics: The current liberal/conservative dichotomy inadequately reflects the complex and nuanced ways in which Muslims understand the relationship between Islam and politics. We invite proposals that shed new light on the constitutive categories of political movements in Muslim societies, such as emergent transformations of political Islam and their multifaceted engagements with Islamic tradition.
3. Crisis, Precarity, and Wellbeing: Contemporary political and sectarian violence has reshaped the everyday world of Muslims in diverse societies, displacing refugees, initiating new forms of exclusion or repression, disrupting community, and straining the hope of social continuity. We are interested in research that chronicles how the experience of crisis and precarity affects Muslim struggles for wellbeing in the contemporary world.
4. In the Shadows of Normativity: Majoritarian forms of Muslim community enact their own religious, political, gender, and sexual norms, and these, in turn, constitute various minority identities. In terms of both the state and Muslim communities, we see the emergence of minority groups that challenge prevailing representations of religion and racial, gender, sexual, and ethnic identity. We seek papers that explore the contexts in which Muslims are constituted as a minority, the negotiation of new forms of identity and community, and the establishment of spheres of life in which alternate normativities encourage new modes of connection.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Esack, Farid, University of Johannesburg, [fesack@uj.ac.za](mailto:fesack@uj.ac.za)

Chair - Widmann Abraham, Danielle, James Madison University, [daniellea@gmail.com](mailto:daniellea@gmail.com)

## Contemporary Pagan Studies Group

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Call Text:

We invite proposals related to all aspects of Pagan studies (including historic) from different parts of the globe. We welcome papers using diverse methodologies: theoretical and practical, qualitative and quantitative, normative and descriptive. In particular, we seek proposals related to the three following themes.

### “Valuing Paganism in the Public Sphere”

How is Paganism represented, engaged, and valued in public spaces such as policy arenas, lobbying, news media, popular culture, schools, prisons, and courtrooms? How do Pagans engage with these publics? What roles do Pagan studies academics have in these forums? What implications do such engagements have for academic practices, including ethical and methodological concerns?

### “Tradition and Resistance in Paganisms”

Some Pagan groups are highly traditionalist, resisting change and eclecticism. Other Pagans are much more eclectic, combining Paganism with practices from a variety of other religious traditions. What role does theology play in these different forms of Paganisms? What motivates both commitment to tradition and the desire to experiment and transform Pagan practice? Conversely, in what ways are new or old Pagan traditions used to inform resistance to modernity in general or to specific examples of injustice?

For a proposed joint session with the Indigenous Religious Traditions Group, we invite proposals for a panel on the problem of “religion” in the study of indigenous and polytheistic traditions. This includes considerations of other critical terms such as “spirituality,” “sacred,” “tradition,” “culture,” “animism,” “Pagan,” “shaman,” etc. and indigenous perspectives on “religion” or equivalents (or lack of). We welcome papers on other problematic terms in the study of indigenous and polytheistic religions, too.

#### Mission Statement:

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

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

#### Leadership:

Chair - Salomonsen, Jone, University of Oslo, [jone.salomonsen@teologi.uio.no](mailto:jone.salomonsen@teologi.uio.no)

Chair - Clifton, Chas, Colorado State University, Pueblo, [chas.clifton@mac.com](mailto:chas.clifton@mac.com)

## Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop and Religion Group

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#### Call Text:

#### **B(I)ack to the Future: Atlanta, Afrofuturism, and Making Worlds with Words**

This Call for Papers encourages submissions that focus on the afrofuturistic sensibilities of Atlanta-based black cultural production and expressive cultures such as hip hop. Historically, Atlanta built its reputation on the future, on the promise that it was part of the “New South,” its vision no longer clouded by antiquated plantation-based and identity-based economies of difference. In similar respects, the cultural milieus we’ve come to call “hip-hop” and “afrofuturism” make use of time and space to carve out and reimagine new social, cultural and political possibilities in the shadow of history and structural realities. For example, Outkast gave us ATLiens, Janelle Monae created Cindi Mayweather, and one of Atlanta’s most popular rappers goes by the simple but poignant stage name, Future. Whether in recording studios or on the written page, hip hop

culture and afrofuturism both make worlds with words, creating contemporary sacred texts reliant on the past and the future concurrently for the navigation of social realities. Possible paper topics might include examination of specific artists or cultural styles, artistic production and the impact of identity formation and social possibilities, contemporary cultural eschatologies and teleologies, the role of methods/genres such as fantasy, sci-fi, and more.

We also seek submissions for a number of possible co-sponsored sessions:

We seek submissions/ request paper submissions for a possible co-sponsored session with the **Sociology of Religion Group** for a panel on the theme “No Method to the Madness?: Sociological Approaches to the Study of Black Expressive Cultures.” Topics should explore theory and method in the academic study of religion, and in particular, sociological approaches to religion, with attention to race and class in urban contexts in the domains of hip hop and black expressive cultures. We encourage proposals that consider/make use of varying cultural practices/data, cartographies, and formats. The interpretation of cultural products and the analyses that come to bear on them have a tendency to rely on “meaning” (and religion) as/in self-evident ways. As such, this session proposes to wrestle with the challenges faced, overcome and unearthed during the scholarly handling of such materials through sociological/social scientific means.

We encourage paper submissions for a potential co-sponsorship with the **Religion and Sexuality Group** on the theme religion, gender, and sexuality (broadly conceived) in hip hop and black popular culture, with particular attention to Southern and Atlanta-based cultural production.

We encourage paper submissions for a potential co-sponsorship with the **Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group** investigating connections between religion and hip hop video production/visual culture (including Graffiti art). Submissions might consider a range of topics and approaches including: afrofuturistic elements; transmediated themes and production; and cultural styles, epistemologies, eschatologies, and teleologies within a Southern “Dirty South” context.

We encourage paper submissions for a potential co-sponsorship with the **Music and Religion Group** for a panel on the theme of "Rap Music and Religion in the American "South." Atlanta, part of the "Dirty South" has been called hip hop's center of gravity. We welcome submissions that engage regional and geographic impact and influence on the cultural production of rap music (with attention to religion) and its cross-cultural pollinations among musical modalities such as folk music, country music on rap music or vice-versa. Examples might include the country stylings of groups such as Nappy Roots and Arrested Development or the more recent trend and growth in popularity of white rap music celebrating Southern culture in particular.

#### Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - White Hodge, Daniel, North Park University, [dan@whitehodge.com](mailto:dan@whitehodge.com)

Chair - Driscoll, Christopher, Rice University, [chrisdriscoll@rice.edu](mailto:chrisdriscoll@rice.edu)

## Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group

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Call Text:

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

This year, the CTDR Group invites proposals on the following topics:

- In the wake of Stuart Hall's death, we'd like to provoke conversation about his legacy in the study of religion, as well as the effects more generally of the Birmingham School. Papers on a variety of topics connected to critical race theory in the present study of religion are welcome.
- On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Bourdieu and Haacke's *Free Exchange* and the 60th anniversary of Adorno's *Prisms*, we invite proposals that use these works -- or the writings of Bourdieu, Adorno, and Haacke more broadly -- as lenses through which to examine (e.g.) economics, class distinctions, taste, and art in the study of religion.
- Reflections on recent studies of religion and empire: David Chidester's *Empire of Religion* and Peter Gottschalk's *Religion, Science, and Empire*. (For possible co-sponsorship with the Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group and the Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Group.)
- Discursive formation of categories in the study of religion, e.g., spirituality, possession, and revitalization. We especially invite proposals treating categories developed/used in History of Religions scholarship on Africa (e.g., "fetish"). (For possible co-sponsorship with the Indigenous Religious Traditions Group.)
- Genealogies of Cognitive Science. We hope for papers that examine either the specific intellectual and cultural antecedents of this approach (in religion or other fields) or a history of the more general phenomenon of the medicalization of religion (For possible co-sponsorship with the Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group.)

Mission Statement:

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

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

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

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

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:  
Chair - Arnal, William E., University of Regina, [warnal@hotmail.com](mailto:warnal@hotmail.com)

Chair - Walker, David, University of California, Santa Barbara, [dwalker@religion.ucsb.edu](mailto:dwalker@religion.ucsb.edu)

## Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group

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Call Text:

The Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group seeks papers that examine the formation and transformation of “religion” (together with other related categories) both in social, cultural, and political practice in various historical periods and in relation to the scholarly study of religion as that study has evolved over time. We seek to explore diverse geographical areas and historical moments. For the 2015 Annual Meeting, we particularly welcome proposals exploring:

(1) A genealogy of the current cognitive science of religion. We hope for papers that examine either the specific intellectual and cultural antecedents of this approach (in religion or other fields) or a history of the more general phenomenon of the medicalization of religion (For possible co-sponsorship with the Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group).

(2) Responses to David Chidester’s *Empire of Religion* (University of Chicago 2014). For possible co-sponsorship with the Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group and the Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Group;

(3) The genealogy of religion and affect (for a possible co-sponsorship with the Religion, Affect, and Emotion Group). We seek papers reflecting on the longer history of studying religion and emotion (i.e. James, Durkheim, etc.) in conversation with recent theorists such as Ahmed, Berlant, Cvetkovich, and Sedgwick. What does the study of affect give us that Jamesian psychology or Durkheimian collective effervescence does not?

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, which we may circulate mid-October in order to focus our discussions at the Annual Meeting in a more collaborative and interactive way. We also welcome further suggestions for new conversational models (please e-mail the co-chairs with your ideas).

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:  
Chair - Styers, Randall, University of North Carolina, [rstyvers@unc.edu](mailto:rstyvers@unc.edu)

Chair - Burlein, Ann M., Hofstra University, [ann.burlein@hofstra.edu](mailto:ann.burlein@hofstra.edu)

## Daoist Studies Group

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### Call Text:

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

### Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:  
Chair - Mozina, David, Boston College, [david.mozina@bc.edu](mailto:david.mozina@bc.edu)

Chair - Valussi, Elena, Loyola University, Chicago, [evalussi@luc.edu](mailto:evalussi@luc.edu)

## Death, Dying, and Beyond Group

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### Call Text:

We encourage proposals on the following themes: marketing death or the afterlife, and near death experiences—NDEs. For marketing death, in view of a co-sponsored session with the Religion and Popular Culture Group we are seeking anything that investigates the popular representation of afterlife destinations or death, and/or how these are marketed or used to promote films, books, and other products. We are also interested in contemporary issues involved with the subject of near death experiences (NDEs) including (but

not limited to) cognition, neurophysiology, and NDEs; NDEs and popular culture; cross-cultural comparisons of NDEs. We also welcome any other proposals on the subject of death, dying, and beyond.

**Mission Statement:**

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

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Lewis, A. David, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences University, [adl@bu.edu](mailto:adl@bu.edu)

Chair - Walsh-Pasulka, Diana, University of North Carolina, Wilmington, [pasulkad@uncw.edu](mailto:pasulkad@uncw.edu)

## Eastern Orthodox Studies Group

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**Call Text:**

1) *Religion and the Crisis in Ukraine*

We welcome proposals for individual papers that examine religion's role in inspiring, shaping and problematizing the crisis in Ukraine that began in November 2013. Topics of interest include (but are not limited to): the unique dynamics of religion in the Ukrainian public square during the EuroMaidan; interactions between church, state and civil society during the EuroMaidan and its aftermath; ethical reflection on religion and revolution in the post-Soviet context; relations among local Eastern Christian churches (both intra-Orthodox and between Orthodox and Ukrainian Greek Catholic) in the face of grassroots syncretic faith identities; the implications of local ecclesial dynamics for broader, transnational Orthodox and Orthodox-Roman Catholic relations; comparisons between the involvement of religion in social changes in Ukraine and around the world; reactions of different religious groups to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

2) *The Legacy of John Zizioulas: 30 years after Being as Communion*: Panel Discussion.

Panelists include Khaled Anatolios, Paul Fiddes, Karen Kilby, and Aristotle Papanikolaou. Critical reflections on the influence of John Zizioulas's work in contemporary theology and ecumenical discourse in Christian East and West, as well as its relevance for future discussions.

3) *Orthodoxy and Eros: Gender, Sexuality, and Embodiment in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition* (co-sponsored with the Religion and Sexuality Group)

We welcome proposals for individual papers or complete sessions that explore themes of gender, sexuality, and embodiment in the Eastern Orthodox tradition (e.g., historic/contemporary Orthodox theology, patristic heritage, liturgics, hagiography, and/or lived practice).

4) *The Legacy of Chalcedon (451): Christology, Ecclesiology, and the Communion of Middle Eastern Churches*

Additionally, along with the Middle Eastern Christianity Group, the Christian Systematic Theology Section, and the Roman Catholic Studies Group, we are sponsoring a call for papers on the legacy of Chalcedon (451) to generate expert discussion on the Council of Chalcedon and its aftermath. The Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) marked a turning point in Church history and Christian theology on account of the schism that resulted from disputes over the statements of Christology promulgated by the council. That schism endures to this

day. Although most Western Christians have little awareness of the Chalcedonian Council, its legacy directly impacts the Middle Eastern Christian communities who are divided among each other and from Western churches along Chalcedonian lines. The committees invite paper proposals from any reasonable discipline (church history, patristics, theology, sociology, etc.) and focused on any historical period or theological theme that can shed light on Chalcedon and its legacy. Special consideration will be given to proposals that link their research in some way to Middle Eastern Christian communities. Paper proposals must demonstrate methodological and theoretical rigor and suggest a coherent argument.

**Mission Statement:**

This Group exists to study the theology, history, and practice of the Eastern Christian churches, including their mutual interaction with Western Christian and non-Christian groups.

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Papanikolaou, Aristotle, Fordham University, [papanikolaou@fordham.edu](mailto:papanikolaou@fordham.edu)

Chair - Shevzov, Vera, Smith College, [vshevzov@smith.edu](mailto:vshevzov@smith.edu)

## **Ecclesial Practices Group**

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**Call Text:**

This year we are co-sponsoring a session with The Society for the Study of Anglicanism. We encourage submissions that use ethnographic or qualitative methods for their theological reflection in a variety of ecclesial traditions. We particularly invite papers that focus on conflict and reconciliation. We welcome papers that consider both the socio-political and personal-communal dimensions of conflict and reconciliation as they impact World Anglicanism and other ecclesial communities. Papers may focus on (but are not limited to) such topics as race and police violence, issues of inclusion (e.g., conflicts around sexuality), ecclesial relations with first peoples/indigenous peoples, clergy sexual abuse, as well as issues of local ecclesial conflicts of various sorts (e.g., 'worship wars').

**Mission Statement:**

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

The group encourages ongoing research in the following areas:

- Empirical and theological approaches to the study of ecclesial communities (churches, congregations, and emerging communities), especially as interdisciplinary efforts to understand lived faith and practice extending from them;
- Studies of specific ecclesial activities, e.g. music, liturgy, arts, social justice, youth work, preaching, pastoral care, rites of passage, community organizing;
- Studies of global contexts of lived faith in relation to ecclesial communities, for example, decolonizing and

postcolonial theory and theology;

- Discussions of congregational growth and decline, new church movements, and ecclesial experiments connected to shared practices in a worldly church;
- Explorations of Christian doctrine in relation to the potential implications of empirical and qualitative research on ecclesial communities and lived faith for discerning, defining, and challenging standard theological genres such as systematics and doctrine, as well as inviting new ways to understand normative logics;
- Discussions of methodological issues with regard to qualitative research on theological topics, especially related to ecclesial communities and lived faith;
- Discussions (both substantive and methodological) of the implications of new technologies and digital cultures for ecclesial communities and lived faith.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

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

Leadership:

Chair - Wigg-Stevenson, Natalie, Emmanuel College, [natalie.wigg@utoronto.ca](mailto:natalie.wigg@utoronto.ca)

Chair - Fulkerson, Mary McClintock, Duke University, [mfulkerson@div.duke.edu](mailto:mfulkerson@div.duke.edu)

## Ecclesiological Investigations Group

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Call Text:

1. What's the Point of Synods?

Following the recent Synod of Bishops summoned by Pope Francis in Rome, we are issuing a call for papers that address the theology and practice of synods. We invite papers from across the church traditions that examine the theology and practice of conciliarity in its different forms. We would be keen to consider the promise and perils of synods drawn from across history and from different modern contexts.

2.

3. The Church and the Environmental Crisis

We invite papers that examine how the churches have understood the environmental crisis both theologically and practically. We are above all interested in receiving paper proposals that express a range of views from across the churches, including those that deny a climate change crisis.

4. Inter-Religious Dialogue in Our Times: The Legacy of *Nostra Aetate*

The Second Vatican Council represents a shift in the attitude of the Catholic Church towards non-Christian religions both at the theological and existential level. This was manifest especially in the declaration *Nostra Aetate*, approved and promulgated fifty years ago, on October 28, 1965: "The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions" (Vatican II, *Nostra Aetate*, par. 2).

Along with the Vatican II Studies Group, the Interfaith and Interreligious Studies Group, and the Jewish-Christian Dialogue and Sacred Texts Group (SBL), with the support of the Christian Scholars Group on Christian-Jewish relations welcome proposals on the following topics related to the declaration of Vatican II *Nostra Aetate* on non-Christian religions:

- The appreciation of the importance of the Jewish people and their covenant for Christians in *Nostra Aetate* paragraph 4.

- The role of the Buddhism and Hinduism as *religiones antiquae* (paragraph 2), and of Muslims (paragraph 3) in relationship to Judaism in the history of the text of *Nostra Aetate*.
- The role of the Shoah in placing the "Jewish question" on the conciliar agenda and the political and religious history of the Middle East as the background of the theological debates on inter-religious dialogue in the (Catholic) Church(es) in the 1960 and at Vatican II.
- The intervention of political-diplomatic tensions between Israel and Arab countries in the agenda of Vatican II about inter-religious dialogue.
- The reception of *Nostra Aetate* in its intertwining with the history of religious coexistence in these last 50 years.
- The role of *Nostra Aetate* and its reception in the theology of religions, in comparative theology and in inter-religious dialogue today.

#### Mission Statement:

This Group is a part of the Ecclesiological Investigations International Research Network, which seeks to serve as a hub for national and international collaboration in ecclesiology, drawing together other groups and networks, initiating research ventures, providing administrative support, as well as facilitating 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 among scholars, research projects, and research centers across the world

The development of virtual, textual, and actual conversation among 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

Publishing the best fruits of all such collaboration in our T&T Clark (Continuum) series of volumes entitled Ecclesiological Investigations, as well as in the journal Ecclesiology (Brill), published in association with the Network. The Network is a "network of networks" serving a "church of churches." See <http://www.ei-research.net/> for more information.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Chapman, Mark, Ripon College Cuddesdon, [mark.chapman@rcc.ac.uk](mailto:mark.chapman@rcc.ac.uk)

Chair - Hinze, Bradford E., Fordham University, [bhinze@fordham.edu](mailto:bhinze@fordham.edu)

## Economics and Capitalism in the Study of Buddhism Seminar

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### Statement of Purpose:

This seminar examines the ongoing interactions between Buddhism and capitalism. These interactions take a variety of forms, influencing institutional organizations, doctrinal systems, styles and types of practices, and

systems of authority. Capitalism has also affected the ways in which Buddhism is conceptualized as an object of scholarly inquiry. The seminar is devoted to examining this range of changes in contemporary Buddhism, while avoiding the presumption that capitalism is the active agent, while Buddhism is passive—being molded, or distorted, by capitalist forces. The socio-economic landscape on which these changes have been taking place is itself undergoing significant transformation as well. This moving background includes the collapse of older systems of direct political colonialism in the middle of the twentieth century, the collapse of the Soviet Union at the century's end, and the rise of information technologies and new forms of globalization.

### **Call for Papers:**

For the inaugural year of this seminar, our theme is "Health Care Institutions and Economics: Transforming Buddhist Practice." We will investigate such topics as the secularization of mindfulness, chaplaincy as a new kind of Buddhist professionalization, the medicalization and psychologization of Buddhist practices, and the transfer of authority from monastics to laity.

### **Method:**

PAPERS

### **Process:**

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

Chair – Rambelli, Fabio, University of California, Santa Barbara, [rambelli@eastasian.ucsb.edu](mailto:rambelli@eastasian.ucsb.edu)

- Chair – Payne, Richard K., Institute of Buddhist Studies, Berkeley, [rkpayne1@mac.com](mailto:rkpayne1@mac.com)

## **Emerging Church, Millennials, and Religion Seminar**

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### **Statement of Purpose:**

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

### **Call for Papers:**

We seek papers that attempt to define the "Emerging Church" movement as well as those that explore the politics involved in this work. What are some of the problems and possibilities that attend trying to define a movement that quickly changes, is diverse, and generally eschews labels? Are there any common characteristics across the movement? What are some of the conditions of possibility that have allowed the "Emerging Church" to exist today? Toward what is the "Emerging Church" emerging?

### **Method:**

## PAPERS

### Process:

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

Chair: Reed, Randall, Appalachian State University, [reedrw@appstate.edu](mailto:reedrw@appstate.edu)

Chair: Zbaraschuk, Michael, Pacific Lutheran University, [zbarasgm@plu.edu](mailto:zbarasgm@plu.edu)

## Employment Services Workshop Series

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In an effort to offer additional programming and networking opportunities for our members, the Employment Center will host a Workshop Series during the 2015 Annual Meeting in the Sheraton Hotel, Atlanta.

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

Successful proposals from last year included the following sessions:

- Job Transitions over 40 with a Ph.D.
- Alt-Ac Employment in Religious Studies and Creative Careers in Church and Faith-Based Non-Profits
- Religious Studies and Nonprofit Management
- Online Pedagogies and Leveraging Online Experience in the Job Market
- Envisioning Academic Alternatives
- Marketing Matters for Academics: It's Not Just a Corporate Thing!

Available times include:

- Saturday, November 21, 2015 – 9 am to 5 pm
- Sunday, November 22, 2015 – 9 am to 5 pm
- Monday, November 23, 2015 – 9 am to 5 pm

If you are interested in submitting a workshop or roundtable proposal, please submit a proposal through the AAR's PAPERS system at the following address:

<https://papers.aarweb.org/content/employment-workshops>

For an example of a successful proposal, please consult the 2014 Annual Meetings Program Book (pp. 16-17), or consider the language in any of the three workshops featured on this website advertising a set of regional workshops:

<http://www.phdlifetransitions.com/>

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

Have questions? Contact Employment Services at [careers@aarsbl.org](mailto:careers@aarsbl.org).

## Ethics Section

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### Call Text:

The Ethics Section seeks proposals for individual papers and panels on the following topics: Civil Disobedience and Legal Violence; Human Trafficking; the Moral Monday Movement; the 50th Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act; and the 20th Anniversary of *Beyond Ontological Blackness: An Essay in African American Religious and Cultural Criticism* (co-sponsored with the Black Theology Group). Other papers and panels relevant to the field of Religious and/or Social Ethics are welcomed.

### Mission Statement:

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

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

### Method of submission:

PAPERS

### Leadership:

Chair - Floyd-Thomas, Stacey M., Vanderbilt University, [s.floyd-thomas@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:s.floyd-thomas@vanderbilt.edu)

Chair - Anderson, Victor, Vanderbilt University, [victor.anderson@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:victor.anderson@vanderbilt.edu)

## Evangelical Studies Group

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### Call Text:

### Mission Statement:

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

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

### Method of submission:

Other

Both sessions are prearranged.

Leadership:

Chair - Moore, Joy J., Fuller Theological Seminary, [joymoore@fuller.edu](mailto:joymoore@fuller.edu)

Chair - Barton, Paul, Seminary of the Southwest, [paul.barton@ssw.edu](mailto:paul.barton@ssw.edu)

## Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Group

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Call Text:

Theme: Loving and Embodying Ourselves as Cultural Workers: Feminist Theories on Life/Work/Sexuality/Love

In appreciating and honoring iconic cultural workers of our past (e.g., Anna Julia Cooper, Emmeline Pinkhurst, and Adrienne Rich) and contemporary alliances such as that which catalyzed the Idle No More movement, we ask how feminist critics and activists might generate new modes of praxis that foster compassionate forms of self-love and love of others. What possibilities exist for creative co-existence in “a world of many worlds,” as Chela Sandoval has suggested? Which crafts -- past, present, and future -- may lead to our flourishing, all while producing habitats of radical relationality? What forms of thinking and which societal forces perpetuate, support, or challenge the very notion of the work/life equation for cultural workers who begin with compassion for self and others? In raising these questions, we seek papers that address three general foci.

First, in conjunction with the initiative led by The Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession of the American Academy of Religion (SWP), we are interested in feminist explorations of the work/life balance and the structures that sustain the academic industrial complex; heteronormativity; managing expectations amid diverse cultural and institutional contexts; perfectionism; power in the academy; competition and solidarity between senior and junior scholars; negotiating our current economic climate and job strain; further clarity on what “balance” means; critical reflections on paid and unpaid labor.

Within the context of feminist theory and religious reflection, we specifically solicit papers that address the following themes:

- Labor of love; labor of sorrow
- The superwoman myth: What religious ideals are driving the work ethic and the expectation that women have to do it all?
- How to theorize and open up spaces that reject the either/or conundrums that truncate our imaginations as cultural workers?
- Expenditures in the academy and cultivating refusals: feminist praxis as resistance, sustenance, and flourishing
- Ethics of care and contingency (adjunct positions within the academy)

Our second focus is the intersection of feminist theory and religion as they relate to sexual education broadly construed. Relying on our past success in securing publication of panel papers, Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection hopes to collect selected papers with this focus for possible publication that has a global representation. Paper topics could include:

- Virginity/Abstinence/Chastity/Sexual purity
- Que(e)rying sexual identities
- Sexual Ethics
- Sexual Rights
- Curricular Issues

Our third focus comes from a quad-sponsored proposal with the Lesbian-Feminist Issues in Religion Group; the Queer Studies and Religion Group; the Religion, and the Theology and Continental Philosophy Group. With this focus, we are especially interested in papers that discuss Lynne Huffer's books *Mad for Foucault* (Columbia University Press, 2009) and *Are the Lips a Grave?* (Columbia University Press, 2013) for an "author-meets-critics" panel.

**Mission Statement:**

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

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - White, Carol, Bucknell University, [cwhite@bucknell.edu](mailto:cwhite@bucknell.edu)

Chair - Keller, Mary, University of Wyoming, [mkeller@uwyo.edu](mailto:mkeller@uwyo.edu)

## Films

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**Call for Papers:**

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](mailto:annualmeeting@aarweb.org).

**Method:**

PAPERS

**Process:**

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

## Folklore and Religion Seminar

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### Call for Papers:

Last year's Wild Card session on Folklore and Religion explored the sources of belief in the supernatural and its validity. In this initial Seminar Unit on Folklore and Religion, we invite proposals that employ folklore theory, themes, and issues for the study of religion in any world context.

Folkloristics is based on participant-observation and ethnography. Folklorists, however, have often been less distant from their subjects than, for example, anthropologists. Folklorists, therefore, are critical of their subject matter, while maintaining a participatory, compassionate approach. Of particular interest in this session are papers that ask method questions about the study of folklore and religion. How can one approach the study of the "supernatural" using folklore genres? What methodological concerns emerge from folkloristic fieldwork generated from personal or online observation? What is the conversation between the lived religion and the vernacular religion approaches, and how do such approaches influence study in the field? Particular attention should be paid to a key concept in the folkloristic study of religion: the "vernacular," the way non-mainstream beliefs exist in parallel to mainstream notions, and how everyone, regardless of their place in religious hierarchy, participates in religion on a vernacular level.

### Method:

PAPERS

### Process:

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

Chair - Primiano, Leonard Norman, Cabrini College, [lprimiano@cabrini.edu](mailto:lprimiano@cabrini.edu)

Chair - Wehmeyer, Stephen, Champlain College, [swehmeyer@champlain.edu](mailto:swehmeyer@champlain.edu)

## Gay Men and Religion Group

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### Call Text:

In light of our 2015 meeting location in Atlanta and the presidential theme of "valuing the study of religion," we encourage paper or panel proposals on the following two themes:

~explorations of the city/metropolis as sanctuary and/or peril for queer religious life—from practices in queerly religious/religiously queer urban communities to policies of segregation or "cleaning up" the city to remove or make invisible the unpleasant or deviant (homeless, migrants, sex workers/clubs, public sex, etc.), for a possible co-sponsored session with the Religion and Cities group.

~contributions to an "author-meets-critics"-style session on Bernadette Barton's *Pray the Gay Away: The Extraordinary Lives of Bible Belt Gays* (NYU, 2012), for possible co-sponsorship with the Lesbian Feminist Issues in Religion group. As examples, papers could explore the following in relation to Barton's book:

- how religious advocates of reparative therapy use of the notion of sexuality as a construction;
- tensions gay men and lesbians in the Bible Belt feel as they attempt to "belong" within both religious and gay rights communities;
- comparisons with similar "bible belts" in other regions or countries.

We also welcome paper or panel proposals on the following themes:

~for a possible quad-sponsored panel with the Religion, Sport, and Play Group; the Men, Masculinities and Religion Group; the Religion and Popular Culture Group; we invite explorations of the gym-built body as the masculine ideal for gay/hetero/bi men (for example, Internet subcultures that praise bodybuilders as “muscle gods”). What might this form of virtual/actual veneration say about gay/hetero/bi men and masculine ideals? How might we theorize approaches to the muscular male body? We welcome proposals that employ case studies whether historical or contemporary and/or draw on a range of disciplinary perspectives and diverse religious traditions. A successful proposal will include a thesis statement and a clear statement of both evidence and methodology.

~reflection on the religious culture, ethics, or theology of viewing bareback pornography and/or engaging in bareback sex. With TruVada and PreP now widely available, how is the culture of pride and shame regarding bareback sex (d)evolving? when is barebacking simply risky behavior and when does it reflect notions of radical solidarity akin to religious community/communion? is barebacking an apophatic discipline?

~ for a possible quad-sponsored session with the Religion and Science Fiction Group, the Lesbian-Feminist Issues in Religion Group, and the Queer Studies in Religion Group, we invite proposals that examine LGBTIQ sexualities, communities, and cultures in the vast universe of science/speculative fiction; push beyond heteronormative species relationships; reflect on how Science fiction mirrors, comments on, or can advocate for LGBTIQ sexualities and spiritualities. We are especially interested in presentations that put LGBTIQ theories in fruitful dialogue with Science Fiction theory and themes (U-/Dystopias, species evolution, cyber worlds, alternate histories, space opera, techno rapture, AI, transcendence, etc.).

Proposals on other religious and theological aspects of gay male religious experience—such as the role of the Black Church among black gay men or drag performance as church—are also welcome as are innovative presentation styles and panel configurations.

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

Thank you for your interest in GMaR and our conversations in 2015.

Mission Statement:

The Gay Men and Religion group:

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

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:  
Chair - Haldeman, W. Scott, Chicago Theological Seminary, [shaldeman@ctschicago.edu](mailto:shaldeman@ctschicago.edu)

Chair - Sneed, Roger A., Furman University, [roger.sneed@furman.edu](mailto:roger.sneed@furman.edu)

## Global-Critical Philosophy of Religion Seminar

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### Statement of Purpose:

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

### Call for Papers:

Over the next five years this seminar plans to research and write an innovative philosophy of religion textbook for undergraduates that is both religiously diverse and critically informed. Our 2015 meeting is devoted to determining the key topics or categories that will structure the content of the book. To this end, we invite paper proposals on this question: What core topics or problems should appear in a religiously inclusive and critically informed philosophy of religion? We encourage scholars who are interested in participating in the seminar to contact its leader.

### Method:

PAPERS

### Process:

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

### Chairs

Chair - Kopf, Gereon, Luther College, [kopfg@luther.edu](mailto:kopfg@luther.edu)  
Chair - Knepper, Timothy D., Drake University, [tim.knepper@drake.edu](mailto:tim.knepper@drake.edu)

## Global Perspectives on Religion and HIV/AIDS Seminar

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### Call Text:

The “Global Perspectives on Religion and HIV/AIDS Seminar” brings together an interdisciplinary group of scholars to develop an analysis of the various roles religion has played historically and continues to occupy in shaping the global AIDS pandemic. We are particularly interested in examining how religion and HIV cuts across, generates and challenges social, economic, geographic and cultural differences. In addition to building theoretical and conceptual tools for understanding religion and AIDS, we aim to create publications appropriate for a wide academic audience interested in the religious and moral dimensions of the AIDS epidemic, including their effects on the lived experience of disease and the formation of religious and public health efforts to fight HIV/AIDS and prevent infection. Much of the work of our multi-year seminar focuses on creating an internally cohesive project that incorporates our diverse methodological and regional perspectives but shares a set of common themes and questions concerning the convergence of religion and HIV/AIDS over the past three decades. This is the fourth year of the seminar and we are especially interested in considering proposals on religion and HIV/AIDS in Asia, Latin America, and Europe, and on HIV/AIDS and non-Christian traditions. Scholars interested in joining this conversation are encouraged to contact the chairs, Lynne Gerber, [l.gerber@berkeley.edu](mailto:l.gerber@berkeley.edu), or Anthony Petro, [apetro@bu.edu](mailto:apetro@bu.edu), for more information and/or details about submitting a proposal.

### Mission Statement:

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

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

### Method of submission:

PAPERS

### Leadership:

Chair - Petro, Anthony, Boston University, [apetro@bu.edu](mailto:apetro@bu.edu)

Chair - Gerber, Lynne, University of California, Berkeley, [l.gerber@berkeley.edu](mailto:l.gerber@berkeley.edu)

## Graduate Student Committee

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### Call Text:

Dehumanized vs. Holistic Scholars: How Academia Impacts Our Lives

Scholars in academia at all levels perform many roles: teacher, researcher, author, counselor, advocate, and activist, to name a few. In addition to the numerous hats that we wear in the academy, we also juggle personal identities such as being parents, partners, friends, and members of communities. Mediating the

pressures to be productive and the desires to maintain one's humanity and beliefs often leaves the individual confused, diminished, and/or fractured. How does one go about incorporating the various components of the self (ethics, beliefs, family, personal and professional goals, etc.) into a balanced whole? What does a "holistic scholar" or "holistic scholarship" look like? Which aspects of the discipline support a holistic self, and which undermine such an ideal?

The Graduate Student Committee invites brief proposals from scholars at all levels for a session that explore the tensions, resolutions, and possibilities that lie between the "holistic" and "dehumanizing" poles of our work. If you have a perspective or experience that you would like to contribute as a panelist for this session, please email your brief proposal (~150 words) and a CV to B.J. Parker at [b\\_j\\_parker@baylor.edu](mailto:b_j_parker@baylor.edu). This does not count toward the two-proposal submission limit within the PAPERS system.

**Mission Statement:**

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

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

**Method of submission:**

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

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

**Leadership:**

Chair - Slominski, Kristy, University of California, Santa Barbara, [slominski@umail.ucsb.edu](mailto:slominski@umail.ucsb.edu)

## Hinduism Group

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**Call Text:**

Panel Proposals for 2015

1. Modi and the New Regime (contact Brian Hatcher: [brian.hatcher@tufts.edu](mailto:brian.hatcher@tufts.edu))
2. Hinduism and Science (contact Patton Burchett: [patton.burchett@nyu.edu](mailto:patton.burchett@nyu.edu))
3. Hinduism and Magic (contact Patton Burchett: [patton.burchett@nyu.edu](mailto:patton.burchett@nyu.edu))
4. Lament and the Work of Mourning: Women's Laments (contact Steven Hopkins: [shopkin1@swarthmore.edu](mailto:shopkin1@swarthmore.edu))
5. Non-North American Hindu Diasporas, and Religious Boundaries (contact Amanda Lucia: [amanda.lucia@ucr.edu](mailto:amanda.lucia@ucr.edu))
6. Sect and Community Formation in Pre-Colonial India (contact Patton Burchett: [patton.burchett@nyu.edu](mailto:patton.burchett@nyu.edu))
7. Flags: Rituals and Political Signs (contact Marko Geslani: [marko.geslani@emory.edu](mailto:marko.geslani@emory.edu))
8. Negotiations over Sacred Spaces (contact Brian Hatcher: [brian.hatcher@tufts.edu](mailto:brian.hatcher@tufts.edu))
9. Book Centered Panel: *The Bhagavad Gita: A Biography*
10. Affect, Intimacy, and the Body (contact Amanda Lucia: [amanda.lucia@ucr.edu](mailto:amanda.lucia@ucr.edu))
11. Sentimental Hinduism: Rasa and the Religious in Text and Performance (contact Charles Preston: [cpreston@uchicago.edu](mailto:cpreston@uchicago.edu))

**Mission Statement:**

This Group was established in 1997 with the mission of providing a forum within the AAR for the academic study of Hinduism as a distinctive world religious tradition including, but not limited to the geographical region of South Asia. The Group seeks to foster research on all periods and registers of Hindu texts and practices through the presentation of new data, critical analysis, and interpretative strategies, based on

textual, sociohistorical, ethnographic, philosophical, theological, and theoretical studies. We are particularly interested in forging connections between the study of Hinduism and other areas of religious studies, and we welcome proposals from scholars in the field that can provide such connections.

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:  
Chair - Dobe, Timothy, Grinnell College, [dobetimo@grinnell.edu](mailto:dobetimo@grinnell.edu)

Chair - Lucia, Amanda, University of California, Riverside, [amanda.lucia@ucr.edu](mailto:amanda.lucia@ucr.edu)

## History of Christianity Section

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Call Text:

The History of Christianity section invites panel and paper proposals for the 2015 AAR meeting in Atlanta. The venue invites reflection on several anniversaries: the sesquicentennial of the end of the Civil War; the centennial of *Birth of a Nation*, and the semicentennial of the Voting Rights Act. Among the topics welcomed are: 1) The US Civil War in the context of religious history; 2) histories of Christianity the U.S. South imbricated with histories of Christianity of the global South (Caribbean, Latin America, etc.); 3) comparative retrospectives of the Second Vatican Council (at 50 years); and 4) the 800th anniversary of the Fourth Lateran Council (including histories of contemporaneous heterodox and non-Christian groups). To mark the centennial of the death of African Methodist Episcopal bishop Henry McNeal Turner, a champion of the Back-to-Africa movement, the section invites papers on 5) Ethiopia as place and symbol (e.g., Ethiopianism) in Christian history. In keeping with the AAR presidential theme of valuing the study of religion, we invite papers on 6) public religious history and 7) the role of Karl Marx's understanding of material value in the study of religious history.

The section will also participate with the Practical Theology Group; the Latina/o Religion, Culture and Society Group; the Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogies Group in a quad-sponsored panel that takes its starting point from the just-published third volume on theological education in North America by historian Glenn Miller. The volume, *Piety and Plurality* (Cascade Press, 2014), covers the tumultuous period between 1960 and today. [The previous volumes, which Dr. Miller has been at work on since the 1970s, are *Piety and Intellect* (the Colonial era up to the Civil War) and *Piety and Profession* (1870-1970). We welcome papers engaging ways to understand both the diversification of places of theological education and the multiplication of theologies and pedagogies employed in order to reshape the landscape of North American theological education in its broadest sense. We are especially interested in theological education at the popular level, including Bible Institutes, but also base communities, and independent networks and institutes. Of special interest are educational developments within Pentecostal and Latino/a theological traditions, and mega-church-based models of theological education. We also seek examples of theological education rooted in transformative pedagogies, experiential learning, or other alternative models for theological education.

Mission Statement:

The mission of this Section is to deepen and broaden the study of the Christian past by presenting innovative and engaging research on the history, culture, and development of Christianity from its origins to the present, while at the same time promoting interdisciplinary dialogue among the fields of history, religious studies,

ritual studies, art history, anthropology, and historical theology. We have a strong commitment to providing a showcase for the work of both younger and established scholars in the field.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Joslyn-Siemiatkoski, Daniel, Seminary of the Southwest, [dan.joslyn-siemiatkoski@ssw.edu](mailto:dan.joslyn-siemiatkoski@ssw.edu)

Chair - Ramirez, Daniel, University of Michigan, [dramire@umich.edu](mailto:dramire@umich.edu)

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

Call Text:

This seminar celebrates the scholarly contributions made by Holmes Welch (1924-1981) to the study of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, and also explores how we might advance the field beyond the boundaries and scope of his original ideas through the use of new sources and methodologies. For this, the second year of a five-year seminar series, we are seeking proposals for full research papers that directly address any aspect of Welch's scholarship, and which use original work to critique it, bring it up to date, and to suggest new avenues of research within the field. We welcome submissions from all scholars, but scheduling priority will be given to previously-confirmed participants. In order to facilitate substantive conversation during the panel, this seminar will participate in the AAR Full Paper Submission system. Full drafts of all accepted papers must be posted online several weeks prior to the Annual Meeting, and will be accessible to AAR members only. Participants will read all papers in advance, and the meeting time will be devoted to comments and suggestions on those papers. At the conclusion of this five-year seminar, the best papers in the seminar series will be collected into an edited volume on Welch's life and work.

Mission Statement:

This seminar will celebrate the scholarly contributions made by Holmes Welch (1924-1981) to the study of twentieth-century Chinese Buddhism, and also explore how we might advance the field beyond the boundaries and scope of his original ideas by using new sources and methodologies. Revisiting and expanding Welch's scholarship is urgently needed, since his work continues to function as both a standard resource for specialists and as an authoritative summary of Chinese Buddhism during this era for non-specialists. The final goal of this seminar is to produce a critical collection of essays covering the major aspects of Welch's work, in which contributors will update his findings and approaches with their own cutting-edge scholarship. The publication of this volume will roughly coincide with the upcoming fiftieth anniversaries of the publications of Welch's volumes *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism* and *The Buddhist Revival*.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Scott, Gregory Adam, University of Edinburgh, [gas2122@columbia.edu](mailto:gas2122@columbia.edu)

Chair - Hammerstrom, Erik, Pacific Lutheran University, [hammerej@plu.edu](mailto:hammerej@plu.edu)

## Indigenous Religious Traditions Group

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### Call Text:

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

- 1) We invite proposals for a panel on the problem of "religion" in the study of indigenous and polytheistic traditions. This includes considerations of other critical terms such as "spirituality," "sacred," "tradition," "culture," "animism," "Pagan," "shaman," etc. and indigenous perspectives on 'religion' or equivalents (or lack of). We welcome papers on other problematic terms in the study of indigenous and polytheistic religions, too. We may run two sessions on this theme, with one of them a proposed joint session with the Contemporary Pagan Studies Group.
- 2) Contemporary media and indigenous religious traditions. This includes digital media, textualization and language, social networking, issues of voice and 'visual sovereignty', media ethics, and so on.
- 3) Responses to genocide, ethnic cleansing and removal, imperialism, the nation-state.
- 4) For a quad-sponsorship with the African Diaspora Religions Group; Religion, Medicines and Healing Group; the Native Traditions in the Americas Group: we invite paper or session proposals that focus on how conceptions of indigeneity and diasporic identity are implicated in efforts to heal individuals, communities, and nations in the context of loss, displacement, and historical trauma.
- 5) For a possible co-sponsorship with the Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group: We invite papers that examine discursive formation of categories in the study of religion, e.g., spirituality, possession, and revitalization. We especially invite proposals treating categories developed/used in History of Religions scholarship on Africa, (e.g., "fetish").

### Mission Statement:

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

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

### Method of submission:

PAPERS

### Leadership:

Chair - Baum, Robert M., Dartmouth College, [robert.m.baum@dartmouth.edu](mailto:robert.m.baum@dartmouth.edu)

Chair - Owen, Suzanne, University of Chester, [s.owen@leedstrinity.ac.uk](mailto:s.owen@leedstrinity.ac.uk)

## International Development and Religion Group

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### Call Text:

The International Development and Religions Group invites proposals at the intersection of religious, theological, and international development studies. In keeping with the 2015 Presidential theme, the Public Place of Religion, we are particularly interested in proposals that explore the relative lack of attention paid to religion in the theory and praxis of International Development Studies (IDS).

In the introduction to his seminal text, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, globalization and religion theorist Roland Robertson confesses that his academic career, which began in the 1960's in what today would be known as IDS, was "colored by the fact that one of my earliest, serious intellectual choices revolved around the question of whether I should study sociology or international relations as an undergraduate. To some extent such phrases as 'a cultural focus' and 'cultural sociology' reflect a kind of compromise between an interest in globalization (much more narrowly, international relations) on the one hand, and religion on the other."(2).

The compromise Robertson made in the nascent field of IDS illustrates the continuing challenge facing international development's encounter with religion(s) in the Global South. From this perspective, we are interested in proposals that explore the exclusion of religious studies or theological perspectives in the establishment of IDS as a distinct, interdisciplinary discipline, and the possible compromises that are needed to include these perspectives. Our invited respondent, Dr. Roland Robertson, will respond with his own reflections on this compromise.

### **Suggested topics:**

- Proposals that explore the religious and or theological assumptions and intellectual history of western ideas of 'progress' and 'development,' and how these ideas are encountered and either accommodated or resisted in the global south.
- Proposals that explore the intellectual and practical compromises and/or costs associate with the inclusion and/or exclusion of religion(s) from international development scholarship and analysis.
- Proposals that explore the compromises faith-based &/or secular NGOs make in their home/donor and/or client/partner relations.

### **Suggested topics for co-sponsored sessions.**

- Proposals that investigate the relationship between offices of religious freedom and faith-based NGOs in the context of global religious pluralism.
- Proposals exploring issues of the way the 'private' and the 'public' are constructed where religion meets international development and economic, political and socio-cultural systems.

### **Guidelines for Submission of Proposals**

- Proposals submitted through Papers, should include an abstract of 150 words, and a more detailed précis with a minimum word count of 750 to a maximum of 1000 words.
- Proposals will be blindly evaluated by the steering committee and short-listed based on overall quality, scope, and clarity of the proposal (including evidence of a clear thesis, logical structure of the proposed argument/analysis, and the relevance of the proposal to the theme and suggested topics in the CFP).
- Individual paper proposals will be selected on the recommendation of the programming committee's evaluation, with consideration given to developing coherent, diverse and intellectually stimulating panels.
- Proposals for full, pre-arranged panels will be considered but they must cover the spirit of the suggested theme and/or topics in the CFP. Panel proposals should include an abstract for the online program book (maximum 150 words), and a more detailed précis (750-1000 wds) indicating the coherency of the proposed

panel as it relates to the CFP. Each individual paper in the panel proposal must likewise include an abstract (150 wds) and précis (750-1000 wds).

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

### **Proposals from the Global South**

- Proposals from the Global South are particularly encouraged.
- International scholars working or residing outside those countries designated as high income by the World Bank may take advantage of a discounted AAR membership rate of \$15 per calendar year for membership, plus international postage.
- Proposal from International presenters who are unable to travel due to political and/or fiscal constraints may be accommodated via video-conferencing technology (e.g., Skype). **If this applies to you please indicate the need for a dedicated broadband connection for your presentation.**

### Mission Statement:

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

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

### Method of submission:

PAPERS

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

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

Other

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

### Leadership:

Chair - DeTemple, Jill, Southern Methodist University, [detemple@smu.edu](mailto:detemple@smu.edu)

Chair - Duncanson-Hales, Christopher, MindGap Scholastics, Ontario, Canada, [theolog3n1@gmail.com](mailto:theolog3n1@gmail.com)

## Interreligious and Interfaith Studies Group

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### Call Text:

The Interreligious and Interfaith Studies group invites paper and panel proposals that critically examine modes of response to religious pluralism from multiple disciplinary perspectives. We welcome proposals that are interdisciplinary, incorporate alternative pedagogies of presentation, make use of new media, and reflect the dialogical nature of this field.

We invite papers in the following areas:

Historical models of interreligious engagement. Interreligious engagement is not a new phenomenon. Throughout history we find examples of individuals encountering each other across religious lines in formal and informal ways. What are the possibilities and limitations of drawing on historical models of engagement for contemporary contexts?

Mapping the discourse of interreligious studies (with critical examination of the use of terms such as interfaith, interreligious, multifaith).

Religious pluralism and feminist theologies.

Interreligious studies and ritual (interreligious learning through ritual, interreligious dialogue as ritual).

The politics of representation in interreligious engagement. To put it simply, who's at the table and how did they get there? Many models of interreligious engagement, particularly dialogical models, are based on implicit or explicit ideas about religious representation and authority. We recognize that the concerns of white male Christians have historically dominated interreligious dialogue. We are interested in broadening participation in interreligious conversations, and exposing and critiquing the structural inequities that arise in this space. We particularly invite proposals from scholars working in critical gender studies, race and ethnicity studies, post-colonial studies, or in any disciplinary space that involves consciousness-raising around questions of systemic discrimination. What can interreligious studies, as an emerging area, learn from the concerns and methodologies of these disciplines? And are there insights from interreligious studies that would be relevant to the concerns of scholars working in these spaces?

Quakers and interreligious dialogue (co-sponsored with Quaker Studies Group). We seek papers that examine Quaker frameworks for interreligious and interfaith dialogue, and that address how Quaker ethics inform these practices. From their inception in the mid-seventeenth century, Quakers have interacted with people of other faiths, and have been formed by the resulting insights. Though the cultural context and rationales have changed over time, Quakers of all traditions continue to have dialogue across religious boundaries. This panel invites paper proposals from a wide range of disciplines that examine this facet of Quaker spirituality and practice.

*Nostra Aetate* and Interreligious Dialogue

The Second Vatican Council represents a shift in the attitude of the Catholic Church towards non-Christian religions at both the theological and existential level. This was manifest in the declaration entitled *Nostra Aetate*, approved and promulgated on October 28, 1965.

Along with the Ecclesiological Investigations Group, the Vatican II Studies Group, and the Jewish-Christian Dialogue and Sacred Texts Group (SBL), the Interreligious and Interfaith Studies Group welcomes proposals on the following topics related to the declaration of Vatican II *Nostra Aetate* on non-Christian religions:

- The appreciation of the importance of the Jewish people and their covenant for Christians in *Nostra Aetate* paragraph 4.
- The role of the Buddhism and Hinduism as "*religiones antiquae*" (paragraph 2), and of Muslims (paragraph 3) in relationship to Judaism in the history of the text of *Nostra Aetate*.
- The role of the Shoah in placing the "Jewish question" on the conciliar agenda and the political and religious

history of the Middle East as the background of the theological debates on inter-religious dialogue in the (Catholic) Church(es) in the 1960 and at Vatican II.

- The intervention of political-diplomatic tensions between Israel and Arab countries in the agenda of Vatican II about inter-religious dialogue.
- The reception of *Nostra Aetate* in its intertwining with the history of religious coexistence in these last 50 years.
- The role of *Nostra Aetate* and its reception in the theology of religions, in comparative theology and in inter-religious dialogue today.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Give voice to what has already been happening for years at the cutting-edge of institutional and pedagogical innovation and at the intersection of the academy and civic engagement in many disciplines

Our intention is that this Group will encourage the rigorous analysis necessary to establish the contours of this emerging field. A crucial first step involves systematic attention to common terminology (interfaith, interreligious, engaged pluralism, multifaith, multireligious) and the intersection of these terms with the disciplinary approaches that are increasingly using this language (interfaith, just peacemaking, comparative theology, and scriptural reasoning). Similarly, we will encourage critical analysis of both national and international interfaith organizational models and other praxis-oriented responses to religious pluralism.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Ziad, Homyra, Institute for Christian and Jewish Studies, [hziad@icjs.org](mailto:hziad@icjs.org)

Chair - Peace, Jennifer Howe, Andover Newton Theological School, [jpeace@ants.edu](mailto:jpeace@ants.edu)

## Interreligious Reflections on Immigration Seminar

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Call Text:

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

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Hwang, Alexander Y., Spalding University, [hwangalex@yahoo.com](mailto:hwangalex@yahoo.com)

Chair - Alexander, Laura, University of Virginia, [lek2fb@virginia.edu](mailto:lek2fb@virginia.edu)

## Islam, Gender, Women Group

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### **Statement of Purpose:**

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

IGW brings together scholars at all career stages, including those working outside the academy. It supports scholarly reflexivity in a collaborative and collegial setting, discussing methods/approaches and the professional dimensions of research and teaching in the field. It fosters collective consideration of the aims, evolution, and lacunae of the field as a way to nurture new lines of inquiry. Our non-traditional programming, such as workshops and mentoring/networking sessions, aims to strengthen rather than compete with the work of related program units, prevent the segregation of scholarship on gender and women into one unit, encourage sustained “mainstream” engagement with questions of gender and women, and expand opportunities for collaboration and conversation with and among other units.

### **Call for Papers:**

In our inaugural year as a program unit we will host a co-sponsored mentoring/networking session for all of those who work on gender and women in Islamic texts and Muslim contexts. Our other session will explore the complicated relationship between academic scholarship and activism. In keeping with our commitment to non-traditional programming, the session will be organized as a workshop, with pre-circulated readings and themed discussion tables. Possible topics include: nonacademic forms of intellectual production on women/gender in Islam (e.g., the blogosphere, visual arts, grassroots activist literature); questions of normativity and confessional investments, including the location of non-feminist work on gender/women in

Islam; the location of academic and nonacademic intellectual production in the larger context of transnational feminism; and the tensions between colonial feminism and Islamic gender justice movements.

We solicit proposals from those who would like an article or chapter length piece of their writing to serve as a basis for one table's discussion. Both recently published work and work in progress (already drafted) are eligible for consideration. Proposals should include an abstract of the piece and explain how the piece relates to the suggested themes of the call; they should also indicate the length of the full piece, its status of publication (date of publication, under review, draft, etc.), whether it forms part of a larger project. Please use the Paper Proposal option in submission. They may also suggest possible facilitators for discussion of the pieces at the workshop. Before making final selections, we will request from finalists the full text of papers/articles for review. Although we have a strong preference for scholars proposing their own work, we are also willing to consider proposals to serve as table facilitator for a discussion of another scholar's published work. Such proposals should indicate why the work matters for the themes under consideration and what qualifies you to facilitate such a discussion.

After final selection of the texts, the workshop's themed tables will be announced broadly, facilitators for each table will be solicited, and all those planning on attending the workshop will be asked to sign up for the themed table at which they will participate. Workshop attendees will have advance access to the designated text beginning in the fall. (Authors will be able to refine drafts of their texts as needed before they are made available for viewing by workshop participants).

**Method:**

PAPERS

**Process:**

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

**Chairs**

Chair - Hidayatullah, Aysha, University of San Francisco, [ahidayatullah@usfca.edu](mailto:ahidayatullah@usfca.edu)

Chair - Ali, Kecia, Boston University, [ka@bu.edu](mailto:ka@bu.edu)

## Islamic Mysticism Group

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**Call Text:**

The Islamic Mysticism Group solicits paper and panel proposals for the 2015 AAR Annual Meeting. While all proposals related to Islamic mysticism are welcome, special attention will be paid to the following topics formulated at the 2015 AAR Islamic Mysticism Group business meeting: Shrines and hostility towards shrines; ritual practices within Sufism; devotion to the family of the prophet. Pre-arranged session or panel proposals reflecting diversity in gender, ethnicity, theoretical method, and rank are highly encouraged.

**Mission Statement:**

Islamic mysticism is a broad rubric, one that allows us to engage in areas such as Sufism, Isma'ili and broader Shi'i esoteric thought, some aspects of Islamic philosophy, and allegorical interpretations of the Qur'an. The study of Islamic mysticism also allows our members to engage Islamic materials from many different parts of

the world including, but not limited to Persianate regions, the Arab world, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, and North America.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Nguyen, Martin, Fairfield University, [alakhira@gmail.com](mailto:alakhira@gmail.com)

Chair - Safi, Omid, University of North Carolina, [omid@email.unc.edu](mailto:omid@email.unc.edu)

## Jain Studies Group

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Call Text:

The Jain Studies Steering Committee, in consultation with other interested scholars, has decided on the following topics as possible themes for its one session in 2015. "Jain Modernities" (contact John E. Cort, [cort@denison.edu](mailto:cort@denison.edu)). "Jain Masculinities" (contact Whitney Kelting, [m.kelting@neu.edu](mailto:m.kelting@neu.edu)). "Jains and Others" (contact Audrey Truschke, [audrey.truschke@gmail.com](mailto:audrey.truschke@gmail.com)). "Bihar in the Jain Imaginary" (contact Leslie Orr, [orr.leslie@gmail.com](mailto:orr.leslie@gmail.com)). "Cenotaphs as Sacred Sites" (contact John E. Cort, [cort@denison.edu](mailto:cort@denison.edu)). We also welcome proposals for complete pre-formed paper sessions, with four papers and a respondent. The steering committee prefers to see proposals for pre-formed sessions, and so strongly discourages submission of individual paper proposals.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Cort, John E., Denison University, [cort@denison.edu](mailto:cort@denison.edu)

Chair - Owen, Lisa, University of North Texas, [lowen@unt.edu](mailto:lowen@unt.edu)

## Japanese Religions Group

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Call Text:

The Japanese Religions Group invites panel and individual proposals related to all aspects of Japanese religious practice and thought, both historical and contemporary. For 2015, we welcome proposals relating

to, but not confined by, the following topics: 1) Tourism and Travel, 2) Deployment of Non-Buddhist Motifs in Buddhist Representation, 3) Gendered Spaces/ Restriction of Women from Sacred Places, 4) Religion and Popular Culture, 5) The Culture of Writing and Textual Production in Medieval Japanese Buddhism, 6) Medicalization of Religious Practice, 7) Religion and Education, 8) Religion, Electoral Politics, and Law, 9) Religion and Sexuality (for potential co-sponsorship), 10) Selling or "Vending" Religion, 11) Women in Contemporary Japanese Religious Practice, 12) a potential quad-sponsored session with the American West, the Buddhism in the West, and North American Hinduism groups that examines the history and impact of Asian religions and the religions of Asian Americans in the Pacific Rim and the North American West, and 13) A joint panel with the Korean Religions Group on Religious Responses to Disaster. How do religious traditions, organizations, communities, and/or individuals respond to tragedies or calamities caused by such things as nature or the foibles of humanity? For example, religious groups have had to provide both meaning and charitable assistance in response to the earthquakes and tsunamis in Japan in 2011 and the Sewol Incident in Korea in 2014. How have religious traditions in these countries responded, helped individuals and families cope, and made meaning for their followers? Topics may also be drawn from earlier periods of Korean and Japanese history.

The JRG is also keenly interested in proposals for screening a film or documentary and then building a panel around discussions with the director. In submitting proposals, please follow the AAR guidelines carefully. Panel proposals should include a panel abstract and individual paper abstracts, to be submitted as a complete package by the panel organizer. Proposals that include explicit reflection on the study of religion more broadly are preferred. Creative formats - film, organized discussion, pre-circulated papers/texts, workshop, etc. - are encouraged.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Sango, Asuka, Carleton College, [asango@carleton.edu](mailto:asango@carleton.edu)

Chair - Rowe, Mark, McMaster University, [rowemar@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rowemar@mcmaster.ca)

## Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture Group

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Call Text:

Call for Papers:

Kierkegaard: Perspectives on Teaching and Learning.

In the spirit of AAR's 2015 theme, "*valuing* the study of religion," we invite proposals on Kierkegaard's perspectives on the place of values in teaching and learning. For Kierkegaard, teaching and learning entail not only epistemic, moral, and aesthetic values, but also religious values, all aimed at developing authentic human being and human relations. In pursuit of this aim, Kierkegaard reflected upon a wide range of ways of

teaching and learning, including (among other things): self-examination; Socratic forms of teaching and learning; indirect communication; and teaching and learning "without authority." Papers might address how these ways of teaching and learning exemplify both the value of faith and the epistemic, moral, and aesthetic values that Kierkegaard viewed as central to faith. We also welcome proposals that consider Kierkegaard's valuing of faith aimed at authentic human being and human relations in the context of Atlanta's civil and human rights traditions.

#### Kierkegaard and Buddhism

For a co-sponsored session with the Yogācāra Studies Group and the Buddhist Philosophy Group, we invite proposals that address methodological and substantive issues concerning Kierkegaard and Buddhism. Possible topics include comparative approaches to issues such as the nature of the self/non-self, the scope and limits of the first-person perspective, the role of suffering in understanding the human condition, and the possibility or impossibility of seeing Kierkegaard's implicit ontology and Buddhism in phenomenological terms.

#### Religious Conversion and Søren Kierkegaard

For a co-sponsored session with the Religious Conversions Group, we invite proposals that explore themes of conversion as they relate to the work of Søren Kierkegaard. We are particularly interested in papers that consider the narrative or literary aspects of religious conversion, the role of imagination and will in conversion, and formulas of religious conversion. One might, for example, consider the relationship between the Kierkegaardian "leap" and conversion, Kierkegaard's concepts of transitions and stages in relation to conversion, or ecclesiological consequences of conversion as presented in Kierkegaard's corpus. Authors might draw upon scholarship that explicitly or implicitly addresses these themes, whether from the standpoint of conversion studies, or from Kierkegaard studies. This session aims to bring together scholars of conversion and Kierkegaard in order to broaden conversation in both fields.

#### [Kierkegaard and the Staging of Desire: A Discussion of Carl Hughes' Book on Rhetoric and Performance in a Theology of Eros](#)

In conjunction with the Bible, Theology, and Postmodernity Group, we are hosting a pre-arranged panel discussion on Carl Hughes' *Kierkegaard and the Staging of Desire* (Fordham University Press, 2014). In this book, Hughes argues that for Kierkegaard, theology is desire and that Kierkegaard uses rhetorical language and a sense of place and performance to "stage" desire for God, particularly in discourses in which the Christian liturgy is central. In doing so, Hughes' study raises questions about the meaning of said desire and its object for Kierkegaard, and about the significance that Kierkegaard places upon the dramatic or theatrical in communicating desire for God. Hughes' study, however, also has implications for the constructive theologian and religious thinker today, who might easily ask what it means to desire God against the backdrop of modernity and postmodernity; why the Bible is significant for articulating such desire; and what it means to perform that desire in a modern and postmodern context in which the ones doing the desiring or affected by the desiring are not homogeneous.

#### Mission Statement:

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

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Robinson, Marcia C., Syracuse University, [mrobin03@syr.edu](mailto:mrobin03@syr.edu)

Chair - Kulak, Avron, York University, [akulak@yorku.ca](mailto:akulak@yorku.ca)

## Korean Religions Group

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Call Text:

Religious Responses to Disasters: How do religious traditions, organizations, communities, and/or individuals respond to tragedies or calamities caused by such things as nature or the foibles of humanity? (*For a co-sponsored panel with the Japanese Religions Group*).

For example, religious groups have had to provide both meaning and charitable assistance in response to the earthquakes and tsunamis in Japan in 2011 and the Sewol incident in Korea in 2014. How have religious traditions in these countries responded, helped individuals and families cope, and made meaning for their followers? Topics may also be drawn from earlier periods of Korean and Japanese history.

For the Korean Religions Group Standalone Session: The American Academy of Religion is holding its 2015 meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, November 21–24, and the Korean Religions Group of the AAR invites you to submit proposals for panels or individual papers. Any proposal relating to Korea and religion will be considered but particular consideration will be given to proposals addressing the following themes.

Possible Themes for the Standalone Session:

1. Religion and Leadership in Korea, with a possible secondary focus on Pope Francis' visit to Korea in 2014 and its impact on the Korean public and meaning in Korean society.
2. Sexuality and Religion in Korea, or Gender and Religion in Korea: What issues are Korean religions encountering in relation to sexuality and gender? How are Korean religions responding to changing norms and expectations regarding gender roles and/or sexual identity?
3. Translation of Scriptures -- 100 year anniversary of the passing of John Ross (1842–1915) (first translator of Bible into Korean)
4. Religious Structures: For example, the function and symbolism of important religious sites, such as Myeongdong Cathedral, Youido Full Gospel Church, Seokguram, Bulguk Monastery, Haein Monastery, Tongdo Monastery, and Songgwang Monastery. How do structures engage with visitors, articulate beliefs through symbolism, serve as a locus of practice, and so forth?
5. Anthropology of Religion in Korea: How is Korean society and culture reflected in religious practice? How can we look at Korean religions from a multidisciplinary approach, and not merely from the disciplines or fields of folk religions, Buddhism, Confucianism, or Christianity?
6. Transnational Networks in Korean Religions, or Transnationality in Korean Religions

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - McBride, Richard D., Brigham Young University, Hawaii, [rick\\_mcbride17@hotmail.com](mailto:rick_mcbride17@hotmail.com)

Chair - Torrey, Debernieri, University of Utah, [djtorrey@gmail.com](mailto:djtorrey@gmail.com)

## Latina/o Critical and Comparative Studies Group

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Call Text:

The Latina/o Critical and Comparative Studies Group fosters interdisciplinary and theoretically innovative analyses of Latina/o religiosities and spiritualities in the Americas. As always, we welcome proposals that expand traditional areas of study, including critical explorations of non-Western beliefs and practices, as well as projects that advance a more complex understanding of culturally hybrid Christianities. We encourage feminist- and queer-centered perspectives, and we value theoretically-innovative investigations that are rooted in community experience. This year we are especially interested in papers that address the following topics: Queering Spirituality/Queering Theology; non-traditional spiritual healing practices (*curanderismo*, *espiritualismo*, *santería*, etc.); Latina/o Humanism (especially in light of the rising number of Latina/o atheists and agnostics); the utility of borderlands theory today (especially the continuing relevance of Gloria Anzaldúa); narco-Christianity (i.e. La Santa Muerte, Jesús Malverde); and Latina/os in the New South.

The panel will discuss the following books in a co-sponsored Session with the Liberation Theologies Group and the Religion in Latin America and the Caribbean Group: Luis Leon's *The Political Spirituality of Cesar Chavez* (UC Press, 2014), Chris Tirres' *The Aesthetics and Ethics of Faith* (Oxford UP, 2014), and Michelle Gonzalez's *A Critical Introduction to Religion in the Americas* (NYU Press, 2014).

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Hughes, Jennifer Scheper, University of California, Riverside, [jhughes@ucr.edu](mailto:jhughes@ucr.edu)

Chair - Tirres, Chris, DePaul University, [ctirres@gmail.com](mailto:ctirres@gmail.com)

## Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Group

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Call Text:

2015 LRCS Call for Papers

Apologizing in Action: Rethinking the Practice of *Teología en conjunto*

As part of the broader attention to questions of "work/life balance" taken up by the Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession, we seek papers that examine the promises and pitfalls of *en conjunto* as theological method, practice, and commitment. Despite being one of the most oft-employed frameworks within U.S. Latina/o theologies, the notion of *de/en conjunto* as process, expectation, and locus has rarely been granted a space dedicated to its reassessment, and yet it is a theological approach that blurs any neat divisions between "work" and "life." We are particularly interested in papers that critically reconsider how the practices of *en conjunto* transform Latina/o notions of "work/life balance" as well as how *en conjunto* theologies can frustrate any attempts to "balance" work and life.

Film Screening w/ Papers Session: *César Chávez*, dir. Diego Luna (2014)

September of 2015 marks the 50th anniversary of the start of the AWOC and NFWA grape strike. We invite papers that reconsider the legacies of the strike and César Chávez within the North American religious imagination. Papers could engage Chávez's legacies from a variety of angles. For instance, a paper might examine Chávez's participation in Latina/o pentecostal services, or a paper might consider how Chávez and Larry Itliong employed religious images and ideas in organizing among Mexican American and Filipino American workers, or a paper might look at the tensions of religious and cross-ethnic and racial conflict during the strike, or a paper might consider the religious practices that adhere to contemporary commemorations of Chávez and/or the grape strike. Another possible trajectory could be to connect Chávez's activism against the use of pesticides with environmental concerns. Though we are pairing this panel with a screening, and we would welcome papers that wrestle with issues of religion, race, and gender in the film, papers need not respond to the film for the sake of this panel.

Proposals for a quad-sponsored panel with the North American Religions Section; the Liberation Theologies Group; the Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr. Group on "Prophetic Pulpits: The Influence and Legacies of MLK Jr. among Latina/o Activists."

Recognizing Atlanta as a major center in the civil rights movement, we invite papers focused on the interplay between MLK Jr.'s religiously grounded civic activism as a model/partner/influence to Latina/o social engagement. Essentially we seek papers that will connect black and brown approaches to civic activism which are rooted in religious convictions. Potential themes for papers include: MLK's friendship and political/religious solidarity with César Chávez; historical sketches of Latina/o activists *en la lucha* for racial equality, workers' rights, immigration reform, etc.; critical comparison/contrast of National Latina/o Evangelical leaders advancing social reform through pulpit ministry (Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, NHCLC; Rev. Gabriel Salguero, NaLEC); current hot topics on black/brown race issues in the media (Ferguson, Trayvon Martin and George Zimmerman); activism in the barrio/hood and in the prison systems (Young Lords and Black Panthers connections).

The Group will also participate with the History of Christianity Section; Practical Theology Group; the Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogies Group in a quad-sponsored panel that takes its starting point from the just-published third volume on theological education in North America by historian Glenn Miller. This quad-sponsored panel takes its starting point from the just-published third volume on theological education in North America by historian Glenn Miller. The volume, *Piety and Plurality* (Cascade Press, 2014), covers the tumultuous period between 1960 and today. [The previous volumes, which Dr. Miller has been at

work on since the 1970s, are *Piety and Intellect* (the Colonial era up to the Civil War) and *Piety and Profession* (1870-1970).

We welcome papers engaging ways to understand both the diversification of places of theological education as well as multiplication of theologies and pedagogies used which force rethinking the landscape of North American theological education in its broadest sense. We are especially interested in theological education at the popular level, including Bible Institutes, but also base communities, and independent networks and institutes. Of special interest are theological educational developments within Pentecostal and Latino/a traditions, and mega-church-based models. We also seek examples of theological education rooted in transformative pedagogies, experiential learning, or other alternative models for theological education.

**Mission Statement:**

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

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Hidalgo, Jacqueline, Williams College, [jacqueline.hidalgo@williams.edu](mailto:jacqueline.hidalgo@williams.edu)

Chair - Alfaro, Sammy, Grand Canyon University, [sammy.alfaro@gcu.edu](mailto:sammy.alfaro@gcu.edu)

## Law, Religion, and Culture Group

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**Call Text:**

In consideration of the official theme for the 2015 AAR, *Valuing the Study of Religion*, the Religion, Law, and Culture Group invites proposals for papers or organized panels that explore the impact of religion scholarship in the courtroom. How is religious studies scholarship used to serve legal ends, and with what consequences? How have American models of religion been made universal (by international organizations for aid or development, religious freedom commissions, international legal mechanisms)?

Considering "value" in a narrower sense, our Group invites proposals that explore the intersection of law, religion, and economy. This theme might be approached in one of the following ways, among others: How has a distinction between religion and economy been invoked, instituted, or contested in law, and with what consequences? Recent critical literature on secularism and secularity has attended to how the boundary is drawn between the "religious" and the "political", and how that boundary is contested, for example, by attempts to "deprivatize" religion for the sake of political critique. Less attention has been given to the politics of boundary-drawing as they apply to the "economic." For instance, how do "private" and "public" become constructed as religious and secular in the discourse and practice of economic development? And how does law work to disrupt or reinforce these distinctions? How does secular politics

effect a distinction between "religious" and "economic" domains, as, for example, in the case of charity law? (For a possible co-sponsorship with the Secularism and Secularity Group).

or,

In what ways do law, religion, and economic practice intersect in colonial and postcolonial settings? For example, How have legal regimes governing economic practice shaped and transformed the institutions we now commonly understand to be religious (such as temples, mosques, monasteries, shrines)? How have the practices of such institutions worked in defiance of colonial legal expectations? (For a possible co-sponsorship with the Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism Group).

or,

What happens when religious expression enters the workplace, either through natural persons or corporate persons?

In honor of the 50th anniversary of the 1965 U.S. Immigration Act, the Law, Religion and Culture Group also invites proposals on Religion and Immigration. How have cultural practices been transformed in the North American legal context? How have views and constructions of Asians and their religions changed since the passing of transformative immigration legislation (e.g., the emergence of the "model minority" or "mindfulness"?) Proposals will be considered for a possible quad-sponsorship with the North American Hinduism Group; the Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Group; the Religion and Migration Group.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Roantree, Bronwyn, Harvard University, [bronwynroantree@gmail.com](mailto:bronwynroantree@gmail.com)

Chair - Adcock, Cassie, Washington University, Saint Louis, [cadcock@wustl.edu](mailto:cadcock@wustl.edu)

## Lesbian-Feminist Issues and Religion Group

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Call Text:

Lesbians, Dykes, Feminists and Queers: Who *really* is part of the "L-Word" today?

For a paper session devoted to Lesbian Feminist Issues in Religion, we are seeking papers that explore what

the word “lesbian” means. What are the multiple ways to define and understand the meaning of the L-Word? What are the various points of resonance and dissonance with other identities in the LGBTIQA spectrum? Where is the common ground among lesbian and lesbian-feminists and where is it not? We are searching for papers that explore variance in race, gender and identity, and culture/community, and work that explores ideas of lesbian, feminist, lesbian- feminist, butch lesbian, butch, femme, trans men, bois, butch dykes, as well as lesbian poetics. Is lesbian identity and life expression, religious and/or spiritual identity, different from or similar to other queer identities and life expression, such as gender queer? Queer woman? How is work-life balance specific/non-specific to lesbian, lesbian-feminist identity? What is the methodology specifically of lesbian and lesbian-feminist thought? We welcome any work on this topic.

We also are happy to read submissions or consider panels dealing with any aspect of lesbian, feminist or specifically Lesbian-Feminist Issues in Religion.

In light of our meeting location in Atlanta and the presidential theme of "valuing the study of religion," we propose an author-meets-critics session on Bernadette Barton's *Pray the Gay Away: The Extraordinary Lives of Bible Belt Gays* (NYU, 2012) for co-sponsorship with the Gay Men in Religion group.

Another focus comes from a quad-sponsored proposal with the Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Group, the Theology and Continental Philosophy Group, and the Queer Studies and Religion Group. With this focus, we are especially interested in papers that discuss Lynne Huffer's books *Mad for Foucault* (Columbia University Press, 2009) and *Are the Lips a Grave?* (Columbia University Press, 2013) for an “author-meets-critics” panel.

For a co-sponsored session with the Religions, Social Conflict, and Peace Group; the African Religions Group: we ask for papers for a session entitled “Gendered Violence in Africa: The Place of Ritual and Ethics in Justification, Protest, and Adjudication”. We seek papers that explore distinctions and connections between institutional and interpersonal violence related to current issues and debates on all forms of gendered violence in Africa, whether against women, girls, boys, or men, including LGBTIQ persons. Among these forms we include domestic abuse, rape, pimping, sexual harassment, sex-trafficking, stalking, wartime violence, and violence against sexual minorities, whether in prisons or public, in church or secular contexts, for ritual or judicial purposes, etc. In all cases, we seek some tie to religious or ethical reflection in African contexts.

For a possible quad-sponsored session with the Religion and Science Fiction Group, the Gay Men and Religion Group, and the Queer Studies in Religion Group, we invite proposals that examine LGBTIQ sexualities, communities, and cultures in the vast universe of science/speculative fiction; push beyond heteronormative species relationships; reflect on how Science fiction mirrors, comments on, or can advocate for LGBTIQ sexualities and spiritualities. We are especially interested in presentations that put LGBTIQ theories in fruitful dialogue with Science Fiction theory and themes (U-/Dystopias, species evolution, cyber worlds, alternate histories, space opera, techno rapture, AI, transcendence, etc.)

#### Mission Statement:

For over twenty-five years, this Group has employed feminist perspectives to explore the multiple dimensions of lesbian interaction with religion, providing one of the few consistent academic settings where discussions on lesbian issues in religion and feminist perspectives on lesbian issues take place. Whether pursued through religious studies, social-scientific, historical, or theological methods during the approach to the academic study of religion, lesbian-feminist scholarship challenges hegemonic discourse within gay, lesbian, and queer movements that function to privilege queer theory as capable of eclipsing theories and methodologies that are explicitly feminist in the face of entrenched patriarchy and self-consciously lesbian in the face of persistent maleness and heteronormativity. Along with the obvious concern for both historical

and contemporary issues pertaining to gender and sexuality, a longstanding feature of the scholarship of this Group has been analysis of race/class/postcolonial critiques. The Group handles important, diverse, and timely themes, providing a theoretical space for probing and further developing the openings and opportunities afforded by changing sociopolitical and theoretical contexts.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Other

We will also be co-sponsoring the screening of the film *Al-Nisa: Black Muslim Women in Atlanta's Gay Mecca* with the Religion and Sexuality Group, Contemporary Islam, Queer Studies in Religion, Study of Islam Section, and Afro-American Religious History. We will be in Atlanta and the film-maker is in Atlanta. Marie Cartier, chair of Lesbian Feminist Issues in Religion will preside/moderate a q and a with the film maker and others following the screening. We will be helping to moderate/preside for this session. For those unfamiliar with the documentary, here's an extended trailer:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_rGU\\_vCi1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_rGU_vCi1s)

Here's a review:

[http://www.roxie.com/ai1ec\\_event/frameline-al-nisa-black-muslim-women-atlantas-gay-mecca/](http://www.roxie.com/ai1ec_event/frameline-al-nisa-black-muslim-women-atlantas-gay-mecca/)

Leadership:

Chair - Cartier, Marie, California State University, Northridge, [ezmerelda@earthlink.net](mailto:ezmerelda@earthlink.net)

## Liberal Theologies Group

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Call Text:

We seek paper or panel proposals that utilize liberal theologies to address the concrete challenges of climate change, economic inequality, and/or mass incarceration. As always, we welcome both normative and descriptive scholarship, both spirited defenses and polemical critiques of liberal theologies, and studies of both classical western liberalism and its analogues in other cultural traditions.

In addition, for possible cosponsored sessions, we also seek proposals that address 1) new prospects for liberal Catholicism in the age of Pope Francis, 2) online pedagogies and interfaith curricula in liberal seminaries, or 3) emerging liberal and liberationist currents within Islamic theology.

All proposals will be evaluated according the following criteria: 1) clarity of thesis and argument; 2) explicit and creative engagement with liberal theologies, broadly understood; 3) relevance to the pressing concerns of both the academy and the world; 4) fit with the call for papers, and with other proposals received. Selected presenters will be asked to provide a full manuscript for precirculation by October 15, 2015.

Mission Statement:

Liberal theology in all its varieties has been a robust intellectual and religious presence from the early modern period to the present. The theologians involved with this Group, who come from many different universities and religious schools in North America and from abroad, are committed to continuing this tradition. Our focus is plural — we look across religious traditions. It is interdisciplinary — we welcome the

participation, among others, of historians, political scientists, anthropologists, sociologists, and philosophers engaged with questions of vital moment to liberal theologies. Our gaze is to the future — we are determined to develop new perspectives, new ways of speaking, and new combinations of ideas that will better address the intellectual and social circumstances in which we find ourselves.

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Bradshaw, Anita L., Minneapolis, MN, [albsrs@usiwireless.com](mailto:albsrs@usiwireless.com)

Chair - McKanan, Daniel, Harvard University, [dmckanan@hds.harvard.edu](mailto:dmckanan@hds.harvard.edu)

## Liberation Theologies Group

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Call Text:

### **1: Liberation and Charlatany in Education**

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The Liberation Theologies Group invites proposals that engage knowledge, its production, institutions of knowledge, and the role of education in the 21st century. We encourage broad interpretation of the terms of the call and creative, constructive proposals for liberation theologies in the 21st century. Papers could engage topics such as the following: *(This list is far from exhaustive. Please be fearless in proposing what needs to be said!)*

#### The Current Situation

- Neoliberalization and corporatization of universities
  - “The Adjunct Crisis”
  - Student debt; Tuition hikes
  - Faculty complicity
  - Academic charlatany
  - Dominant modes of scholarship
  - Seminaries and today’s challenges
  - Non-dominant, resistant, or experimental models of education (e.g. Open University, University of the Poor, School Occupations)
  - Where is God in the modern university? Where is God *not* in the modern university?
  - Student movements
  - “Crisis of Humanities”
  - Accreditation and tenure benefits, demands, and dangers
  - US scholarly arrogance
- ..... and many other important topics ....

#### Thinking about Knowledge, Scholarship, and Education

- Power and knowledge; Power and pedagogy; Power and scholarship
- Social position and the possibilities of knowledge
- Knowledge of God; Knowledge of world; Knowledge of self
- Radical archives or other futures for liberative libraries

- Critical pedagogies; Social education; Pedagogies from the margins
- Rethinking economies and currencies of knowledge
- Recognizing and resisting manifestations of oppression
- Theological perspectives role of scholarship and education
- Ethics of scholarly methods and knowledge production
- Universities and empire; Universities and war
- Roles, purposes, and forms of liberative education and/or theological education
- Intersectional, womanist or *mujerista* approaches to institutional formation and/or pedagogy
- Academic work versus academic praxis  
..... and many other important topics ....

### Looking Forward

- Life-giving models of academic community
- (Non-capitalist) economies of knowledge
- Educating for change
- Examples, practices, or proposals for academic solidarity rather than complicity
- Connecting technology, knowledge, and liberation (e.g. postcolonial digital humanities)
- Creating liberative and liberated spaces in the academy
- Ideas for how to manifest other forms of education within the neo-liberal market
- Prophetic calls for educational justice  
..... and many other important topics ....

The group encourages crossover dialogue — between contexts, between disciplines, and between religions — and reflection on the implications of liberationist discourse for the transformation of theology as a whole, both its methods and substance. We welcome any theological approach (e.g. constructive, theoretical, activist, sociological, historical, etc.). Likewise, we welcome proposals arising out of or engaging all religious or ritual traditions including, but certainly not limited to: indigenous religions, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Christianity, traditional African religions, and Buddhism.

## **2: Class, Theology, Place, and the Academy**

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Quad-sponsored Session with the Class, Religion, and Theology Group; the Religion and Cities Group; the Theology and Religious Reflection Section

*This quad-sponsored session focuses on the intersections of class, theology, place, and academic production. Proposals that fit within this rubric should be submitted to the joint call.*

For a quad-sponsored session with the Religion and Cities Group, the Theology and Religious Reflection Section, and the Class, Religion, and Theology Group, we are inviting papers that address the relevance of issues of class, religion, and theology to the academy and academics, including issues of academic labor and how class affects academic production more broadly conceived (in particular teaching and writing). In these papers we also encourage reflections on place. How do issues of class, religion, and theology shape up in the academy in relation to the various locations of academic production in large cities, towns, and rural areas?

## **3: Prophetic Pulpits: The Influence and Legacies of MLK Jr. among Latina/o Activists**

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Co-sponsored Session with the Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Group; the North American Religions Section; the Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr. Group

Proposals for a quad-sponsored panel with the North American Religions Section; the Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Group; the Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr. Group on “Prophetic Pulpits: The Influence and Legacies of MLK Jr. among Latina/o Activists.”

Recognizing Atlanta as a major center in the civil rights movement, we invite papers focused on the interplay between MLK Jr.'s religiously grounded civic activism as a model/partner/influence to Latina/o social engagement. Essentially we seek papers that will connect black and brown approaches to civic activism which are rooted in religious convictions. Potential themes for papers include: MLK's friendship and political/religious solidarity with César Chávez; historical sketches of Latina/o activists *en la lucha* for racial equality, workers' rights, immigration reform, etc.; critical comparison/contrast of National Latina/o Evangelical leaders advancing social reform through pulpit ministry (Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, NHCLC; Rev. Gabriel Salguero, NaLEC); current hot topics on black/brown race issues in the media (Ferguson, Trayvon Martin and George Zimmerman); activism in the barrio/hood and in the prison systems (Young Lords and Black Panthers connections).

#### **4: New Books Session (Pre-arranged)**

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Co-Sponsored Session with the Latina/o Critical and Comparative Studies Group and the Religion in Latin America and the Caribbean Group

The panel will discuss the following books: Luis Leon's *The Political Spirituality of Cesar Chavez* (UC Press, 2014), Chris Tirres' *The Aesthetics and Ethics of Faith* (Oxford UP, 2014), and Michelle Gonzalez's *A Critical Introduction to Religion in the Americas* (NYU Press, 2014).

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Slabodsky, Santiago H., Claremont School of Theology/Claremont Graduate University, [sslabodsky@cst.edu](mailto:sslabodsky@cst.edu)

Chair - Hofheinz, Hannah, Harvard University, [hofheinz@mail.harvard.edu](mailto:hofheinz@mail.harvard.edu)

#### **Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions Group**

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Call Text:

WOMEN AND THE REFORMATION

The Martin Luther and the Global Lutheran Traditions Group invites proposals on the topic of Women and the Reformation.

We invite papers on specific contributions of women to the Reformation (e.g. Katharina von Bora, Argula von Grumbach and other historical female figures that history has obscured); the contribution of the Reformation for women (broadly speaking, e.g. literacy by establishing schools, equality of men and women in secular pursuits, etc.); the ambiguous effects for women through the Reformation (e.g. exclusion of women from ministry, not marking their role in the German confessing church, the case of Charlotte von Kirschbaum, etc.); global women and the Reformation's legacy and its living tradition in the lives, spiritualities, and theologies of women around the globe in the past and today; Reformation theology done by women since the 16th century to the present; and how the study of women enhances and develops the study of Reformation theologies in historical, methodological, and epistemological terms.

We invite a papers that apply different methodologies: historical, theological, feminist and liberation theology, etc. We look for papers that promise to make a major contribution in Reformation studies and bridge historical, theological and feminist study. We look for papers that model how to study Reformation and its theological legacy with the principle of inclusivity and with intentional attention to the contributions and experiences of women. While the anticipated papers are not exclusively addressing the Lutheran tradition, our session seeks to facilitate research and conversation towards ongoing critical re-assessment of the global Lutheran traditions and their future.

#### CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY AND JEWISH PERSECUTION WITH MARTIN LUTHER'S WRITINGS

The Martin Luther and the Global Lutheran Traditions Group, in collaboration with the Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Group and the Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence Group, seeks individual paper or panel proposals on the following topics: 1) drawing inspiration from the Presidential Theme for 2015, we are particularly interested in work that assesses the valuing of "religion" in the analysis of "genocide" and the debated definitions of these terms; 2) comparing models of rupture (theology), continuity (history), and conflict (sociology) in the interpretation of genocide; 3) 100 years later, what is the status of the Armenian genocide in religious studies?; 4) Christian theology and Jewish persecution, critical and constructive responses to the Holocaust, addressing Martin Luther's writings and the Lutheran tradition (=MLGLT's group); 5) religion and genocide in the Balkans.

#### Mission Statement:

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

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

Other

The normal online system for submitting proposal

#### Leadership:

Chair - Stjerna, Kirsi, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, [kstjerna@ltsg.edu](mailto:kstjerna@ltsg.edu)

Chair - Westhelle, Vitor, Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago, [vwesthel@lstc.edu](mailto:vwesthel@lstc.edu)

#### Material Islam Seminar

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Call Text:

The Islamic Sensoria

The primary concern of the Material Islam seminar is to consider how the study of material culture advances Islamic Studies and how Islamic Studies contributes to the study of material culture and religion more broadly. This year, the seminar invites proposals for a pre-distributed paper session on the Islamic sensoria. Focusing on a theoretical model(s) of the senses, papers should consider ways in which Islamic objects, spaces, and practices engage the senses of their audiences and interlocutors.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Bigelow, Anna, North Carolina State University, [anna\\_bigelow@ncsu.edu](mailto:anna_bigelow@ncsu.edu)

Chair - GhaneaBassiri, Kambiz, Reed College, [ghaneabk@reed.edu](mailto:ghaneabk@reed.edu)

## Men, Masculinities, and Religions Group

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Call Text:

*Performing Intersectional and (Un)recognized Masculinities.* For this panel we solicit papers that critically investigate the performativity of masculinity at the intersections of categories such as gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and class, and/or at the boundaries of what is socially, culturally and religiously recognized as 'masculine' (and what is not). Possible topics are Asian, Jewish, Black, Latino, gay, transgender and female masculinities, in relation to particular religious, social, political, ritual and/or discursive performances.

*Masculinities and Religion in Africa:* The study of gender and religion in Africa has so far focused mostly on women. Yet in recent years, men and masculinities have emerged as a new field in African Studies, raising a number of issues. On the one hand, scholars have problematized and interrogated dominant forms of African masculinity for their role in issues such as HIV and AIDS, violence, and the oppression of women. On the other hand, this focus has exposed ways that men, too, are affected by patriarchal norms and struggle with the expectations of modernity. We welcome papers that address constructions and transformations of

masculinity in African cultural, social, and political contexts, examining the complex ways in which religious discourses, practices, and politics intersect with the diverse modalities of masculinity in contemporary Africa. (For a possible co-sponsored session with the African Religions Group)

*Male Aesthetic and Muscle Gods:* for a possible quad-sponsored panel with the Religion, Sport, and Play Group; the Men, Masculinities and Religion Group; the Religion and Popular Culture Group; we invite explorations of the gym-built body as the masculine ideal for gay/hetero/bi men (for example, Internet subcultures that praise bodybuilders as “muscle gods”). What might this form of virtual/actual veneration say about gay/hetero/bi men and masculine ideals? How might we theorize approaches to the muscular male body? We welcome proposals that employ case studies whether historical or contemporary and/or draw on a range of disciplinary perspectives and diverse religious traditions. A successful proposal will include a thesis statement and a clear statement of both evidence and methodology.

*Ritual, Sex, and Gender:* We are interested in proposals that look at the relationship between ritual, sex, sexuality, and gender for a potential co-sponsorship with the Ritual Studies Group.

**Mission Statement:**

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

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - van Klinken, Adriaan, University of Leeds, [a.vanklinken@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:a.vanklinken@leeds.ac.uk)

Chair - De Sondy, Amanullah, University of Miami, [a.desondy@miami.edu](mailto:a.desondy@miami.edu)

## Middle Eastern Christianity Group

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**Call Text:**

1. Middle Eastern Christianity and Islam: Areas for Dialogue?  
The Middle Eastern Christianity Group calls for paper proposals addressing Middle Eastern Christianity *vis-à-vis* Islam. The call for papers seeks broad participation from scholars employing various methodologies (historical, literary, theological, sociological, legal, etc.) and in all time periods. Paper proposals need not be construed as traditional Christian-Muslim “relations”; rather, they may include any topic of joint concern, or interest that could provide fertile grounds for dialogue among or between Middle Eastern Christians and Muslims.
2. Middle Eastern Christians Constructing Identities in Diaspora Communities  
The Middle Eastern Christianity Group invites proposals for research papers examining the identity of Middle Eastern Christians in diaspora. Proposals can include any historical period and any region of relocation— including relocation from one Middle Eastern milieu to another. The call for papers encourages proposals from any methodologically sound discipline (theology, sociology, history, law, musicology, etc.). Topics must be clearly defined, and proposals must demonstrate theoretical rigor, preferably engaging primary source evidence in its native language (Arabic, Coptic, Farsi, Syriac, Turkish, etc.).

### 3. Wisdom Literature in Syriac & Middle Eastern Christianity

The AAR Middle Eastern Christianity Group and the SBL Syriac Literature and Interpretation of Sacred Texts Unit are jointly issuing a call for papers addressing wisdom literature in the Middle East Christian communities. The program units invite proposals that investigate wisdom literature in the Syriac milieu as it is understood broadly—including related Christian traditions in other Middle Eastern languages, such as Arabic, Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopic, Greek, etc. Proposals focused on any historical period are welcome, and abstracts must demonstrate methodological and theoretical rigor.

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

#### Mission Statement:

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

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

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

#### Leadership:

Chair - Zaborowski, Jason R., Bradley University, [jzaborowski@bradley.edu](mailto:jzaborowski@bradley.edu)

Chair - Andraos, Michel, Catholic Theological Union, [mandraos@ctu.edu](mailto:mandraos@ctu.edu)

## Moral Injury and Recovery in Religion, Society, and Culture Group

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#### Call Text:

Moral injury is a wound of moral subjectivity within a social context. It combines loss of faith in one's own moral goodness and the goodness of the surrounding society and occurs either through the experience of particular acts or through a longer-term experience of social suffering and moral distrust. It is linked to the

loss of a meaningful world so that “An individual with moral injury may begin to view him or herself as immoral, irredeemable, and un-reparable or believe that he or she lives in an immoral world.” (Litz, et. al., Dec. 2009 *Cl Psych Rev*) First identified in 1993 by VA psychiatrist Jonathan Shay as involving the violation of what is right by someone in authority, moral injury is currently defined as involving “an act of transgression that creates dissonance and conflict because it violates assumptions and beliefs about right and wrong and personal goodness.” (Litz) It includes a range of relevant agency, from actual perpetration to witnessing violations and can include shame for violating core moral values, survivor guilt, remorse at causing harm, alienation from religious communities and beliefs, being haunted by mistreating human remains, and grief at losses, including the loss of a sense of being a good person.

For the 2015 AAR Annual Meeting, we invite papers or complete panels on 1) moral injury and other forms of trauma, such as injury to conscience and feelings of shame after moral transgressions, and psychological harm caused by social injustice or domestic violence (with particular interest in diverse religious scriptural and cultural understandings of moral injury outside the Christian tradition) for a co-sponsored session with the Buddhist Critical-Constructive Reflection Group and the Warfare in Ancient Israel Group (SBL); 2) moral formation and moral injury in relation to teleological, deontological, and virtue ethics; 3) psychological and religious perspectives on moral injury, for a possible co-sponsored session with the Psychology, Culture and Religion Group; 4) conversations about moral injury among service providers in the active duty military, the VA, chaplains, and medical care givers; 5) moral injury in relation to issues of women and gender, for a possible co-sponsored session with the Women and Religion Section; 6) how the study of moral injury interrogates the role of religion in civic society.

**Mission Statement:**

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

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

**Contributions are welcome engaging:**

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

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Brock, Rita, Brite Divinity School, [ritabrock@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ritabrock@sbcglobal.net)

Chair - Bounds, Elizabeth Margaret, Emory University, [ebounds@emory.edu](mailto:ebounds@emory.edu)

## Mormon Studies Group

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### Call Text:

The Mormon Studies Group seeks proposals for full sessions or individual papers that consider any aspect of Mormon experience using the methods of critical theory, philosophy, theology, history, sociology, or psychology. This includes the use of Mormonism as a case study for informing larger questions in any of these disciplines and, thus, only indirectly related to the Mormon experience. For 2015, we are particularly interested in proposals addressing international Mormonism and which engage questions of globalization, imperialism, and decolonization.

### Mission Statement:

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

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

### Method of submission:

PAPERS

### Leadership:

Chair - McDannell, Colleen, University of Utah, [colleen.mcd@utah.edu](mailto:colleen.mcd@utah.edu)

Chair - Newell, Quincy, University of Wyoming, [qdnewell@uwyo.edu](mailto:qdnewell@uwyo.edu)

## Music and Religion Group

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### Call Text:

The Music and Religion Group invites papers or panels on the relationship between music and religion in the context of contemporary or historical cultures. We seek proposals that bring innovative methodological considerations to the study of musical phenomena in relation to the following 2015 themes. Papers or panels which incorporate/demonstrate live performance as part of the session are particularly welcome.

- Gospel Music of the American South. Gospel Music of the American South: We invite proposals that explore the distinctive forms of gospel music that have developed in the American South and how they have shaped or been shaped by traditions of spirituality, biblical interpretation, theological reflection, or socio-political perspectives within the black church. Proposals featuring performed music especially welcome. (for a potential quad-sponsored session with the Christian Spirituality Group; the Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities Group; the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements Group.

- Rap Music and Religion in the American South. Atlanta, part of the "Dirty South," has been called Hip Hop's center of gravity. We welcome submissions that engage regional and geographic impact and influence on the

cultural production of rap music (with attention to religion) and its cross-cultural pollinations among musical modalities such as folk and country on rap music or vice versa. Examples might include groups such as Nappy Roots and Arrested Development or the more recent growth in popularity of white rap celebrating Southern culture. (Co-sponsored with Critical Approaches to Hip Hop and Religion).

- Sacred Harp and Shape Note Singing Traditions. Explorations into the ritual, musicological, and theological phenomenon of nineteenth-century American shape note and four-part singing schools and traditions and/or their contemporary manifestations.

- Music, Religion, and Migration. How does the intersection of music and religion help to shape identities and socio-political perspectives in the context of migration and newer immigrant communities? Co-sponsored with Religion and Migration.

#### Mission Statement:

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

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

#### Leadership:

Chair - Trost, Theodore, University of Alabama, [ttrost@as.ua.edu](mailto:ttrost@as.ua.edu)

Chair - Stoltzfus, Philip, United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, [stoltzfusp@gmail.com](mailto:stoltzfusp@gmail.com)

## Mysticism Group

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#### Call Text:

The Mysticism Group welcomes proposals on the following topics:

- Scholar-Practitioners: Coming out in and of the Academy (with the Contemplative Studies Group)
- The Life and Times of a Modern Mystic: Thomas Merton (with the Christian Spirituality Group)
- Spiritual but not Religious: Mysticism and the “Nones”
- Hypnotherapy and Mysticism
- African-American Mystics
- Jewish Mysticism: Past and Present
- Mystics, Monsters, and Marvel

We welcome both proposals for individual papers as well as proposals for panels.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

We do NOT accept proposals by email.

Leadership:

Chair - Sarbacker, Stuart R., Oregon State University, [stuart.sarbacker@oregonstate.edu](mailto:stuart.sarbacker@oregonstate.edu)

Chair - Gleig, Ann, University of Central Florida, [ann.gleig@ucf.edu](mailto:ann.gleig@ucf.edu)

## Native Traditions in the Americas Group

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Call Text:

We invite individual paper and group proposals on any aspect of Native traditions in the Americas (North, Central and South). Because the Annual Meeting will be in Atlanta this year, we especially encourage proposals on the following topic:

1) For a possible co-sponsored session with the African Diaspora Religions Group:

The Trail of Tears: We invite papers or session proposals that address the impact of the Trail of Tears on Native and African American communities. We are interested in addressing the Trail of Tears as a site of loss of sacred knowledge, as a site of displacement and removal, and as a site that offers the possibility of recovery and transformation.

We are also interested in proposals in the following areas:

2) For a possible quad-sponsored session with the African Diaspora Religions Group; Religion, Medicines, and Healing Group; the Indigenous Religious Traditions Group: we invite paper or session proposals that focus on how conceptions of indigeneity and diasporic identity are implicated in efforts to heal individuals, communities, and nations in the context of loss, displacement, and historical trauma.

3) Concepts of home and homeland

4) Indigenous theologies

5) Concepts of power as understood or experienced within different indigenous cultures;

6) Religion in the public sphere

7) Native American rhetoric

**Mission Statement:**

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

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Pesantubbee, Michelene, University of Iowa, [michelene-pesantubbe@uiowa.edu](mailto:michelene-pesantubbe@uiowa.edu)

Chair - Zogry, Michael, University of Kansas, [mzogry@ku.edu](mailto:mzogry@ku.edu)

## **New Perspectives on Religion in the Philippines Seminar**

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**Statement of Purpose:**

This seminar serves as a space at AAR for presenting and discussing innovative research on religion in the Philippines and strives to develop new perspectives in the study of its religious history. The Philippines has always been a crossroads of diverse religious encounters: between indigenous religions, Islam, Iberian and American Catholicism, Protestantism, indigenous Christian and non-Christian traditions, as well as various Charismatic movements. At the same time, it has been a marginal space, at the geographical margin of Asia and the intellectual margins of scholarship on religion in Southeast Asia and the study of Christianity and Islam. In response to these concerns, this five-year seminar on “New Perspectives on Religion in the Philippines” will contribute to understanding the Philippines as an important node in a global history of transregional and transcontinental religious interactions. It pursues two goals: publishing an extensive edited volume outlining a broad and comparative perspective on religion in the Philippines, as well as establishing a public forum at AAR for discussing the study of religion in the Philippines.

**Call for Papers:**

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

Scholars interested in being part of this conversation are encouraged to contact the chairs, Adrian Hermann, [adrian.hermann@gmail.com](mailto:adrian.hermann@gmail.com) and Deidre de la Cruz, [ddelac@umich.edu](mailto:ddelac@umich.edu), for more information and/or details about submitting a proposal. In order to facilitate substantive conversation during the panel, this seminar will participate in the AAR Full Paper Submission system. Full drafts of all accepted papers will be posted online several weeks prior to the Annual Meeting, being accessible to AAR members only.

**Method:**

PAPERS

**Process:**

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

Chair - de la Cruz, Deidre, University of Michigan, [ddelac@umich.edu](mailto:ddelac@umich.edu)

Chair - Hermann, Adrian, Utrecht University, [adrian.hermann@gmail.com](mailto:adrian.hermann@gmail.com)

## New Religious Movements Group

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**Call Text:**

For 2015, the New Religious Movements Group welcomes proposals for papers and panels on any of the following topics:

- NRMs and health, mental health, and/or (dis)ability
- New Religions and political extremes
- Southern New Religions and the question of race
- Method and theory in the study of New Religions, especially in relation to popular culture and materiality
- For a potential co-sponsored session with the Religion and Food Group: The intersections between Food and New Religions and/or New Religiosities

In addition, our group always welcomes proposals related to any aspect of the study of new and alternative religions, regardless of whether it has been specified in this year's call.

**Mission Statement:**

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Dallam, Marie W., University of Oklahoma, [mwdallam@ou.edu](mailto:mwdallam@ou.edu)

## Nineteenth Century Theology Group

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Call Text:

This Group invites proposals for papers on, but not limited to, the following topics:

- 1) For a session on Neo-Kantianism and Religious Thought, we invite proposals for papers that examine the intersection and mutual influence of Neo-Kantian philosophy, Christian theology, and Jewish religious thought in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
- 2) For a session on Aesthetics and the Religious Imagination in the Nineteenth Century, we invite proposals for papers that examine the interrelation of aesthetic theory and art criticism, on the one hand, and religious thought and theological discourse, on the other, in the nineteenth century.
- 3) For a session on Schleiermacher and Mediating Theology to be co-sponsored with the Schleiermacher Group, we welcome proposals for papers that analyze strategies employed by Schleiermacher and subsequent representatives of Mediating Theology, broadly conceived, to reconcile the classical claims of the Christian faith with the epistemological and ethical demands of modernity.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Gooch, Todd, Eastern Kentucky University, [todd.gooch@eku.edu](mailto:todd.gooch@eku.edu)

## North American Hinduism Group

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Call Text:

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

Specifically for the 2015 AAR in Atlanta, we invite individual papers, paper sessions, and roundtable proposals on the following five topics:

1. The history and impact of Asian Religions and the religions of Asian Americans in the Pacific Rim and the North American West (for possible quad-sponsorship with the Buddhism in the West Group, the Japanese Religions Group, and the Religion in the American West Group)
2. The 50th Anniversary of the 1965 U.S. Immigration Act: How have cultural practices been transformed in the North American legal context? How have views and constructions of Asians and their religions changed since the passing of transformative immigration legislation (e.g., the emergence of the “model minority” or “mindfulness”?) Proposals will be considered for a possible quad-sponsorship with the Law, Religion, and Culture Group; the Asian North American Religion, Culture, and Society Group; the Religion and Migration Group.
3. ‘Hindoos’ and ‘Mohammedans’ in North America during the long 19th century. How do American representation of Muslims and Hindus compare in the 19th century? How was their religious difference imagined similarly or differently?
4. Pedagogical Approaches to North American Hinduism
5. IDOL Talk - When and why (or why not) do Hindus describe their own sacred images as idols? When is the term "idol" deployed by non-Hindus? What are we really talking about when we talk about "idols?"

**Mission Statement:**

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

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

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

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

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Gandhi, Shreena, Kalamazoo College, [shreena.gandhi@kzoo.edu](mailto:shreena.gandhi@kzoo.edu)

Chair - Altman, Michael, University of Alabama, [maltman2@ua.edu](mailto:maltman2@ua.edu)

**North American Religions Section**

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Call Text:

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

As always, the section welcomes proposals for papers and panels examining any of a broad range of topics; submissions need not be tied to highlighted themes.

For the 2015 Annual Meeting, we especially encourage proposals on the following topics:

\*"Activism, Religion, and Social Change" (including Freedom Summer, same-sex marriage, street protests for justice, Ferguson) or "Disease, Plague, and Alien Threats" for co-sponsorship with the Religion, Media, and Culture group;

\*Religion and the New Materialism

\*Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

\*American Islam

\*Religion and Affect/Emotion

\*Religion and Place/Emplacement (particularly displacement, such as the Trail of Tears and other forced removals of Native Americans)

\*The City of Atlanta and North American Religions or Religion in the Cities

\*Capitalism, Money, and Atlanta

\*Religion, Civil Rights, Gay Rights

\*Religion, Race, and State Violence (such as religious responses to Ferguson/Michael Brown's death, criminality, and incarceration)

\*Global Networks/Influence of American Religion

\*Rethinking Narratives of Religion in the American South

\*Proposals for a quad-sponsored panel with Latino/a Religion, Culture, Society Group; the Liberation Theologies Group; the Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr. Group on "Prophetic Pulpits: The Influence and Legacies of MLK Jr. among Latina/o Activists."

Recognizing Atlanta as a major center in the Civil Rights movement, we invite papers focused on the interplay between MLK Jr.'s religiously grounded civic activism as a model/partner/influence to Latina/o social engagement. Essentially we seek papers that will connect black and brown approaches to civic activism which are rooted in religious convictions. Potential themes for papers include: MLK's friendship and political/religious solidarity with César Chávez; historical sketches of Latina/o activists *en la lucha* for racial equality, workers' rights, immigration reform, etc.; critical comparison/contrast of National Latina/o Evangelical leaders advancing social reform through pulpit ministry (Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, NHCLC; Rev. Gabriel Salguero, NaLEC); current hot topics on black/brown race issues in the media (Ferguson, Trayvon Martin and George Zimmerman); activism in the barrio/hood and in the prison systems (Young Lords and Black Panthers connections).

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

Mission Statement:

**Purpose, Practices & Procedures:**

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

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

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

**4. Composition:** The Steering Committee is made up of seven members, two of whom are elected by the members to serve as co-chairs. A Steering Committee term is three years, renewable for a second three years if everyone is amenable. The terms are staggered, so that there are continuity and change on the committee. During a total of six possible years, a member might serve a co-chair term, which is three years. A member elected to serve as co-chair has at least one full year's experience on the Steering Committee. The co-chair elections are staggered as well, so that each new co-chair serves with an experienced co-chair.

**5. Responsibilities:** The co-chairs take care of the business of NAR and moderate communication of the Steering Committee. All members of the Steering Committee make decisions on substantive matters. All attend the Annual Meeting and reserve Friday dinner and Saturday lunch for Steering Committee socializing, envisioning and business. All attend the NAR Business Meeting.

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

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

Anonymity: Other (please explain below)

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Suh, Sharon A., Seattle University, [suhs@seattleu.edu](mailto:suhs@seattleu.edu)

Chair - Johnson, Sylvester, Northwestern University, [sylvester.johnson@northwestern.edu](mailto:sylvester.johnson@northwestern.edu)

## Occupying Latino Male Bodies Seminar

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**Statement of Purpose:**

The seminar explores the challenges, dangers, and pitfalls of occupying a Latino male body. Although some attention has been given to issues surrounding Hispanics and/or women in the academy, none has focused on what it means to occupy a Latino male body. And yet, Hispanic men face unique challenges that complicate their ability to teach, as well as their personal lives. We would argue that how society constructs male Hispanic bodies is problematic, especially when said bodies find themselves occupying positions of authority. For this reason, we are gathering Hispanic male scholars of religion to serve as consultants helping

to address issues of ethnic and racial identity. This is the first time male Latino professors will be asked to reflectively examine, share, and create new models centered on being. The gathering is charged with exploring this often neglected phenomena so as to construct possible pedagogies of empowerment that can be employed, not just by the six participants. Through the dissemination of our findings, we hope to begin a broader discussion on the materiality of Latino men.

**Call for Papers:**

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

**Method:**

PAPERS

**Process:**

Other (please explain below)

**Comments:**

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

**Chair**

Chair - De La Torre, Miguel A., Iliff School of Theology, [mdelatorre@iliff.edu](mailto:mdelatorre@iliff.edu)

## Open and Relational Theologies Group

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**Call Text:**

The Open and Relational Theologies group plans to explore two themes in its 2015 sessions. First, we invite proposals exploring hope in relation to themes common in open, relational, or process theologies. Such themes may include (but are not limited to) time and God, power, love, omniscience, evil, ecology, cooperation, social and political structures, justice, forgiveness, and salvation. We prefer proposals addressing these themes or others from overtly open, relational, or process theological perspectives. Second, we invite papers exploring the hermeneutics, especially in relation to scripture. Papers might offer general hermeneutical methods and rationale that defend or promote open and relational themes. They may focus upon a particular problematic or especially helpful text. We prefer proposals that explicitly address hermeneutical concerns from open, relational, or process perspectives. We plan to accept multiple proposals that explore these themes, which means that we expect relatively short presentations from those whose proposals are accepted.

**Mission Statement:**

This Group brings together scholars of diverse interests and concerns. Prominent among those who participate are scholars who label themselves as process-oriented, openness-oriented, Wesleyan, feminist, liberationist, Arminian, trinitarian, evangelical, etc. Those participating generally affirm the following:

Theology involves speculation about who God truly is and what God really does

God's primary characteristic is love

Creatures — at least humans — are genuinely free to make choices

God experiences others in some way analogous to how creatures experience others

Both creatures and God are relational beings, which means that both God and creatures are affected by others in give-and-take relationships

God experience changes, yet God's nature or essence remains the same

Creatures are called to act in ways that please God and make the world a better place

The future is open — it is not predetermined by God

God's expectations about the future are often partly dependent upon creaturely actions

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership: Thomas J. Oord, Northwest Nazarene University, [tjoord@nnu.edu](mailto:tjoord@nnu.edu)

## Pentecostal—Charismatic Movements Group

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### Call Text:

The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements Group welcomes paper proposals and full panel proposals on the following themes for the Annual Meeting in Atlanta in 2015: (1) the “New South” as a center of global migrations, immigration, and transnationalism, migrations to and from the New South, and/or the effects or impacts of transnationalism; (2) immigration(s) of peoples from the Global South affecting Pentecostalism in North America, and/or the effects or impacts of transnationalism; (3) Pentecostalism and gender, especially in relation to the “gender paradox” in particular cultural or national contexts, i.e., a seeming contradiction between “official” gender teachings and actual experiences and practices; (4) “Performing Scripture” (for possible co-sponsorship with an SBL Program Unit) to explore Pentecostal-Charismatic ideas, experiences, and practices regarding performative utterances; the power of the spoken, preached, or sung word; and/or musical, homiletic, or dramatic adaptations or enactments of scripture. (5) “Gospel Music of the American South” (for a possible quad-sponsorship with the Music and Religion Group; the Bible in Racial, Ethnic, and Indigenous Communities Group; the Christian Spirituality Group) We invite proposals that explore the distinctive forms of gospel music that have developed in the American South and how they have shaped or been shaped by traditions of spirituality, biblical interpretation, theological reflection, or socio-political perspectives within the black church. Proposals featuring performed music especially welcome. The committee also welcomes proposals related to divine healing, prophecy, and the prosperity gospel.

### Mission Statement:

This Group provides a forum for scholarly consideration of global phenomena associated with Pentecostalism and Charismatic movements. This Group provides an arena for a wide array of scholars, disciplinary orientations, and methodological approaches bringing together those working constructively from within these traditions with scholars considering the phenomena from historical, sociological, ethnographic,

theological, and other perspectives. The Group intentionally seeks to encourage a global and pluralist perspective.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Sanchez Walsh, Arlene, Azusa Pacific University, [asanchez-walsh@apu.edu](mailto:asanchez-walsh@apu.edu)

Chair - McClymond, Michael J., Saint Louis University, [michael@slu.edu](mailto:michael@slu.edu)

## Philosophy of Religion Section

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Call Text:

This section invites proposals on the following topics:

Race and the History of Philosophy of Religion

Responses to Terry Godlove's *Kant and the Meaning of Religion*

Religion and Emotion

New Materialism

Theories of the Ordinary

Analytic Theology Across Cultures

Responses to Stephen Bush's *Visions of Religion: Experience, Meaning, and Power*

Responses to Dan Arnold's *Brains, Buddhism, Believing*

Critical Perspectives on the Cognitive Science of Religion

Value and the Study of Religion

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

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Rea, Michael, University of Notre Dame, [michael.rea2@gmail.com](mailto:michael.rea2@gmail.com)

Chair - Rubenstein, Mary-Jane, Wesleyan University, [mrubenstein@wesleyan.edu](mailto:mrubenstein@wesleyan.edu)

## Platonism and Neoplatonism Group

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Call Text:

The Platonism and Neoplatonism Group will host two sessions at the 2015 Annual Meeting:

1. "Love, Desire, and Ascent in Ancient and Medieval Platonism."  
The Group is initiating a four year project concentrating on the role that love and desire have played in the aspiration for transcendence.  
This is intended as a comprehensive, cross-traditional study centered on Platonism.  
Papers on Philo, Origen, and Plotinus have been invited for the project's first year.
2. "The Contemporary Significance of Platonism."  
This session will focus on Lloyd Gerson's recent book, *From Plato to Platonism* (Cornell, 2013).  
The author will discuss his understanding of the development and continued significance of Platonism.  
Responses to Gerson's book are invited.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

## Practical Theology Group

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Call Text:

The Practical Theology Group encourages paper proposals in all areas of practical theological research. This year we especially welcome papers on the following topics.

Intersectionality. How can practical theology illuminate and take into account the intersections and power dynamics between forms or systems of oppression, domination, and discrimination? In what way can practical theology help trace and support the origins of theories of intersectionality theory in the scholarship and resistance of African American women? How are religion and theology exacerbating and/or ameliorating the tensions of intersectionality? We especially welcome papers that demonstrate how such power dynamics are played out in practice/empirically in theological education, congregations/churches, and other organizations.

Mass incarceration. Practical theology cultivates resistance to the dehumanizing process of incarceration. Through its engagement of the prison industrial complex, practical theology offers critiques of systemic issues that lead to mass incarceration and creates avenues to enfranchise the lives of incarcerated persons. How

can practical theological scholarship explicate the complex problems of U.S. mass incarceration? In what ways can practical theological methods and values be seen implicitly or explicitly in the work of those already addressing the prison industrial complex? How does practical theology address and challenge the practice of mental health care in prisons? How might practical theology promote the transformation of entire systems, human resilience, and resistance? In what ways are theological education, research, and curricula addressing the enfranchisement of incarcerated individuals in systems that deny them personhood?

Postcolonial methodology and analysis. How might practical theological scholarship reveal, counter, or offer alternatives to logics of empire? What values and limits of postcolonial theory can be identified for practical theological scholarship? Additionally, how are various postcolonial discourses informing current practical theological research and the theory and practices of the sub-disciplines?

Transformations in theological education. The Group will also participate with the History of Christianity Section; the Practical Theology Group; the Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogies Group in a quad-sponsored panel that takes its starting point from the just-published third volume on theological education in North America by historian Glenn Miller. The volume, *Piety and Plurality* (Cascade Press, 2014), covers the tumultuous period between 1960 and today. [The previous volumes, which Dr. Miller has been at work on since the 1970s, are *Piety and Intellect* (the Colonial era up to the Civil War) and *Piety and Profession* (1870-1970). We welcome papers engaging ways to understand both the diversification of places of theological education as well as multiplication of theologies and pedagogies used which force rethinking the landscape of North American theological education in its broadest sense. We are especially interested in theological education at the popular level, including Bible Institutes, but also base communities, and independent networks and institutes. Of special interest are theological educational developments within Pentecostal and Latino/a traditions, and mega-church-based models. We also seek examples of theological education rooted in transformative pedagogies, experiential learning, or other alternative models for theological education.

*Valuing* the study of religion. As AAR President Tom Tweed describes his choice for the 2015 Presidential Theme, we welcome proposals for papers in practical theology that “consider how religion and the study of religion is valued—and devalued—in public spaces, including but not only in legislatures, schools, prisons, courtrooms, hospitals, airports, news media, the state department, the military, the arts, and popular culture. [Also,] “looking at our own practices, how [do] we enact epistemic, moral, and aesthetic values in our research, teaching, and public outreach?”

Complexities and challenges of “work/life balance.” As suggested by the Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession (SWP) of the AAR, proposals are invited for practical theological papers on issues such as: “the academic industrial complex, the two-body problem and relationships, being single as well as couple normativity, heteronormativity, the ways institutions package “ability,” managing expectations amid diverse cultural and institutional contexts, perfectionism, power in the academy, navigating unwanted advances, competition and solidarity between senior and junior scholars, making visible the unwritten and unspoken rules, negotiating our current economic climate and job strain, a clarity on what “balance” even means and how one separates “work” and life,” as well as critical reflections on paid and unpaid labor.”

Visit <https://www.aarweb.org/worklife-balance-project> for more information about SWP’s work/life balance project.

Successful proposals will: demonstrate theoretical clarity and methodological transparency, including researcher self-reflexivity and show how theoretical claims are related to a particular practice and/or are based on field research. Presenters are urged to “teach” their papers and to use innovative, interactive formats and multimedia presentations as appropriate. We welcome prearranged paper sessions (generally preferable to prearranged roundtables). Please provide separate abstracts for each paper and formulate a

panel that represents diversity of perspective (for example, race/ethnicity, gender, academic seniority and discipline).

**Mission Statement:**

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

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

For theological and religious studies — to foster interdisciplinary critical discourse about religious practice, contextual research and teaching for ministry, and practical theological method and pedagogy

For a variety of religious traditions — to enhance inquiry in religious practice and practical theology

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

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

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Kaufman, Tone Stangeland, MF Norwegian School of Theology, [tkaufman@mf.no](mailto:tkaufman@mf.no)

Chair - Scharen, Christian A. B., Auburn Theological Seminary, [cscharen@auburnseminary.org](mailto:cscharen@auburnseminary.org)

## **Pragmatism and Empiricism in American Religious Thought Group**

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**Call Text:**

Pragmatism and Genealogy

Pragmatist inquiry entails normative commitments. Nancy Frazier criticizes an unacknowledged and thus cryptonormativity in Foucauldian genealogy. If the charge of cryptonormativity is true and even if it is not, how well does genealogy compare to pragmatist inquiry? Which gives a better account of the relationship among acting, claiming, and believing? We invite proposals that explore the comparative strengths and weaknesses of pragmatic and genealogical modes of inquiry: proposals that sort through the similarities and differences between Nietzschean and Foucauldian genealogies in relation to pragmatic inquiry, creative attempts to synthesize the best insights of pragmatism and genealogy, or proposals that insist on choosing between the two. How do Cornel West's *The American Evasion of Philosophy: A Genealogy of Pragmatism*

(1989), Alasdair McIntyre's *Three Rival Versions of Moral Inquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition* (1991), and Talal Asad's *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (1993) bear on these questions?

Jane Addams Today: Immigration and Social Crisis

We invite proposals that reflect on the life and work of Jane Addams in light of the multiple challenges Americans face around issues of economic, gender, and racial inequality, immigration, and the persistent problem of militarism. Though we are especially interested in proposals that explore Addams within her own context, we also encourage proposals that address her social justice-oriented pragmatism in relation to contemporary issues such as climate change and figures such as Richard Bernstein and Cornel West.

Wayne Proudfoot: 30th Anniversary of *Religious Experience*

2015 marks the 30th anniversary of Wayne Proudfoot's *Religious Experience*. This study has influenced at least two generations of scholars. With an accent on this text, we propose a panel on the contributions Proudfoot to pragmatism and religious studies. Pragmatism developed distinctive notions of experience that bear on their conceptions of religious experience. But in the years after the publication of *Religious Experience*, some pragmatists began to question the very utility of the concept of experience. We intend to invite a panel that includes Cornel West, Scott Davis, and Matthew Bagger. Given their diverse appropriations of the pragmatist tradition, each panelist brings a distinctive perspective to Proudfoot's work and to the category of religious experience. We expect the panelists to bring the full range of their interests to bear both retrospectively and prospectively on Proudfoot's legacy, pragmatism, and the category of religious experience.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Eddy, Beth, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, [bleddy@wpi.edu](mailto:bleddy@wpi.edu)

Chair - Hart, William David, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, [wdhart@uncg.edu](mailto:wdhart@uncg.edu)

Psychology, Culture, and Religion Group

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Call Text:

The Psychology, Culture, and Religion Group is interested in proposals on the following topics: 1) Help, harm, or resistance: To what extent are concepts and practices of caregiving (psychotherapy, chaplaincy, pastoral counseling) in a neo-liberal society perpetuating or challenging harmful views of the human person? 2) Society without God? The terms "existential health" and "meaning-making" are used in place of "religion" or "spirituality" in various European and North American settings, particularly in highly secular contexts. What are the psychological, religious, and theological implications of these alternative frameworks? 3) Psychological and religious perspectives on moral injury, for a co-sponsored session with the Moral Injury and Recovery in Religion, Society, and Culture Group. Proposals on other topics involving psychology, culture, and religion are also welcome. In PCR sessions, we encourage presenters to articulate substantial ideas succinctly to allow ample time for collegial conversation.

Mission Statement:

This Group is an informal association of scholars and practitioners in the fields of religion and psychology who share common interests in the relationship between religion, psychology, and contemporary cultures. Our primary purposes are to foster creative research in the fields of the Group's interest, to encourage the exchange of ideas among the membership, and to provide a forum associated within the AAR for those with shared backgrounds in the fields of psychology, religion, and cultural theology. Please visit our website at <http://pcr-aar.org/>.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Bulkeley, Kelly, Graduate Theological Union, [bulkeleyk@gmail.com](mailto:bulkeleyk@gmail.com)

Chair - Campbell-Reed, Eileen, Central Baptist Theological Seminary, [eileen.campbellreed@gmail.com](mailto:eileen.campbellreed@gmail.com)

## Quaker Studies Group

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Call Text:

"Quakers and Interfaith Dialogue": This panel is cosponsored with the Interreligious and Interfaith Studies Group. We seek papers that examine Quaker frameworks for interreligious and interfaith dialogue, and that address how Quaker ethics inform these practices. From their inception in the mid-seventeenth century, Quakers have interacted with people of other faiths, and have been formed by the resulting insights. Though the cultural context and rationales have changed over time, Quakers of all traditions continue to have dialogue across religious boundaries. This panel invites paper proposals from a wide range of disciplines that examine this facet of Quaker spirituality and practice.

"Feminist Reform in Religious Perspective on the 200th Anniversary of Elizabeth Cady Stanton's Birth": For a possible cosponsored session with the Women in Religion Section to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Elizabeth Cady Stanton's birth, we invite papers that offer critical, historical and theological approaches to Quakerism, women and gender; present perspectives on Stanton, Mott, Anthony, and other First Wave feminist reformers; delve into tradition-specific treatments of women's religious authority, human liberation, and justice, then and now; explore how collaboration across religious and other lines of difference have shaped women's religious thought; and/or assess contemporary engagements with the life and thought of First Wave foremothers; compare women's theological and political coming of age in a US context with the developments in feminist movements elsewhere.

This book review session examines H. Larry Ingle, *Nixon's First Cover-up: The Religious Life of a Quaker President* (University of Missouri Press, 2015). Questions to be considered include: What role did Nixon's religion (as a professed Evangelical Quaker) play in his political career? How have Quakers of different branches viewed Nixon, before, during, and after his presidency? How did the role of religion as it played out during the Nixon presidency affect the role of religion in subsequent presidential administrations? H. Larry Ingle will be the respondent.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Spencer, Carole Dale, Earlham School of Religion, [spencca@earlham.edu](mailto:spencca@earlham.edu)

Chair - Kershner, Jon, University of Lancaster, [jon.kershner@gmail.com](mailto:jon.kershner@gmail.com)

## Queer Studies in Religion Group

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Call Text:

This Group welcomes proposals for individual papers, papers sessions, and roundtables on all topics related to queer theory and LGBT studies in religion, in particular those focused on bisexual and/or transgender studies and on religions other than Christianity.

Another focus comes from a quad-sponsored proposal with the Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Group, the Lesbian-Feminist Issues in Religion Group, and the Theology and Continental Philosophy Group. With this focus, we are especially interested in papers that discuss Lynne Huffer's books *Mad for Foucault* (Columbia University Press, 2009) and *Are the Lips a Grave?* (Columbia University Press, 2013) for an "author-meets-critics" panel.

We are particularly interested in papers that (1) examine the ways that queer bodies and subjects are negotiating "conservative" and "hostile" religious spaces or (2) rehabilitate lost or overlooked authors and methodologies that might invigorate the queer study of religion.

We are also seeking papers that explore the intersection between queer theory and disability studies as it relates to the study of religion, for a possible co-sponsored session with the Religion and Disability Studies Group.

For a possible quad-sponsored session with the Gay Men and Religion Group, the Lesbian-Feminist Issues and Religion Group, and the Religion and Science Fiction Group, we invite proposals that examine LGBTQIA

sexualities, communities, and cultures in the vast universe of science/speculative fiction, that push beyond heteronormative species relationships, and that reflect on how science fiction mirrors, comments on, or can advocate for LGBTQIA sexualities and spiritualities. We are especially interested in papers that put feminist and queer theories in fruitful dialogue with science fiction theory and themes (U-/Dystopias, species evolution, cyberworlds, alternate histories, space opera, technorapture, artificial intelligence, transcendence, etc.).

Finally, for a possible quad-sponsored session with the Afro-American Religious History Group; the Religion and Sexuality Group; the Religion, Social Conflict, and Peace Group: we solicit papers on incidents and histories of violence against marginalized bodies—including (but not limited to) police brutality, incarceration, religious violence, hate crimes, sexualized violence, and/or militarized, state-sanctioned violence. This might also include analysis of commemoration, social rituals, justice work, artistic practices, and peacemaking efforts that respond to violence. We are particularly interested in intersectional approaches to queer/gender/sexuality studies and African American religious history.

Mission Statement:

The core goals of this Group are as follows:

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

Encourage comparative study of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues in religion

Support the growth of bisexual studies and transgender studies in the field

We actively seek to explore the connections between queer theory in religion and complementary or overlapping fields of inquiry, such as postcolonial theory, critical race theory, disability theory, feminist theory, and cultural studies, among others.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Young, Thelathia, Bucknell University, [nikki.young@bucknell.edu](mailto:nikki.young@bucknell.edu)

Chair - Brintnall, Kent, University of North Carolina, Charlotte, [kbrintna@uncc.edu](mailto:kbrintna@uncc.edu)

## Qur'an Group

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Call Text:

For 2015, the Qur'an Group welcomes proposals for individual papers and paper sessions on any theme. We hope to arrange panels around topics such as the following: Religious Studies and Theology, including scholarly work situated in context of moral/ethical commitment and concern; *tafsir* and commentary in modern Qur'anic Studies; normativity and authority cast as questions of "canonicity"; Qur'anic interpretation

as translation; and, performance pedagogy in and about global Qur'anic traditions. Our Group is eager to partner with other official units of the AAR and SBL to share sponsorship of panels on a wide range of topics.

**Mission Statement:**

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

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

**Method of submission:**  
PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Saleh, Walid, University of Toronto, [walid.saleh@utoronto.ca](mailto:walid.saleh@utoronto.ca)

Chair - Gade, Anna M., University of Wisconsin, [amgade@wisc.edu](mailto:amgade@wisc.edu)

## Reformed Theology and History Group

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**Call Text:**

**Statement of Purpose:**

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

**Call for Papers:**

(1) The Reformed Theology and History Group seeks proposals on the theme of *resistance and submission* within the Reformed tradition. Papers may be historical or theological in nature; the best contributions will ordinarily not be merely descriptive but rather also constructive, seeking to relate these questions to the contemporary cultural context. Topics might include:

- *resistance and submission in the civil sphere:* Where, how, and why have Reformed thinkers related "resisting authorities that do not acknowledge God as Lord" to "submitting to the authorities that God has ordained"? When should Christians resist civil authority or submit to it?
- *resistance and submission in the life of the worshipping community:* How have Reformed thinkers understood "obedience" as integral to humans' relationship to God and their service one to another? Where, how, and why have they understood calls to obedience within the Church to legitimate the claims of some to wield power to the detriment of others?
- *resistance and submission in the Christian household:* How have Reformed thinkers understood the respective roles of men and women, slaves and masters, parents and children? How do these understandings deal with the biblical mandate to "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21)? Where, how, and why have Reformed thinkers legitimated harm or, alternatively, promoted the flourishing of life?

(2) The Reformed Theology and History Group along with the Wesleyan Group invites proposals on *the role of Arminius in Wesleyan and Reformed Theology*.

This session calls for papers that will consider Jacob Arminius and the reception of his theological perspective in Wesleyan and Reformed communities. How have these communities historically represented Arminius? Do these perspectives prove to be historically accurate? For instance, to what extent can 18th century Anglicanism be characterized as Calvinist? To what extent can Methodism be seen as an expression of Calvinism? Could a reconsideration of Arminius contribute to a rapprochement between Reformed and Wesleyan churches? Proposals that are historical and constructive, and that address issues broadly pertaining to both of these traditions and communities are encouraged.

(3) The Reformed Theology and History Group will host a panel of invited speakers who will critically engage the contribution of Brian Gerrish. Significant consideration will be given to Gerrish's forthcoming publication *Christian Faith: A Dogmatics In Outline* (Westminster John Knox Press, August 2015).

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Rigby, Cynthia, Austin Theological Seminary, [crigby@austinseminary.edu](mailto:crigby@austinseminary.edu)

Chair - Billings, J. Todd, Western Theological Seminary, [todd.billings@westernsem.edu](mailto:todd.billings@westernsem.edu)

## Religion and Cities Group

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Call Text:

Cities and their suburbs represent contested spaces. Within them, more vulnerable populations are deemed illegal and criminalized. Social marginalization can result in spatial marginalization as these groups are pushed out. The rise in criminalization of groups such as immigrants, homeless citizens, and African American men begs for deeper analysis and theological reflection. What are the social processes of establishing illegality? How are these grounded historically, culturally, and religiously? How do theologians in the urban context reflect on these dynamics and come to voice in public discourse? Religion and Cities seeks papers that explore the theme of illegality and criminalization within the metro/urban context.

Religion, Class and the Academy: For a quad-sponsored session with the Liberation Theologies Group, the Theology and Religious Reflection Section, and the Class, Religion, and Theology Group, we are inviting papers that address the relevance of issues of class, religion, and theology to the academy and academics, including issues of academic labor and how class affects academic production more broadly conceived (in particular teaching and writing). In these papers we also encourage reflections on place. How do issues of

class, religion, and theology shape up in the academy in relation to the various locations of academic production in large cities, towns, and rural areas?

Explorations of the City/Metropolis as Sanctuary and/or Peril for Queer Religious Life: We invite proposals that explore this topic, from practices in queerly religious/religiously queer urban communities to policies of segregation or “cleaning up” the city to remove or make invisible the unpleasant or deviant (homeless, migrants, sex workers/clubs, public sex, etc.). (For a possible co-sponsored session with the Religion and Cities group).

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Slessarev-Jamir, Helene, Claremont School of Theology, [hslessarevjamir@cst.edu](mailto:hslessarevjamir@cst.edu)

Chair - Edwards, Elise, Baylor University, [elise\\_edwards@baylor.edu](mailto:elise_edwards@baylor.edu)

## Religion and Disability Studies Group

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Call Text:

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

1. Notions of time and space in disability cultures and religious communities: notions of futurity, crip time, reconfigurations of liturgical space, etc.
2. Papers that engage and extend the work of Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, in conversation with disability theologies and ethics
3. Papers in honor of the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, including papers that examine the interrelationship with disability justice, racial justice, and the civil rights movement
4. Papers that explore the intersection between queer theory and disability studies as it relates to the study of religion for a possible co-sponsored session with the Queer Studies in Religion Group.
5. Papers that examine illness narratives or other aspects of the interrelationship between disability, religiosity, literature, and art for a possible joint session with the Arts, Literature, and Religion Group and the Bioethics and Religion Group

## 6. Papers that engage disability from diverse religious and cultural contexts

### Mission Statement:

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

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

### Method of submission:

PAPERS

### Leadership:

Chair - Watts Belser, Julia, Georgetown University, [jwb84@georgetown.edu](mailto:jwb84@georgetown.edu)

Chair - Iozzio, Mary Jo, Boston College, [mary.jo.iozzio@bc.edu](mailto:mary.jo.iozzio@bc.edu)

## Religion and Ecology Group

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### Call Text:

The Religion and Ecology Group invites panels and papers that take up these themes: 1) the contribution of religion and ecology to the field of religious studies; 2) international law, ethics, and development; 3) emotions, aesthetics, affect theory, and 'new materialism'; 4) environmental racism and injustice; 5) environmental conflict and violence, such as eco-terrorism, environmental conflicts around extractive economies in Africa and Latin America, and the relationship between Islamism and petroleum economies (co-sponsored with the Religion and Violence Group); and 6) post-growth religious thinking in relation to alternative economic and environmental concerns in Europe, which includes (but is not limited to) how these concerns influence values, nature-based spiritualities, etc. (co-sponsored with the Religion in Europe Group); 7) postcolonial studies and animals (for a possible cosponsored session with Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Group; Animals and Religion Group). We welcome proposals for complete panels and plan to devote at least one session to individual paper proposals. All proposals must explicitly indicate each paper's methodological approach, central thesis, as well as their contribution to the field of religion and ecology.

### Mission Statement:

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

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

### Method of submission:

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

### Leadership:

Chair - Miller, James, Queen's University, [james.miller@queensu.ca](mailto:james.miller@queensu.ca)

Chair - Berry, Evan, American University, [berry@american.edu](mailto:berry@american.edu)

## Religion and Food Group

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### Call Text:

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

Topics might include, but are not limited to:

- With respect to the 2015 emphasis on public spaces, we welcome submissions on food-related topics such as institutional food (prisons, schools, soup kitchens)
- With respect to our Atlanta location: religion and Coca-Cola, and possibly issues related to consumerism or industrial regulation
- Religiously inspired/targeted foods (e.g. “yogi tea”, “Ezekiel bread”)
- Religion and intoxicants (alcohol and other drugs)
- Religion and holidays (particularly Thanksgiving, given the AAR’s traditional timing)
- Religion and faux foods (e.g. turkey bacon, kosher shrimp, tofurkey)
- Issues of food shaming and religious contexts
- Religion, food and citizenship
- Intersections between New Religions and/or New Religiosities and food (for a possible co-sponsored session with the New Religious Movements Group).
- Esotericism and food (for a possible co-sponsored session with the Western Esotericism). Another case of a significant presence that has received little attention by scholars so far is the relationship between esotericism and food. Being often at the creative end of techniques for improving bodily health, rejuvenation, or even immortality, western esotericism has had a long interest in nutrition and in the preparation of elixirs and medicaments, but also in dietary requirements and regimens. Esoteric metaphors sometimes refer to processes of ingestion, digestion and excretion, and rituals of purification include indications about the preparation and consumption of food. Papers are welcome on any of these aspects.

### Mission Statement:

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

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

Diet and sustainability

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

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

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

We seek to develop ongoing investigations into practices and beliefs related to food, drink, fasting, the

production of food, the ethics of production and consumption, or on any aspect of religiously influenced foodways.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Rubel, Nora L., University of Rochester, [nrubel@mail.rochester.edu](mailto:nrubel@mail.rochester.edu)

## Religion and Humanism Group

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Call Text:

Religious Humanism and Human Rights

Human rights, it has often been asserted, cannot exist without a robust understanding of the idea of human dignity. The study of religious humanisms can play an important role in the current debates about the relationship between the ideals of human dignity, flourishing, and rights. This panel welcomes papers that address some of the following questions: How has religion both supported and suppressed human rights? What is the place of various religious humanisms in the grounding of human dignity? Can the contemporary articulations of religious humanisms address the critiques and rejections of human rights? Could the humanistic principles in religious traditions be directed toward highlighting human dignity and human rights without the challenges and legacies of modern secular humanisms?

Uncovering humanisms, religious and secular, historical and contemporary (Co-sponsored with Secularity and Secularism group)

Humanism is a complex notion and requires the recognition of a range of ideas--from ancient Greek philosophy and a variety of Renaissance humanisms, to the Christian, Confucian, Enlightenment, and liberal humanisms, or communist and socialist humanisms. This panel invites papers that consider religious and secular humanisms (either or both), to address several important questions such as: Why is it so often assumed that humanism is an inherently secular or secularizing ideal? Why don't we know more about various expressions of humanism that constitute religious traditions? What do the differences and similarities between religious and secular humanisms tell us about the changing nature and ethical premises of humanism? Can humanism, secular or religious, survive the long line of critiques of humanism--from Jean Paul Sartre's ("antihumanist") "existentialist humanism" to Emmanuel Levinas's posthumanism, to Tzvetan Todorov's "critical humanism"? Or, should the contestations of humanistic ideals be seen as part of the history of humanism and an indication of its capacity for revival? We welcome papers that address these questions from historical, philosophical, ethical, or social scientific points of view.

Mission Statement:

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

The historical legacy of religious humanism

Traditional humanist concern with rhetoric as a means to study religion

Critiques and constructive reappraisals of humanism as a contemporary theological and philosophical stance

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

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

Leadership:

Chair - Elwell, J. Sage, Texas Christian University, [sage.elwell@tcu.edu](mailto:sage.elwell@tcu.edu)

Chair - Jakelic, Slavica, The Honors College of Valparaiso University, [sj3d@virginia.edu](mailto:sj3d@virginia.edu)

## Religion and Migration Group

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Call Text:

- The Religion and Migration Group seeks proposals from varied religious traditions, geographical locations, and disciplinary backgrounds. We encourage submissions exploring:
  - themes related to families in migration: intersection between migration, women and children in any region of the world, including their religious practices and beliefs, reconstructions of religious identity, responses of religious organizations, and causes and contexts of their voluntary or forced migration (violence, economics, etc.) (co-sponsored with the Childhood Studies and Women and Religion Section);
  - how the intersection of music and religion shapes identities and socio-political perspectives in the context of migration and newer immigrant communities. Proposals involving musical performance will be particularly prized (co-sponsored with the Music and Religion Group);
  - the effect of migration on the dynamics of religious diversity in Europe or related to Europe in any historical period. We encourage interdisciplinary, interreligious, and comparative approaches to the topic. This includes, but is not limited to, such themes as inclusion/exclusion, immigration, body policies, law, etc. (co-sponsored with the Religion in Europe Group);
- the 50th anniversary of the 1965 U.S. Immigration Act: How have cultural practices been transformed in the North American legal context? How have views and constructions of Asians and their religions changed since the passing of transformative immigration legislation (e.g., the emergence of the “model minority” or “mindfulness”?) Proposals will be considered for a possible quad-sponsorship with the Law, Religion, and Culture Group; the Asian North American Religion Group; the North American Hinduism Group.

Mission Statement:

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

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Marshall, Alison R., Brandon University, [marshalla@brandonu.ca](mailto:marshalla@brandonu.ca)

Chair - Snyder, Susanna, Ripon College, Cuddesdon, [susanna.snyder@rcc.ac.uk](mailto:susanna.snyder@rcc.ac.uk)

## Religion and Politics Section

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Call Text:

### CALL FOR PAPERS - 2015 RELIGION AND POLITICS SECTION

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

\* The conference theme of "Valuing the Study of Religion:" i.e., How is religion scholarship used for political purposes? Conversely, how do normative assumptions structure the study of religion and politics?

- The role of religion in protests and new conversations about racial injustice, both within the U.S. and transnationally, following the grand jury decisions in Ferguson, MO, and New York City.
- The shifting conceptions and use of religious liberty in the U.S. and abroad, particularly as it being used to carve out exemptions for religious groups in complying with generally applicable laws on reproductive issues and LGBTQI rights.
- The changing religion and politics landscape (e.g. new atheism, nones, the "Pope Francis effect" ahead of the papal visit to Philadelphia, shifting coalitions ahead of the 2016 elections, etc.).
- How religion and digital media play a role in shaping discourse on narratives about local, national and transnational controversies.
- Religion and politics in the context of Atlanta and the South (e.g., role of civil and human rights institutions past and present, 50th anniversary of Freedom Summer, etc.).

Mission Statement:

This Section provides a forum for scholars and professionals interested in the relationships between religion, the state, and political life, both in the United States and around the world. Our members focus on the interaction between religious and political values, movements, and commitments, and the role of religious individuals and communities in bodies politic. This focus includes attention to the ways in which religion and religious actors participate in public discourse, contribute to debates over public values and social policy, and affect — and are affected by — activity in the political sphere. We welcome members doing both normative and descriptive work from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds, including religious studies, political science, philosophy, social ethics, law (including church–state studies), history (as it relates to contemporary understandings), and theology. We seek to advance scholarly inquiry on religion and politics and we seek also to speak to broad and diverse publics about areas falling under the Section's purview.

We also maintain a lively, year-round Religion and Politics Google group, which is open to all AAR members here:

<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/aar-religionandpolitics>

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Syeed-Miller, Najeeba, Claremont School of Theology, [nsyeed-miller@cst.edu](mailto:nsyeed-miller@cst.edu)

Chair - Jones, Robert P., Public Religion Research Institute, Washington, D.C., [rjones@publicreligion.org](mailto:rjones@publicreligion.org)

## Religion and Popular Culture Group

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### Call Text:

This Group invites both organized sessions and individual paper proposals that explore the intersections of religion and popular culture. We strongly encourage presentation formats that foster interactive environments and provide creative alternatives to the conventional reading of papers. This year, we encourage presentations that examine the following areas:

- Reality Television and Religion
- Teaching Popular Religion
- Minority Popular Cultures
- Social Media and Ferguson
- Popular Southern Cultures
- Emotional Labor
- Popular Cultures of Atlanta
- Possible co-sponsorship with Death, Dying, and Beyond Group
- Possible co-sponsorship with Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop and Religion Group
- Possible quad-sponsored panel with the Religion, Sport, and Play Group; the Men, Masculinities and Religion Group; the Gay Men and Religion Group; we invite explorations of the gym-built body as the masculine ideal for gay/hetero/bi men (for example, Internet subcultures that praise bodybuilders as “muscle gods”). What might this form of virtual/actual veneration say about gay/hetero/bi men and masculine ideals? How might we theorize approaches to the muscular male body? We welcome proposals that employ case studies whether historical or contemporary and/or draw on a range of disciplinary perspectives and diverse religious traditions. A successful proposal will include a thesis statement and a clear statement of both evidence and methodology.

Finally, we offer an open call for any other topics dealing with religion and popular culture, especially proposals that address the relevance of popular culture studies for larger theoretical and methodical issues in the field of religious studies

### Mission Statement:

This Group is dedicated to the scholarly exploration of religious expression in a variety of cultural settings. We encourage a multidisciplinary display of scholarship in our sessions and are committed to taking popular culture seriously as an arena of religious and theological reflection and practice.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Gregory, Rabia, University of Missouri, [rabiagregory@gmail.com](mailto:rabiagregory@gmail.com)

Chair - Seales, Chad, University of Texas, [seales@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:seales@austin.utexas.edu)

## Religion and Public Schools: International Perspectives Group

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Call Text:

Public School Teacher Preparation to Teach *about* Religion: Issues, Models, Resources

Inasmuch as public education remains a common locus of preparation for living in democratic societies, lack of attention to preparing teachers to discuss religion in the public school threatens to render such civic preparation incomplete. Further, this neglect represents a devaluing of religion in at least two respects: first, it gives insufficient recognition of and attention to religion as an important aspect of history, literature, and the broader culture that form subjects for primary and secondary students; and second, it fails to engage how religion affects identity in many teacher and student-citizen's lives and how that may legally and appropriately enter into classroom discussions.

The preparation of public school teachers to teach about religion in their respective content areas, as well as a stand-alone subject, remains one of the great underdeveloped areas of public school teacher education, particularly the United States and Canada. In different European countries and in Japan, though proceeding from differing state-supported authority bases, a range of examples of more advanced approaches to this issue have been developed.

This is a call for papers on the multifaceted challenge of public school teacher preparation to teach about religion at both the preservice or inservice levels. Papers are sought in these areas:

- general issues, policies, law, or other influencing or constraining parameters relative to religion and public school teacher education;
- models and best practices of religion education in the preparation of public school teachers, both in teaching about religion as an aspect of history, literature, and culture, but also in the preparation of teachers for religion education as a stand-alone subject; and
- analysis of resources for teaching about religion in public schools and for teaching teachers.

We also invite papers that advance the mission of this program group, particularly in connection with the 2015 theme of the American Academy of Religion (“valuing and devaluing religion”) for an open call.

Mission Statement: This Group will promote the comparative study of religion education in public schools around the world. By encouraging interdisciplinary research on the range of ethical, legal, political, pedagogical, and religious issues that arise in connection with the study of religion in elementary and

secondary education, we seek to extend and deepen our understanding of approaches to religion as an academic subject matter in public schools, alternative ways of responding to increasing religious diversity in schools and societies, and the relationship between religion education and citizenship education in pluralistic democratic societies.

**Mission Statement:**

This Group will promote the comparative study of religion education in public schools around the world. By encouraging interdisciplinary research on the range of ethical, legal, political, pedagogical, and religious issues that arise in connection with the study of religion in elementary and secondary education, we seek to extend and deepen our understanding of alternative approaches to religion as an academic subject matter in public schools, alternative ways of responding to increasing religious diversity in schools and societies, and the relationship between religion education and citizenship education in pluralistic democratic societies.

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Waggoner, Michael, University of Northern Iowa, [mike.waggoner@uni.edu](mailto:mike.waggoner@uni.edu)

Chair - Berglund, Jenny, Södertörn University, [jenny.berglund@sh.se](mailto:jenny.berglund@sh.se)

## Religion and Science Fiction Group

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**Call Text:**

Religion and Science Fiction (SF) invites proposals exploring the intersections of religion and SF in ways that illuminate theoretical, methodological, and substantive issues in the study of religion. We are especially interested in proposals that invite audience conversation, make use of new media, and imagine presentations coincident with SF techniques for presenting alternative "sciences" and worlds. We seek proposals on the following topics:

Alterities: sexual, gender, species, minds, being, time

SF fandom as ritual, devotion, religious/spiritual communities

Cthulhu

Esotericism/Occultism in/and/as Science Fiction

For a possible quad-Sponsored session with the Gay Men and Religion Group, the Lesbian-Feminist Issues and Religion Group, and the Queer Studies in Religion Group, we invite proposals that examine LGBTIQ sexualities, communities, and cultures in the vast universe of science/speculative fiction; push beyond heteronormative species relationships; reflect on how Science fiction mirrors, comments on, or can advocate for LGBTIQ sexualities and spiritualities. We are especially interested in presentations that put LGBTIQ theories in fruitful dialogue with Science Fiction theory and themes (U-/Dystopias, species evolution, cyberworlds, alternate histories, space opera, technorapture, AI transcendence, etc.).

Mission Statement:

This Group connects the study of religion to the limitless possibilities for world-making, soul-saving, god-imagining, community-forming, and human-being posed by science fiction (and broadly, “speculative” fictions). Science Fiction (SF) is a literary and visual medium addressing the most basic existential and teleological questions human beings can pose. As the genre of infinite possible worlds, and human and superhuman becoming, SF has a unique ability to ask, examine, and suggest answers to profound questions and to envision transcendence beyond traditional realist literature or religious interpretations of the world.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Busto, Rudy V., University of California, Santa Barbara, [rude@religion.ucsb.edu](mailto:rude@religion.ucsb.edu)

Chair - Sullivan, Bruce M., Northern Arizona University, [bruce.sullivan@nau.edu](mailto:bruce.sullivan@nau.edu)

## Religion and Sexuality Group

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Call Text:

In keeping with our aim to facilitate reflection on questions of how and why sexuality (broadly conceptualized) matters for religious persons, communities, or traditions, we invite papers and panels on the following themes:

--“value” in the study of religion and sexuality—specifically, social class, economics, finance and/or capitalism as categories in the study of religion and sexuality. We would be particularly interested in gathering papers or panelists that would bring international/transnational perspectives to bear on this theme

-- discussion of pedagogy (broadly conceived) and research methods that considers ethical relationalities, boundary negotiation, and critical reflexivity in the learning, teaching, and study of religion and sexuality. (Interested individuals are encouraged to contact Nina Hoel in advance of submitting a proposal)

-- themes of gender, sexuality, and embodiment in the Eastern Orthodox tradition (e.g., historic/contemporary Orthodox theology, patristic heritage, liturgics, hagiography, and/or lived practice) for potential co-sponsorship with the Eastern Orthodox Studies group.

--religion, gender, and sexuality (broadly conceived) in hip hop and black popular culture, with particular attention to Southern and Atlanta-based cultural production. For potential co-sponsorship with Critical Approaches to Hip Hop and Religion.

-- incidents and histories of violence against marginalized bodies—including (but not limited to) police brutality, incarceration, religious violence, hate crimes, sexualized violence, and/or militarized, state-sanctioned violence. This might also include analysis of commemoration, social rituals, justice work, artistic practices, and peacemaking efforts that respond to violence. We are particularly interested in intersectional approaches to queer/gender/sexuality studies and African American religious history. For a potential quad-sponsored session with the Afro-American Religious History Group; Religion, Social Conflict and Peace Group; the Queer Studies in Religion Group.

--Other proposals for papers, sessions, panels and/or book sessions in keeping with the general mission of the Group are always welcome.

**Mission Statement:**

This Group examines religion and sexuality, broadly conceptualized, and focuses on questions of why and how sex matters for particular religious persons, communities, or traditions. We welcome collaboration with other Program Units doing work in some area of sexuality. Distinguishing this Group from other Program Units are an emphasis on empirical research and analysis and an intentionally multidisciplinary and comparative religious focus. We especially encourage interdisciplinary approaches, interest in gender (broadly defined), and strong attention to methodological issues.

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Hoel, Nina Birgitte, Centre for Church Research, Norway, [ninahoel@gmail.com](mailto:ninahoel@gmail.com)

Chair - Leath, Jennifer S., Columbia University, [jl2550@columbia.edu](mailto:jl2550@columbia.edu)

## Religion and the Social Sciences Section

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**Call Text:**

This section invites proposals on the following topics:

The intersection of religion, social mobilization, and political change in the global south or the Middle East, with particular interest in questions of national identity and citizenship discourse

Race and religion in US South

Religious or theological reflection on questions of money, monetary policy, credit, debt, usury, and banking

Economic theory or the future of capitalism

U.S. Latino congregations in relation to questions of racial-ethnic identity; liturgy, music, or worship; local, community, or political engagement; conversion and "religious switching,"

We also seek empirically grounded and theoretically sensitive papers from scholars working with various methodologies from fields such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, economics, religious studies, and cultural studies. We welcome papers presenting original social scientific research. Submitted proposals should clearly specify issues, concepts, and/or questions of relevance to contemporary social scientists as well as the use of social scientific research methodology.

Mission Statement: This Section supports scholarship at the intersection of the social sciences — including psychology, ethnography, sociology, political sciences, economics, and cultural studies — and religious or theological studies. Topic areas include the study of religious and theological questions through specific social scientific methodologies, the contribution of religious and theological approaches to the work of social scientific disciplines, and comparative assessments of current issues by humanities-based and social scientific methods.

Mission Statement:

This Section supports scholarship at the intersection of the social sciences — including psychology, ethnography, sociology, political sciences, economics, and cultural studies — and religious or theological studies. Topic areas include the study of religious and theological questions through specific social scientific methodologies, the contribution of religious and theological approaches to the work of social scientific disciplines, and comparative assessments of current issues by humanities-based and social scientific methods.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Anonymity of Review Process: Proposals are anonymous to chairs and steering committee members until after final acceptance/rejection. Please do not include any identifying information in the body of your proposal.

Leadership:

Chair - McClenahan, Ann B., Boston Theological Institute, [abmcclenahan@gmail.com](mailto:abmcclenahan@gmail.com)

Chair - Marti, Gerardo, Davidson College, [gemarti@davidson.edu](mailto:gemarti@davidson.edu)

## Religion and US Empire Seminar

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Call Text:

Presentations to be made by seminar participants.

Mission Statement:

This seminar supports a critical examination of the complex relationship between religion and US empire from the formal inception of the US as a nation-state to the present. The seminar will encourage attention to fundamental theoretical issues relating to religion and US expansionism, including (but not limited to) the following: the co-constitution of race, religion, and nation; the political and institutional mechanics of empire; the role of civic, ethnic, and religious nationalisms in supporting and critiquing empire; the value of transnational and national approaches to understanding US religious history; and the implications of reconceiving the standard periodization of US history to depart from standard state-building categories. The specific research projects of the collaborators attend to such issues as militarism and the materiality of religion and empire; the influence of empire on rituals, practices, and beliefs of US public religion; the linkages between colonial administrators, missionaries, and the scientific study of religion.

Anonymity: Other (please explain below)

Method of submission:

## PAPERS

### Leadership:

Chair - Leavelle, Tracy, Creighton University, [tracy.leavelle@creighton.edu](mailto:tracy.leavelle@creighton.edu)

Chair - Curtis, Heather D., Tufts University, [heather.curtis@tufts.edu](mailto:heather.curtis@tufts.edu)

## Religion in Europe Group

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### Call Text:

This Group analyzes religion in Europe or related to Europe in any historical period. We encourage interdisciplinary, interreligious, and comparative approaches to the topic. For the 2015 meeting we especially seek proposals related to one or more of the following themes:

- Islam and European media ten years after the Muhammad cartoons and the London bombing, especially discourses on iconography, blasphemy, and terrorism today. This may include, but is not limited to, ISIS responses to European polemics, media reaching young European jihadists, the attack on *Charlie Hebdo* etc.;
- Separatist identities and religious identities in Europe (such as those found in Scotland, Spain, Italy, Ukraine, etc.);
- The effect of migration on the dynamics of religious diversity in Europe. This includes, but is not limited to, such themes as inclusion/exclusion, immigration, body policies, law, etc. (co-sponsored with the Religion and Migration Group);
- Post-growth religious thinking in relation to alternative economic and environmental concerns in Europe. This includes, but is not limited to, how these concerns influence values, nature-based spiritualities, etc. (co-sponsored with the Religion and Ecology Group).

Proposals (individual papers or session proposals) that address other themes within the scope of the Group's activities will also be considered seriously. Successful proposals will be considered for publication in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Religion in Europe* (Leiden & Boston: Brill).

### Mission Statement:

This Group is designed to serve as a forum for the examination of religious issues related to the social, cultural, and political development of Europe. Its guiding principles include a commitment to scholarly dialogue across disciplines, a comparative spirit sensitive to Europe's religious diversity, and a transhistorical appreciation of the full trajectory of the European experience.

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

### Method of submission:

## PAPERS

### Leadership:

Chair - von Stuckrad, Kocku, University of Groningen, [c.k.m.von.stuckrad@rug.nl](mailto:c.k.m.von.stuckrad@rug.nl)

Chair - Cutter, Elissa, Saint Louis University, [emccorm3@slu.edu](mailto:emccorm3@slu.edu)

## Religion in Premodern Europe and the Mediterranean World Group

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### Call Text:

This consultation brings together scholars working on premodern Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in order to create a venue where religious phenomena can be considered comparatively. We invite paper and panel proposals on all subjects related to religion in medieval and early modern Europe and the Mediterranean. I

Individual papers might (and usually do) focus on one specific tradition, but presenters should be interested in engaging this material comparatively during the discussion period. This year, we especially encourage papers that consider the formation and articulation of religious identities in medieval and early modern Spain.

**Mission Statement:**

This Group provides a venue for scholars of premodern Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to examine questions of comparison and influence in a geographically and temporally defined context.

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Freidenreich, David, Colby College, [dfreiden@colby.edu](mailto:dfreiden@colby.edu)

Chair - Catlos, Brian, University of Colorado at Boulder/U California Santa Cruz, [brian.catlos@colorado.edu](mailto:brian.catlos@colorado.edu)

## Religion in Latin America and the Caribbean Group

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**Call Text:**

This year the Religion in Latin America and the Caribbean Group invites paper submissions and panel proposals on hemispheric approaches to the study of religion in the Americas. We are particularly interested in methodological issues that emerge from the relationship between theology and religious studies. We also invite proposals on the topic of Colonial Latin American religion and ritual. A third area of emphasis is the study of trans-national evangelizing movements throughout the Americas. RILAC also welcomes paper and panel proposals on any theme related to religion, culture, and society in Latin America, including among Latino/a in the US: an open call for papers.

**Mission Statement:**

This Group explores the richness and diversity of religious traditions in Latin America, the complex and often explosive relations between religion and politics in the region, the centrality of religion in Latin American culture since pre-Conquest times, and the global significance of religious events and lived religion in Latin America. We provide a forum for scholars to address religion in Latin America and the Caribbean with special attention to their larger sociopolitical and cultural contexts. Diverse disciplinary and methodological perspectives are highlighted in presentation of this scholarship.

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Gonzalez Maldonado, Michelle, University of Miami, [mmaldonado@miami.edu](mailto:mmaldonado@miami.edu)

Chair - Schmidt, Jalane D., [University of Virginia, jds7b@virginia.edu](mailto:jds7b@virginia.edu)

## Religion in South Asia Section

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### Call Text:

This Section gives strong preference to papers sessions (not roundtable sessions). Proposals for papers sessions should include specific titles and proposals for each paper included in the session. There is a maximum of 4 presenters plus a discussant per papers session. RISA does not consider papers that are submitted individually; they must be part of a papers session organized around a given topic. If you are looking for other presenters to contribute to a papers session, you are welcome to use the RISA listserv to advertise your topic or to contact the RISA Co-Chairs and ask for their assistance. Some of the themes already identified as potential papers sessions are listed below. Please contact the listed organizers if you wish to contribute to the following themes (where no organizer is identified, we welcome someone to take on that role):

- Transnational Dimensions of Religions of Modern India (Jon Keune, [jonkeune@gmail.com](mailto:jonkeune@gmail.com))
- Tomb and Mortuary Relic Worship in South Asia (Mark McLaughlin [markasha@gmail.com](mailto:markasha@gmail.com))
- Materiality and Texts in Hindu Traditions (Mugdha Yeolekar [mugdha.yeolekar@gmail.com](mailto:mugdha.yeolekar@gmail.com))
- Vaishnavism: Textual Sources and Practice of Krishna Worship (Lavanya Vemsani [lvemsani@shawnee.edu](mailto:lvemsani@shawnee.edu))
- New Directions in the Study of Religion in South Asia

The RISA steering committee is committed to having one of the paper sessions at the 2015 annual meeting in Atlanta be dedicated to the work of rising young scholars. This session will be entitled "New Directions in the Study of Religion in South Asia." There will be four papers, and the RISA steering committee will recruit one senior colleague to serve as a respondent. We therefore are actively seeking paper proposals from scholars who are either finishing their dissertations or who have finished their dissertations in the past several years. We are specifically looking for papers that are either part of or otherwise integrally related to the scholar's dissertation. We are not looking for papers originally written for courses or seminars. Please send a proposal of no more than 1,000 words for your paper, as well as a 150-word abstract, to RISA Steering Committee Member, Harshita Kamath [hkamath@middlebury.edu](mailto:hkamath@middlebury.edu).

Other things to keep in mind as you formulate possible paper sessions:

- The theme of the 2015 AAR is religion and public life. As part of this, AAR plans to craft a statement of best practices in the field. Perhaps a panel on this matter as it implicates South Asianists might be in order.
- One RISA papers session at the 2015 AAR is going to consist of pre-distributed papers. AAR is looking to move to this model for all panels in the near future. We are currently experimenting with different formats. Pre-distributed papers will be made available on-line to AAR members for a period of 2 weeks prior to the meeting. The session at the meeting will consist of brief presentations (7-10 minutes) by the authors, followed by prepared comments from one or more panelists, followed by a discussion of the papers. If you feel you have a topic that works well in this format, please say so in your proposal.

-One RISA papers session must be 90 minutes long. (The standard length is 2 hours, 30 minutes.) If you feel the papers in your session work well for a shorter format, please say so in your proposal.

### Mission Statement:

This Section's mission is to provide a venue for new and important research in the many religious cultures, texts, and histories of South Asia. Within the area of South Asia, all world religions exist in unique forms, from

religions that originated in India — such as Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Tantra, and tribal religions — to religions that have taken on longstanding and distinctive forms in South Asia — such as Islam, Judaism, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism. The focus of our work is thus on a geographical area, the religious, cultural, and intellectual traditions of that area, and changes that have occurred in those traditions over several millennia. Scholars of South Asia explore the distinctive manifestations of religious traditions in the subcontinent, their interactions, and their movements to and expressions in other parts of the world. This Section encourages contextualizing religion within debates on a broad array of parallel and intersecting issues, such as (but not limited to) politics, secularism, literature, philology, globalization, modernity, colonialism and postcolonialism, history, society, media, popular culture, material and visual culture, and economics. Our scholarship often emphasizes sessions and papers that look at more than one tradition and thus frequently entail some degree of comparative approach. Our Website is [www.montclair.edu/RISA](http://www.montclair.edu/RISA). We also have a listserv, which is essential to the work of our Section. Information on joining the listserv can be found on our Website.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Stoker, Valerie, Wright State University, [valerie.stoker@wright.edu](mailto:valerie.stoker@wright.edu)

Chair - Bellamy, Carla, Baruch College, CUNY, [carlabellamy@gmail.com](mailto:carlabellamy@gmail.com)

## Religion in Southeast Asia Group

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Call Text:

The Religion in Southeast Asia Group invites proposals for individual papers, paper sessions, and round tables. This year we are especially interested in proposals addressing Buddhist, Hindu and Christian developments across SE Asia. Areas of special emphasis might include:

- Women Religious in Southeast Asia, for a possible co-sponsorship with the Women and Religion Section; some possible themes might include labor and relations with the state, changing ideals of domesticity and bodily comportment, and rival conceptions of agency, gender and tradition, though proposals may also be submitted on other topics.;
- Religion and the environment;
- Theorizing and documenting religion and violence;
- Postcolonial theology;
- Local practices and lived religion;
- Religion and water in Southeast Asian religious traditions, past and present;

Proposals may also be submitted on any other subject relating to religion in Southeast Asia.

Mission Statement:

Situated at the nexus of several civilizational influences — including Indian, Chinese, and Middle Eastern — Southeast Asia, as a region, remains understudied in terms of its relevance to the theoretical and methodological study of religion. This neglect is in part due to the tendency to reduce Southeast Asian religious systems to the named “world religions” often identified with other regions. As a result, indigenous practices are not viewed in terms of their conceptual and other linkages — and in some cases the dynamic interactions between those practices and the religious practices brought over by different classes of immigrants are frequently overlooked. However, and especially in the last fifteen years, exciting materials addressing different religious cultures in Southeast Asia have emerged. Hitherto, there has been little scholarly conversation at the AAR on Southeast Asia. And, perhaps even less commonly, are Southeast Asian religious cultures (e.g., Buddhist, Islamic, Christian, Hindu, “animist,” Chinese, and Pacific) put into conversation with one another. In light of this need in the field, we strive to provide a context for this conversation as well as to foster critical thinking about Southeast Asia as a region.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

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

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

Leadership:

Chair - Angeles, Vivienne, La Salle University, [angeles@lasalle.edu](mailto:angeles@lasalle.edu)

Chair - Fox, Richard, Universität Heidelberg, [rfox@eth.uni-heidelberg.de](mailto:rfox@eth.uni-heidelberg.de)

## Religion in the American West Group

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Call Text:

Proposals for individual papers or a full session are solicited on the following topics:

- The wielding and negotiation of power and authority in religious contexts in the North American West. Specifically, we seek papers that critically interrogate the various and distinctive forms religious authority has taken in the American West, and the consequences of the exercise of that authority. Possible areas of inquiry include, but are not limited to, discussions of power in relation to land disputes, religious groups and governmental entities, institutional vs. popular religious practices, and the establishment and maintenance of religious authority in the West. Topics for papers should not only be situated in the North American West but should also deal significantly with unique aspects of the region or novel analytical approaches. Papers for this session will be pre-circulated.
- The post-1965 religious and ethnic demographic changes and realities in the North American West (for a possible co-sponsored session).
- The history and impact of Asian religions and the religions of Asian Americans in the Pacific Rim and the North American West (for possible quad-sponsorship with the American West, Japanese Religions, and Buddhism in the West groups).

Mission Statement:

The Religion in the American West Group is a forum for graduate students, independent scholars, and faculty who situate their work regionally in the North American West, broadly conceived. The study of religion in this region allows scholars to use a broad array of methodologies (historical, anthropological, literary, sociological, and others) to explore the most pressing questions in the field of American religion and in Religious Studies more generally. These include, but are not limited to: the history of empire and colonialism; the connections between religion and violence; the construction and deployment of racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual identities; transnational movement of people and ideas; religion and the natural and built environments; myth-making and its role in the construction and critique of nationalist ideologies; and the development of the category of religion. The purpose of this subfield is not to remain in the American West, to define the West, or to argue that religion in the West is unique. Instead, by situating scholarship regionally, scholars of the American West are able to develop theories and methods that can be useful interpretive lenses for other regions defined by land, transnationalism, migrations, diversity, and colonialism. Moreover, the Group supports the development of a rigorous intellectual community by pre-circulating papers in advance of the national meeting and maintaining a blog.

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Hendrickson, Brett, Lafayette College, [hendribr@lafayette.edu](mailto:hendribr@lafayette.edu)

Chair - Denison, Brandi, University of North Florida, [b.denison@unf.edu](mailto:b.denison@unf.edu)

## Religion, Affect, and Emotion Group

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Call Text:

*The Genealogy of Religion and Affect* (for a possible co-sponsorship with the Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group): We seek papers reflecting on the longer history of studying religion and emotion (i.e. James, Durkheim, etc.) in conversation with recent theorists such as Ahmed, Berlant, Cvetkovich, and Sedgwick. What does the study of affect give us that Jamesian psychology or Durkheimian collective effervescence does not?

*Religion, Emotion, and Belief* (for a possible quad-sponsorship with Cognitive Science and Religion Group; the Science, Technology, and Religion Group; the Religious Experience in Antiquity Group (SBL)): How can recent approaches from the natural and social sciences help scholars of religion to better understand the religious experience of belief? Is belief a natural product of affective and cognitive processes? What role does emotion play in belief? Does the role of emotion and belief function differently in "science" and "religion"? How do religions use emotion in the cultivation of the believing religious-subject? Is there room for a model of self and subjectivity that goes beyond self-cultivation, in which a subject is being acted upon (ethics of passion)? How does work on emotions complicate or challenge the links between belief and religiosity? What are the distinct benefits and limitations to conceptualizing religious belief in these ways?

*Affect and Activism*: the politics of conviction: How are religious values linked to and altered by affective reactions to charged political issues like race, inequality, protest, and violence? How are the verbal and bodily practices of activism shaped and advanced by religious affect?

*Affect and Literature*: How does fiction help us to imagine relationships between religion and recent

perspectives on affect? We are particularly interested in exploring attention to affect in recently published literature, popular and otherwise.

*The Affects of 'Spiritual Health':* How do Sara Ahmed's critiques of happiness and other affect theories help us to critique the intersections of religion and medicalization or analyzing the affects of "spiritual health."

*Focus on Recent Scholarly Work:* We seek papers critically examining Sianne Ngai's *Our Aesthetic Categories*, or Eugenie Brinkema's *The Forms of Affect*.

*Affect and Race:* the affective landscapes of hate: What is the role of affect(s) in the formation of racial and racist identities and relationships?

#### Mission Statement:

This Group provides space for theoretically-informed discussion of the relationship between religion, affect, and emotion. The Group serves as a meeting point for conversations on the affective, noncognitive, and passional dimensions of religion coming from diverse fields, including anthropology, comparative religion, psychology, decolonial theory, gender and sexuality studies, cultural studies, philosophy, and theology. Proposals drawing on these theoretical resources to examine specific religious traditions, shifting historical understandings of religion and affect/emotion, comparative work that looks at affective forms across traditions, and broader theoretical reflections are all welcome.

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

#### Leadership:

Chair - Schaefer, Donovan, University of Oxford, [donovan.schaefer@theology.ox.ac.uk](mailto:donovan.schaefer@theology.ox.ac.uk)

Chair - Hamner, M. Gail, Syracuse University, [mghamner@syr.edu](mailto:mghamner@syr.edu)

## Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Group

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#### Call Text:

The Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism Group invites papers and panel proposals related to any issue in the study of religion, colonialism, and postcolonialism. We conceptualize colonial and postcolonial spaces broadly and encourage papers that develop postcolonial studies approaches to examine North America and Europe as well as more traditional sites of colonialism. We are particularly interested in four projects for the 2015 AAR meeting in Atlanta:

1. We invite proposals on "Regulating Religion: Securitization and Policing Religion in the Post-Colonial State." Proposals should deal with the colonial / postcolonial regulation of religion by state authorities and/or how states construct discourses surrounding religion in order to promote national and/or international military and security initiatives.
2. We invite proposals for a possible co-sponsored session with the Law, Religion, and Culture group. In consideration of the 2015 AAR theme, "Valuing Religion": these proposals should explore the intersection of law, religion, and economic practice in colonial and postcolonial settings. For example, how have legal regimes governing economic practice shaped and transformed the institutions we now commonly understand to be religious (such as temples, mosques, monasteries, shrines)? How have the practices of such institutions worked in defiance of colonial legal expectations?

3. We invite proposals that explore the transformation of religious discourses about the natural world in colonial and postcolonial settings. Proposals might engage with work on ecology, animality, the anthropocene, or a variety of other topics.
4. We invite proposals on the intersections between postcolonial studies and animals (for a possible co-sponsored session with Religion and Animals Group and the Religion and Ecology Group).
5. We encourage responses to David Chidester's *Empire of Religion* (University of Chicago 2014) for a possible co-sponsorship with the Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group and the Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group;

Finally, this year the group will also sponsor a pre-arranged Author-Meets-Critics session on Birgit Meyer's forthcoming book *Sensational Movies. Video, Vision and Christianity in Ghana* (Univ. of California Press, 2015). Co-sponsors for this panel are: World Christianity; Religion, Film, and Visual Culture; Anthropology of Religion; African Religions; Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism. We will not be accepting individual proposals for this pre-arranged panel.

**Mission Statement:**

This Group presents an opportunity for scholars in various subfields of religious studies to explore a topic whose relevance cuts across specializations. We bring together scholars treating different time periods, geographical regions, and traditions in working to strengthen our field's role in the study of empire, colonialism, and postcolonialism.

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Hussain, Syed Adnan, St Mary's University, [syedadnan.hussain@smu.ca](mailto:syedadnan.hussain@smu.ca)

Chair - Foody, Kathleen, College of Charleston, [foodykm@cofc.edu](mailto:foodykm@cofc.edu)

## Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group

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**Call Text:**

We welcome proposals for individual papers, papers sessions, and roundtables dealing with religion, film, and visual culture, with particular emphasis invited on the following topics:

1. Humor
2. Global Cinema
3. Sacrifice
4. "Race"
5. Pedagogy: teaching religion and film with a special focus on either globalizing your content or bridging the gulf between the academy and film studies/the film industry.
6. In keeping with the theme for the AAR meeting in Atlanta ("valuing the study of religion"), we invite proposals that concern the role and purpose of studies of religion, film, and visual culture. How, why, to whom, and in what ways does this scholarship matter? What is, or should be, the public role of this field?

7. Muslims, film, and visual culture: from Muslim directors to portrayals of Muslims/Islam in any form of visual culture.
8. How religion informs filmic aesthetics
9. We will also cosponsor a session with the Critical Approaches to Religion and Hip-Hop group, and we invite submissions investigating connections between religion and Hip Hop video production/visual culture (including Graffiti art). Submissions might consider a range of topics and approaches including: afrofuturistic elements; transmediated themes and production; and cultural styles, epistemologies, eschatologies, and teleologies within a Southern "Dirty South" context.
  10. The Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group will also quint-sponsor a panel on Birgit Meyer's forthcoming book, *Sensational Movies: Video, Vision and Christianity in Ghana* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), in collaboration with the World Christianity Group; the Anthropology of Religion Group; the African Religions Group; the Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism Group. Selection of panelists will be pre-arranged so that they may read Meyer's book as provided by the press in advance of the meetings in order to comment on it. Prof. Meyer will summarize her book's argument, and at least one panelist will comment on the methodological aspects of Prof. Meyer's book. We are soliciting no papers for this session but encouraging our members and other interested parties to attend for what will be a truly multi-disciplinary discussion focused on religion and Africa.
- 11.

Important: We strongly encourage the use of visual media in academic presentations, and ask that all proposals indicate whether such media will be employed and in what way(s).

Mission Statement:

This Group offers a forum for theory and methodology of the visual for those interested in the serious interdisciplinary study of religion, film, and visual culture. There is no single way to study religion and the visual, and we expect scholars to provide new perspectives on the way we understand visual culture and to provide this understanding through traditional and emerging methodologies.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Reedy Solano, Jeanette, California State University, Fullerton, [jsolano@fullerton.edu](mailto:jsolano@fullerton.edu)

Chair - Derry, Ken, University of Toronto, [ken.derry@utoronto.ca](mailto:ken.derry@utoronto.ca)

## Religion, Holocaust, and Genocide Group

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Call Text:

We are seeking individual paper or panel proposals on the following topics: 1) Drawing inspiration from the Presidential Theme for 2015, we are particularly interested in work that analyzes valuing "religion" in the analysis of "genocide" and debated definitions of these terms; 2) comparing models of rupture (theology), continuity (history), and conflict (sociology) in the interpretation of genocide; 3) 100 years later, what is the status of the Armenian genocide in religious studies?; 4) co-sponsored with the Martin Luther and Global Lutheran Traditions group: Christian theology and Jewish persecution, critical and constructive responses to

the Holocaust, addressing Martin Luther's writings and the Lutheran tradition; 5) co-sponsored with the Comparative Approaches to Religion and Violence group: religion and genocide in the Balkans.

**Mission Statement:**

This Group provides an academic forum to integrate the analysis of the Holocaust with past and ongoing problems of genocide around the globe. It asks critical questions about the implications of these histories and their legacies for the study of religion, building on Jewish and Christian theological, literary, ethical, ritual, and philosophical responses to the Holocaust, and opening conversations with responses to genocide from other communities — such as Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Native American, and LGBT.

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Pinnock, Sarah K., Trinity University, [sarah.pinnock@trinity.edu](mailto:sarah.pinnock@trinity.edu)

Chair - Vincent, Alana, University of Chester, [alana.vincent@gmail.com](mailto:alana.vincent@gmail.com)

## Religion, Media, and Culture Group

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**Call Text:**

This Group invites individual papers, papers sessions, and roundtable proposals on the following themes:

- 1) Civil War, Media, and Southern Culture (including the role of technology in Civil War culture and contemporary re-imaginings of the Civil War);
- 2) "Activism, Religion, and Social Change" (including Freedom Summer, same-sex marriage, street protests for justice, Ferguson - for possible co-sponsorship with North American Religions Group);
- 3) Disease, Plague, and Alien Threats (for possible co-sponsorship with North American Religions Group);
- 4) Religion, Change, and New Media Delivery -- From Cineplex to "Gigaplex;"
- 5) Media, Markets, Money, and Religion

Multimedia audio/visual enhanced and illustrated research presentations are strongly encouraged in the Religion, Media, and Culture program unit. Please indicate in your proposal if you will be employing these technologies in your presentation.

**Mission Statement:**

This Group provides a multidisciplinary forum for exploring the intersections between media and religion. Areas of interest include the participation of religion in digital culture, mediation of religion, the interplay between religious and media communities and between religious and media practices, and the significance of both media and religion in the transformation of religious structures and practices.

**Anonymity:** Other (please explain below)

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Taylor, Sarah McFarland, Northwestern University, [sarah@northwestern.edu](mailto:sarah@northwestern.edu)

Chair - Supp-Montgomerie, Jenna, Quest University Canada, [jennasuppmontgomerie@gmail.com](mailto:jennasuppmontgomerie@gmail.com)

## Religion, Memory, History Group

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Call Text:

We invite proposals on the following themes.

1) Material Memory: How do objects play a role in both individual and collective memory? How has the growth of critical approaches to “material religion” changed how scholars examine the past? We are particularly interested in the analysis of objects; the rituals surrounding them; and/or their connections with textual memory. What stories do we tell about such objects, and how do we use them?

2) Commemoration in Online Spaces: How have the wide variety of social media practices transformed memories of religion in all of its forms, as well as commemoration of major events, communities, and individuals? How do these practices and stored texts relate to critical theory on “the archive”? How has the online proliferation of commemorative religious ceremonies been reshaping the spatial, affective, and communal dimensions of worship? How have the processes of mourning and remembrance been altered in the virtual domain? Platforms to be considered could include, but are not limited to: Virtual sites of worship, Facebook, Twitter, role-playing games such as World of Warcraft, blogs, Second Life or other virtual spaces; museum web pages, and digital archives.

On any of these topics, both individual paper proposals and preformed panels are welcome. We seek to include a broad array of historical periods, traditions, and theoretical and methodological approaches. We also welcome individual papers or pre-formed panels on other topics related to our group’s work. In all proposals, we encourage work that addresses this year’s presidential theme by engaging with what it means to address the study of religion in the public arena.

Mission Statement:

This Group explores the construction of narratives of the past as memory and history in relation to religious practices, ideologies, and subjectivities. The role of memory and history in the formation of religious subjectivities calls for examination within a comparative context to allow for an intercultural and interdisciplinary exploration of its forms and contexts, and to provide engagement with theoretical and methodological concerns across traditions.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Eichler-Levine, Jodi, University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh, [eichlerj@uwosh.edu](mailto:eichlerj@uwosh.edu)

Chair - Hassan, Mona, Duke University, [mona.hassan@duke.edu](mailto:mona.hassan@duke.edu)

## Religion, Sport, and Play Group

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Call Text:

The Religion, Sport, and Play Group invites proposals for participation in a round-table discussion of pedagogical strategies for teaching about sport/play and the pedagogical advantages of including content on sport/play in religious studies classes. A successful proposal will outline a short presentation and describe how this presentation will contribute to a round-table discussion of pedagogy. We also welcome proposals that address other related questions and encourage proposals that use historical or contemporary cases and draw on a range of disciplinary perspectives and diverse religious traditions.

ALSO:

Possible quad-sponsored panel with the Religion and Popular Culture Group; the Men, Masculinities and Religion Group; the Gay Men and Religion Group; we invite explorations of the gym-built body as the masculine ideal for gay/hetero/bi men (for example, Internet subcultures that praise bodybuilders as “muscle gods”). What might this form of virtual/actual veneration say about gay/hetero/bi men and masculine ideals? How might we theorize approaches to the muscular male body? We welcome proposals that employ case studies whether historical or contemporary and/or draw on a range of disciplinary perspectives and diverse religious traditions. A successful proposal will include a thesis statement and a clear statement of both evidence and methodology.

Mission Statement:

This Group provides an opportunity for scholars to engage in the emerging research at the intersection of religion and sport, games, and play. We are interested in examining these topics across broad geographical areas, religious traditions, and historical eras. We encourage critical reflection regarding relationships of religious institutions to sport, play, and games; theological and spiritual experiences of participants and spectators invested in these activities; and the cross-cultural applicability of the received categories of sports and religion.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Blazer, Annie, College of William and Mary, [annie.blazer@gmail.com](mailto:annie.blazer@gmail.com)

Chair - Remillard, Arthur, Saint Francis University, [aremillard@francis.edu](mailto:aremillard@francis.edu)

## Religions in Chinese and Indian Cultures: A Comparative Perspective Group

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Call Text:

Monasticism and Its Cultural Contexts

The institutionalization, in the form of the Buddhist *sangha*, of the already existing patterns of renunciation in ancient India transformed the expression of asocial individuality into a community of common purpose. The *sangha* developed as a community of ordained monks or nuns leading highly disciplined and regimented collective lives in pursuit of a doctrinally significant awakening, supported by the lay community. This led to dynamic and often dialectic patterns of interaction with other norms, doctrines, social formations and loci of power. The entry of Buddhism into China led the *sangha* to have an even more radical impact on society, in a

civilizational context where renunciation of familial ties was a radical idea. Clearly Buddhist monasticism's evolving and distinct forms of organization have had a major impact on religious lives in both India and China. It was also controversial, and was often challenged within both Indian and Chinese cultural contexts.

This year's panel seeks to look at forms of religious life in India and China through the lens of the *sangha*. Papers can cover various aspects of the issue: the changes in the nature of the sangha over time and cultural context(s); non-Buddhist developments, like the various Advaitic, Śaiva and Śrīvaiṣṇava orders of renunciators or orders of Daoists such as Lingbao and Quanzhen, etc., that functioned as responses or even direct challenges to Buddhist conceptions of monasticism; patterns of resistance to or alternatives to the sangha model of spiritual life.

An ideal proposal will be comparative in its coverage, involving India and China, but historical, conceptual or some combination of both in its methodology. To name a few possibilities, papers could address some form of monastic practice across Indian and Chinese contexts; the intellectual, political or institutional competition between Buddhist and other monastic organizations; textual critiques of renunciation and renunciatory communities; or particular challenges that faced the *sangha* in different contexts. So topics can be within a Buddhist context, or comparatively with other Indian and Chinese traditions, or even entirely on other traditions.

If you have questions, please contact the co-chairs.

#### Mission Statement:

This Group addresses two significant gaps in the current scholarship on Chinese and Indian religious traditions. The first gap is on historical scholarship. India and China have been the two mother cultures of South Asia and East Asia. Historically, the two were connected through the transmission and transformation of Buddhism from India to China. This remarkably fruitful incorporation and assimilation of a foreign system of thought and cultural practice into another well-established civilization is one of the first of its kind in the human history of cross-cultural exchanges, and one of its most sweeping in magnitude. Unfortunately, there has been inadequate scholarly attention paid to how Indian Buddhism — and its central Asian variants — introduced new issues and imaginations to the Chinese people and how the Chinese managed to appropriate the alien tradition into their own intellectual milieu, hence deeply enriching and reshaping the indigenous Chinese culture. Second, we also seek to redirect some of the attention of the comparative study of religion and philosophy away from the default Western-centered approach. India and China are profoundly important civilizations, both historically and contemporarily. Despite the historical connection of Buddhism, the differences in their cultural products — whether religious, linguistic, philosophical, artistic, or material — are so striking that comparing them would highlight the true richness, plurality, and diversity of human creativity and cultural productivity.

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

#### Leadership:

Chair - Jiang, Tao, Rutgers University, [tjiang@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:tjiang@rci.rutgers.edu)

Chair - Ram-Prasad, Chakravarthi, Lancaster University, [c.ram-prasad@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:c.ram-prasad@lancaster.ac.uk)

## Religions, Medicines, and Healing Group

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### Call Text:

This Group welcomes proposals that explore specific intersections of religious and healing traditions and practices. We ask that proposals address the socio-political context of the topic, as well as theoretical and analytical framework(s). Our group is also experimenting with posting full papers online before the meeting, with brief presentations, responses and open discussions at one or more of our sessions.

The group is particularly interested in reviewing proposals on the following themes for the upcoming year:

- 1) Synergy, hybridity, and creativity in healing: How do theories of synergy, hybridity, and creativity help to explain the ways in which religious people and groups conflate elements from within a particular religious tradition, or from different traditions, based on their own deeper concerns, commitments, sense of self or selves, and the suffering that they have experienced?
- 2) Gendered dimensions of religious healing, responding theoretically and empirically to women's participation in religious healing practices; discourses of women, gender, health, and healing; and/or exploring the "gendered divisions of labor" in religious healing (possible session with Women and Religion Section).
- 3) The spiritualization of the secular and the secularization of the spiritual in the context of health, healing, and medicine. For instance, how are certain "spiritual" practices being integrated into "secular" medical settings, and how has secular medical research influenced spiritual and religious practice? (possible co-sponsored session with Secularism and Secularity Group).
- 4) For a possible quad-sponsored session with the African Diaspora Religions Group; Native Traditions in the Americas Group; the Indigenous Religious Traditions Group: we invite paper or session proposals that focus on how conceptions of indigeneity and diasporic identity are implicated in efforts to heal individuals, communities, and nations in the context of loss, displacement, and historical trauma.

### Mission Statement:

The study of religions, medicines, and healing is a growing field within religious studies that draws on the disciplines and scholarship of history, anthropology (particularly medical anthropology), phenomenology, psychology, sociology, ethnic studies, ritual studies, gender studies, theology, political and economic theory, public health, bioscientific epidemiology, history of science, comparative religion, and other interdisciplinary approaches to interpret meanings assigned to illness, affliction, and suffering; healing, health, and well-being; healing systems and traditions, their interactions, and the factors that influence them; and related topics and issues. As a broad area of inquiry, this field incorporates diverse theoretical orientations and methodological strategies in order to develop theories and methods specific to the study of illness, health, healing, and associated social relations from religious studies perspectives. Although religious texts serve as important resources in this endeavor, so do the many approaches to the study of lived religion, religious embodiment and material culture, and popular expressions of religiosity. Finally, like its sister field of medical anthropology, the field of religions, medicines, and healing encourages examination of how affliction and healing affect social bodies through fractured identities, political divides, structural violence, and colonialism. We support the work of graduate students, religion scholars, scholar-activists, and scholars in allied fields. We promote collaboration with other interdisciplinary Program Units and those focused on particular traditions and/or regions.

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

**Method of submission:**

## PAPERS

### Leadership:

Chair - Laird, Lance D., Boston University, [llaird@bu.edu](mailto:llaird@bu.edu)

Chair - Wu, Emily, Dominican University of California, [eswu@hotmail.com](mailto:eswu@hotmail.com)

## Religions, Social Conflict, and Peace Group

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### Call Text:

This group welcomes individual papers and paper session proposals (presider, 3-4 papers, and respondent) on intersections of religion with violence, social conflict, and peace. For the coming annual meeting, we are particularly interested in the following:

We wish to convene a panel or session on incidents and histories of violence against marginalized bodies—including, but not limited to, police brutality, incarceration, religious violence, hate crimes, sexualized violence, and/or militarized, state-sanctioned violence. This might also include analysis of commemoration, social rituals, justice work, artistic practices, and peacemaking efforts that respond to violence. We are particularly interested in intersectional approaches to queer/gender/sexuality studies and African American religious history. (For a possible quad-sponsored session with the Religion and Sexuality Group; the Afro-American Religious History Group; the Queer Studies in Religion Group.)

For a co-sponsored session with the African Religions Group; the Lesbian-Feminist Issues and Religion Group: we ask for papers for a session entitled “Gendered Violence in Africa: The Place of Ritual and Ethics in Justification, Protest, and Adjudication”. We seek papers on all forms of gendered violence in Africa, whether against women, girls, boys, or men, and/or LGBTIQ persons. Among these forms we include domestic abuse, rape, pimping, sexual harassment, sex-trafficking, stalking, wartime violence, and violence against sexual minorities, whether in prisons or public, in church or secular contexts, for ritual or judicial purposes, etc. We invite proposals that explore distinctions and connections between institutional and interpersonal violence and address a broad range of instances in which gender and violence intertwine. In all cases, we seek some tie to religious or ethical reflection in African contexts.

- the state of methodology and pedagogy in the study of religion, social conflict and peace
- the role of religion in historical and contemporary violence affecting African Americans (e.g., faith-based responses to blue-on-black violence or the role of religion in challenging the criminalization of black and brown bodies)
- transnational rhetoric and tools employed by actors in religious conflicts, or by religious actors in larger social conflicts
- religious dimensions of the resurgence of Russian power
- religion in social discord over public health (e.g. infectious diseases, experimental drugs)
- connections between theory-practice/lived experience connections, particularly proposals that reflect collaboration between scholars and practitioners

### Mission Statement:

Relationships between religions and the causes and resolution of social conflict are complex. On the one hand, religion is a major source of discord in our world, but on the other, religious agents have often played a central role in developing and encouraging nonviolent means of conflict resolution and sustainable peace. While religion as a factor in conflicts is often misunderstood by military and political leaders, it is also the case that the popular call for an end to injustice is quite often a religious voice. We seek to add a critical dimension to the understanding of how religion influences and resolves social conflict. We want to develop

and expand the traditional categories of moral reflection and response to war and also to investigate kindred conflicts — terrorism, humanitarian armed intervention, cultural and governmental repression, ecological degradation, and all of the factors that inhibit human flourishing. We also hope to encourage theoretical and practical reflection on religious peace-building by examining the discourses, practices, and community and institutional structures that promote just peace. Through our work, we hope to promote understanding of the relationships between social conflict and religions in ways that are theoretically sophisticated and practically applicable in diverse cultural contexts.

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:  
Chair - Marshall, Ellen Ott, Emory University, [ellen.marshall@emory.edu](mailto:ellen.marshall@emory.edu)

Chair - Van Ham, Lane, Metropolitan Community College-Penn Valley, [lvvanham@gmail.com](mailto:lvvanham@gmail.com)

## Religious Conversions Group

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Call Text:

*The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, ed. Lewis R. Rambo and Charles E. Farhadian (Oxford University Press, 2014): Both in a spirit of celebration and in the hopes of stimulating new research pushing converting studies to new levels of development, this session will include perspectives from editors and contributors to the *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion* as well critical assessment of the *Handbook* by other presenters.

Religious Conversion and Søren Kierkegaard. For a co-sponsored session with the Kierkegaard, Religion and Culture Group, we invite proposals that explore themes of conversion as they relate to the work of Søren Kierkegaard. We are particularly interested in papers that consider the narrative or literary aspects of religious conversion, the role of imagination and will in conversion, and formulas of religious conversion. One might, for example, consider the relationship between the Kierkegaardian “leap” and conversion, Kierkegaard’s concepts of transitions and stages in relation to conversion, or ecclesiological consequences of conversion as presented in Kierkegaard’s corpus. Authors might draw upon scholarship that explicitly or implicitly addresses these themes, whether from the standpoint of conversion studies, or from Kierkegaard studies. This session aims to bring together scholars of conversion and Kierkegaard in order to broaden conversation in both fields.

Mission Statement:

This Group studies the full spectrum of issues related to religious conversions, in any historical or geographic context, encompassing different forms of religious belief and practice. The scope of the issues we cover is broad and wide-ranging. We consider investigations into the reasons for various types of religious conversions including, but not limited to intellectual, theological, philosophical, historical, experiential, psychological, social, cultural, political, and economic causes. We also study the consequences of religious conversions, both individually and socially, and their implications. We encourage the methodologies of multiple disciplines, as well as interdisciplinary approaches. More narrowly focused areas of inquiry suggested by interested scholars include, but are not limited to the following:

multiple conversions

group and individual conversions

forced conversions

the narrative and/or literary aspects of conversions

hybridity

ecclesiological consequences of conversion

the place and role of conversion in a specific religious tradition

theories of conversions

formulas of religious conversion (as step-by-step processes)

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:  
Chair - Bauman, Chad, Butler University, [cbauman@butler.edu](mailto:cbauman@butler.edu)

Chair - Scalise, Charles J., Fuller Theological Seminary, [cscalise@fuller.edu](mailto:cscalise@fuller.edu)

## Ricoeur Group

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Call Text:  
Theme: Critical Assessments of Ricoeur for Religious Studies

On the tenth anniversary of Paul Ricoeur's death, we are seeking paper proposals that critically assess the value and/or disvalue of his work for religious studies. Which of his ideas should be retained, modified, or jettisoned? How should his legacy be evaluated from the perspective of religious studies, philosophy of religion, theology, religious ethics, or the study of sacred texts? How could his work be supplemented or corrected by other thinkers? We are particularly interested in papers that address the following themes: 1) Ricoeur's anthropology, which spans his oeuvre, applied to theological anthropology and ethics; 2) Ricoeur's hermeneutics applied to different religious textual traditions; 3) Ricoeur's moral philosophy applied to contemporary ethical challenges, particularly those dealing with systemic, institutional, and structural injustice; 4) Ricoeur's attempts to bridge the gap between the continental and analytic philosophical traditions; and 5) Ricoeur and imagination. Proposals on other topics are also welcome.

Mission Statement:

The purpose of this Group is to promote the work of Paul Ricoeur within the broad fields of theology and religious studies. We believe that Paul Ricoeur, as a dialogue partner, has continued relevance to the manifold disciplines that constitute the AAR. Yet more than a group dedicated to the study of a particular scholar's work — as a form of academic fandom — this Group seeks to build up and creatively use Ricoeur's work in a way that enriches a wide range of theological and religious subdisciplines.

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Reynhout, Kenneth A., Bethel University, [kenneth.reynhout@gmail.com](mailto:kenneth.reynhout@gmail.com)

Chair - Sohn, Michael, Cleveland State University, [mikedwsohn@gmail.com](mailto:mikedwsohn@gmail.com)

## Ritual Studies Group

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Call Text:

The Ritual Studies Group encourages submissions from scholars whose research focus on the study of ritual, and from scholars keen to develop theoretical sophistication in the study of ritual. This year, we particularly invite papers on:

- (1) Ethical Questions in the Study of Ritual: We are particularly interested in papers or panel proposals which examine the particular ethical and normative issues in the study of ritual and ritual traditions. We are also open to papers taking on broader questions of the relationship between ritual and ethics.
- (2) Ritual, Body, Movement, and Space: We are interested in papers that look at various embodied practices, such as walking and dancing within ritual contexts and, more broadly, papers examining the sensual dimension of ritual. In this context, we are also interested in paper providing new or innovative ways of examining possession or trance.
- (3) Ritual and Social Change: We are interested in research examining the role of ritual in social change or the contributions ritual studies can make to understanding social change. We are particularly interested in papers attending to ritual and climate change.

In addition, we are interested in the following topics for potential joint sessions with other program groups:

- (1) Ritual and Film: Building from 2014 presentations on ritual and film we are interested in proposals on film in the study of ritual, especially with regard to the use of film in fieldwork or ethnographic filmmaking, for a potential joint session with the Anthropology of Religion Group.
- (2) Ritual, Sex, and Gender: We are interested in proposals that look at the relationship between ritual, sex, sexuality, and gender for a potential co-sponsorship with the Men, Masculinities, and Religions Group.
- (3) Ritual and Esotericism: We are interested in proposals that might contribute to a joint panel with the Western Esotericism Group that focus on the ways in which esoteric discourses often oscillate between normativity and transgression when they become embodied in rituals.

Any other aspect of the relationship between western esotericism and ritual studies will also be considered.

In addition to the listed topics, the Ritual Studies Group is also open to reviewing any proposals that might contribute positively to the academic study of ritual. We are interested in both individual paper proposals and proposals for full panels. Panel proposals should include full proposals for individual papers. Please note, because we are exploring alternative formats for our sessions, contributors may be asked to submit their papers in advance of the meeting to be available to attendees, and to present a short summary instead of a full paper at the meeting.

**Mission Statement:**

This Group provides a unique venue for the interdisciplinary exploration of ritual — broadly understood to include rites, ceremonies, religious and secular performances, and other ritual processes — in their many and varied contexts, and from a range of theoretical and methodological perspectives. To learn more about this Group, visit our Website at <http://www.ritualstudies.org>.

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Kreinath, Jens, Wichita State University, [jens.kreinath@gmail.com](mailto:jens.kreinath@gmail.com)

Chair - Potts, Grant H., Austin Community College, [grant.potts@religiousthought.com](mailto:grant.potts@religiousthought.com)

## Roman Catholic Studies Group

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**Call Text:**

The Roman Catholic Studies Group invites submissions on the following topics:

“The Family” This theme has been the focus of recent Roman Catholic high profile events (e.g. The Synods of Bishops on the Family). We seek papers pursuing the question of what Catholic discourse on the family is not discussing. What are the realities and relationships (e.g. violence, single parenthood, family networks impacted by HIV/AIDS, families in poverty) or the methodologies (of material culture, ethnography) that might complicate the family as presented in these contexts?

White Supremacy, Racial Diversities, and Catholic Thinking. A range of approaches to this broad topic are invited as a thread to expand our discussion of Critical Catholic Studies. Papers incorporating Catholicism in Atlanta and the racialized realities of this context especially welcomed.

Public Catholicisms: This call invites papers considering Catholicism in the public sphere (e.g.. Catholics and politics) but also public figures and their public Catholicism (politicians, theorists, media figures, etc.)

On the 50th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*, we invite submissions that consider the document from non-Catholic perspectives. Might scholars of Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and others have a distinctive view on the importance and the reception of this document in the non-Catholic world?

We are especially interested in proposals that are attentive to the ways in which history and theology relate to one another within the field. Co-chairs are happy to consult with individuals who are developing individual paper, papers session, or roundtable proposals to answer questions, discuss ideas, and help shape final submissions.

Additionally, along with the Middle Eastern Christianity Group, the Christian Systematic Theology Section, and the Eastern Orthodox Studies Group, we are sponsoring a call for papers on the legacy of Chalcedon (451) to generate expert discussion on the Council of Chalcedon and its aftermath. The Council of Chalcedon (AD 451) marked a turning point in Church history and Christian theology on account of the schism that resulted from disputes over the statements of Christology promulgated by the council. That schism endures to this day. Although most Western Christians have little awareness of the Chalcedonian Council, its legacy directly impacts the Middle Eastern Christian communities who are divided among each other and from Western churches along Chalcedonian lines. The committees invite paper proposals from any reasonable discipline (church history, patristics, theology, sociology, etc.) and focused on any historical period or theological theme that can shed light on Chalcedon and its legacy. Special consideration will be given to proposals that link their research in some way to Middle Eastern Christian communities. Paper proposals must demonstrate methodological and theoretical rigor and suggest a coherent argument.

**Mission Statement:**

This Group provides a scholarly forum to study the global Roman Catholic community. Consequently, we welcome critical studies, cultural, ethical, historical, and theological perspectives. We seek to mirror the subject community's diversity in pursuing equally diverse methods to study that community.

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Pasquier, Michael, Louisiana State University, [mpasquier@lsu.edu](mailto:mpasquier@lsu.edu)

Chair - Koehlinger, Amy, Oregon State University, [amy.koehlinger@oregonstate.edu](mailto:amy.koehlinger@oregonstate.edu)

## Schleiermacher Group

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**Call Text:**

Our theme for 2015 is "Schleiermacher as Public Theologian in a time of Political Turmoil." In the spirit of this year's conference theme (Valuing the Study of Religion in public spaces), the Schleiermacher Group invites proposals that help us understand and evaluate Schleiermacher's contribution as a public theologian. We seek proposals that advance scholarship on Schleiermacher's theory of state, public stance on German identity, role in the Napoleonic wars, and role as hospital chaplain. We especially invite proposals that consider how the context of war and political turmoil shape theological constructions.

For a session on Schleiermacher and Mediating Theology to be co-sponsored with the Nineteenth Century Theology Group, we welcome proposals for papers that analyze strategies employed by Schleiermacher and subsequent representatives of Mediating Theology, broadly conceived, to reconcile the classical claims of the Christian faith with the epistemological and ethical demands of modernity.

Mission Statement:

This Group is committed to the following:

Providing a forum for sustained and focused study of texts — texts penned by Schleiermacher, read by Schleiermacher, and inspired by Schleiermacher

Identifying theological, religious, ethical, and philosophical themes with a wide range of appeal and contemporary relevance and sponsoring sessions on them

Balancing the interests and scholarship of specialists and nonspecialists alike

Identifying, helping to establish, and supporting scholarship in new areas of Schleiermacher research

Being fully and creatively engaged in theological conversations in the AAR and inviting serious scholarship on Schleiermacher's oeuvre — scholarship that will shape the questions for the next generation of Schleiermacher scholars

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Waggoner, Ed, Brite Divinity School, [ed.waggoner@tcu.edu](mailto:ed.waggoner@tcu.edu)

Chair - Poe, Shelli, Millsaps College, [poe.shelli@gmail.com](mailto:poe.shelli@gmail.com)

## Science, Technology, and Religion Group

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Call Text:

The Religion, Science, and Technology Group seeks paper and panel proposals on the following themes: Postcolonial Science Fiction, Speculative Fiction, and Religion; Science, Religion and Pluralism (with particular interests towards "traditional ecological knowledge"); Science, Technology, Religion and Hermeneutics; Globalization, Technology and Inequality; and Science, Religion and "Wicked" Problems.

In addition, we are looking for papers for a quad-sponsored session on the theme of "Religion, Emotion, and Belief" with the Religion, Affect, and Emotion Group; the Cognitive Science of Religion Group; the Religious Experience in Antiquity Group (SBL). How can recent approaches from the natural and social sciences help scholars of religion to better understand the religious experience of belief? Is belief a natural product of affective and cognitive processes? What role does emotion play in belief? Does the role of emotion and belief function differently in "science" and "religion"? How do religions use emotion in the cultivation of the believing religious-subject? Is there room for a model of self and subjectivity that goes beyond self-cultivation, in which a subject is being acted upon (ethics of passion)? How does work on emotions complicate or challenge the links between belief and religiosity? What are the distinct benefits and limitations to conceptualizing religious belief in these ways?

Mission Statement:

This Group supports scholarship that explores the relationship of religion, theology, technology, and the natural sciences. We support research that attempts to bridge the gap between religious and scientific approaches to reality and encourage the development of constructive proposals that encourage engagement and dialogue with the sciences, along with a critical assessment of the meaning and impact of technologies for the human condition and the natural world.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Fredericks, Sarah, University of North Texas, [sfrederi@unt.edu](mailto:sfrederi@unt.edu)

Chair - Bauman, Whitney, Florida International University, [whitneybauman@mac.com](mailto:whitneybauman@mac.com)

## Scriptural Reasoning Group

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Call Text:

This Group gathers Jewish, Christian, and Muslim thinkers for the study of scriptural texts related to themes of contemporary import. Papers should examine brief scriptural passages—drawing on both textual scholarship and reception history—and suggest how they address contemporary readers' concerns. Participants will be asked to circulate drafts in advance and revise their papers in conversation with each other. At least one session will include text study in small groups. We invite paper or panel proposals in the following areas:

- The role of faith/moral traditions and their texts in the formation of scholars of religion
- The use of religious texts (including commentaries) in understanding, debating, and negotiating the relationship between Religious Studies and Theology
- Hermeneutics
- Scriptural reasoning methodology
- The nature of Scripture

We welcome proposals on other topics as well and encourage complete panel proposals. For guidance on the sorts of topics and proposals that have worked well in the past, see the sessions from previous years here:

<https://jsr.shanti.virginia.edu/the-scriptural-reasoning-group-at-the-am...>

Mission Statement:

“Scriptural reasoning” is a practice of interreligious scriptural study — as illustrated in the *Journal of Scriptural Reasoning*. This Group provides one “home,” within the AAR itself, for sustained study of the Abrahamic scriptural traditions, for exploring postmodern approaches to the study of scriptural religions, for

interreligious and intercultural fellowship as an essential aspect of study, and as an experimental workshop in the practices of collaborative, dialogic, and interdisciplinary study.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

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

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

Leadership:

Chair - Zahl, Simeon, University of Oxford, [simeon.zahl@theology.ox.ac.uk](mailto:simeon.zahl@theology.ox.ac.uk)

## Scriptural/Contextual Ethics Group

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Call Text:

The Scriptural/Contextual Ethics Group invites proposals from scholars and/or activists analyzing the use of sacred and foundational religious texts, including commentaries, in ethical or political discourse (either contemporary or historical). We welcome individual papers and panel proposals from all religious traditions and methodologies, including constructive ethical reflection with a textual basis.

Proposals on all topics are welcome. We are particularly interested in the following questions:

-Sacred texts and prisons/prisoners. This could include considerations of textual passages discussing prisons or prisoners and/or discussions of the use of sacred texts in prison systems or among prisoners (American or otherwise).

-Ethical considerations of public health crises (such as the Ebola outbreak in West Africa). Such papers may consider multiple aspects of such crises, including: biomedical ethics; communal responsibility; limitations on travel; isolationism; research ethics; and more.

-The texts and ethics of gentrification, urban renewal, urbanization, and policing.

-The use of sacred texts in either historical or contemporary civil war(s). While proposals focusing on the American Civil War are welcomed, we encourage consideration of other such conflicts as well, particularly in the non-Western context.

-The relationship between different textual genres (narrative, legal, poetry, letters, etc.) and religious ethics.

-The invocation of others' sacred texts (for instance, the citation of Qur'anic passages among Christians) for ethical or political ends.

Mission Statement:

The Scriptural/Contextual Ethics Group invites scholars and activists across the disciplines to consider (or reconsider) the complex and enduring role of scriptural and foundational religious texts in the contemporary world as well as historically, and to theorize the roles these texts play in ethical reflection, lived religious practice, and political debate.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Filler, Emily, St. Olaf College, [efiller@virginia.edu](mailto:efiller@virginia.edu)

Chair - Phillips, Elizabeth, Westcott House, [erp31@cam.ac.uk](mailto:erp31@cam.ac.uk)

## Secularism and Secularity Group

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Call Text:

In its first two years, the Secularism and Secularity Group has explored the secular and its precarious, shifting boundary with religion. We now aim to take stock of its lacunae. Our group is especially interested in papers that investigate the secular's complicated relationship with race and sex/gender. What new spaces has the secular opened up for women and people of color, and what new barriers has it created? What forms of activism does the secular enable that are not available in spaces governed by religious norms, and what forms does it foreclose? How does the divide between secular and religious map onto different kinds of feminism and struggles for rights and recognition? In turn, how do critical analyses of race and sex/gender disrupt that divide? And why are self-avowed nonbelievers disproportionately white and male? We invite paper and session proposals that engage these and related questions through original historical or social scientific research.

We also welcome papers that explore any of the following areas:

- Uncovering humanisms, religious and secular, historical and contemporary (Co-sponsored with the Religion and Humanism Group)
- The role of the secular in effecting a distinction between economic and religious spheres. How has a distinction between religion and economy been invoked, instituted, or contested in law, and with what consequences? Recent critical literature on secularism and secularity has attended to how the boundary is drawn between the "religious" and the "political", and how that boundary is contested, for example, by attempts to "deprivatize" religion for the sake of political critique. Less attention has been given to the politics of boundary-drawing as they apply to the "economic." For instance, how do "private" and "public" become constructed as religious and secular in the discourse and practice of economic development? And how does law work to disrupt or reinforce these distinctions? How does secular politics effect a distinction between "religious" and "economic" domains, as for example, in the case of charity law? (Co-Sponsored with the Law, Religion, and Culture Group)
- The spiritualization of the secular and the secularization of the spiritual in the context of health, healing, and medicine. For instance, how are certain "spiritual" practices being integrated into "secular" medical settings, and how has secular medical research influenced spiritual and religious practice? (Co-Sponsored with the Religion, Medicine, and Healing Group).

Mission Statement:

This Group seeks to explore a set of questions associated with secularism, secularity, and secularization — questions that pertain to the shifting relationship between “the religious” and “the secular” — to the

changing role of religion in law, politics, and public life, to the metamorphosis of personal identities, practices, and affiliations (figured as religious, spiritual, secular, or otherwise), and to a broader set of historical transformations that have conditioned and been imbricated in these and other changes. The Group seeks to promote and enable more sustained interdisciplinary engagement among scholars of secularism, secularity, and variously conceived forms of “nonreligion.”

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - VanAntwerpen, Jonathan, Social Science Research Council, Brooklyn, NY, [vanantwerpen@gmail.com](mailto:vanantwerpen@gmail.com)

Chair - Blankholm, Joseph, Columbia University, [jl2210@columbia.edu](mailto:jl2210@columbia.edu)

## Sikh Studies Group

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Call Text:

The Sikh Studies Group invites papers on any topic related to Sikhism, with any methodological and theoretical approach, but in particular papers that relate to teaching about Sikhism in the Western academy and particularly in the context of the general "Asian Religions" survey course. We particularly encourage people to suggest papers through this Group as well as others, to promote the development of jointly sponsored sessions and encourage the inclusion of content on the Sikh tradition within other entities in the AAR. Complete paper sessions or roundtable proposals and cosponsored sessions are especially welcome and will be prioritized, and we encourage those with participation from different ranks in the field (from graduate students to faculty) and reflecting diverse perspectives.

Mission Statement:

This Group provides a forum for highlighting the most recent and innovative scholarship in the area of Sikh studies. Our work draws from a broad range of methodological and theoretical approaches — history, postcolonial theory, performance theory, popular culture, philosophy, literary criticism, gender studies, etc. — by both established scholars as well as those new to the field. Seeking a balance between critical theory and substantive content, we seek to call into question key critical terms, challenge established frames of reference, and offer innovative and alternative ways in which Sikhs and Sikhism can be understood and studied in the academy.

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Singh, Pashaura, University of California, Riverside, [psingh@ucr.edu](mailto:psingh@ucr.edu)

Chair - Murphy, Anne, University of British Columbia, [amurphy2@mail.ubc.ca](mailto:amurphy2@mail.ubc.ca)

## Social Theory and Religion Cluster

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Call Text:

To have a presentation or a panel considered by the Social Theory and Religion Cluster, please submit a proposal to one of the three constitutive units of the cluster, the Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group, the Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group, or the Sociology of Religion Group.

**Mission Statement:**

This Cluster is a collaboration of three program units, the Critical Theory and Discourses on Religion Group, the Cultural History of the Study of Religion Group, and the Sociology of Religion Group, and we hope to use our sessions to expand consideration of the use of social theory in the scholarly study of religion.

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

**Method of submission:**  
PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Walker, David, University of California, Santa Barbara, [dwalker@religion.ucsb.edu](mailto:dwalker@religion.ucsb.edu)

Chair - Chatterjea, Ipsita, Vanderbilt University, [i\\_chatterjea@yahoo.com](mailto:i_chatterjea@yahoo.com)

Chair - Styers, Randall, University of North Carolina, [rstyers@unc.edu](mailto:rstyers@unc.edu)

## Sociology of Religion Group

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**Call Text:**

The Sociology of Religion Group (SOR) aims to bridge the gap between sociology of religion and religious studies. For the most part, these fields have been isolated from each other with scholars from each existing in separate departments, attending different meetings, and publishing in different journals. We believe that this cloistering has hindered the development of both fields and that only a cross-fertilization that transgresses departmental boundaries can foster progress in research. Therefore, we invite scholars from both sociology of religion and religious studies to submit innovative papers pushing the boundaries of both fields.

We are open to both panel and paper proposals across a wide range of topics of interest to both the sociology of religion and religious studies and are particularly interested in papers, which speak to both thereby encouraging increased dialogue between them.

*Theory, Method, and their Application*

Sociology of Religion as part of a larger discipline is marked by a canonization of its theory and its division by paradigms and methodologies--whether these be the classics (Weber and Durkheim), the old paradigm (functionalism and social constructionism), or the new paradigm (rational choice) on the one hand or quantitative, qualitative, or historical-comparative sociology on the other. As it intersects with sociology of religion, the study of religion has drawn from theories and methodologies in conversation with sociology, anthropology, critical theory, psychology, history, and other related disciplines. We are interested both in papers that utilize the theories of religious studies and bring them into the sociological canon as well as those that help religious studies gain a better grasp of the sociological theory of religion. We encourage papers that exploit both the theory and methodology of sociology of religion and religious studies and use them as frames for analysis of concrete cases. In particular, we request papers that touch upon social divisions examining race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, region, age, etc.

### *Internationalism and Diversity*

Critics of sociology of religion have pointed out that the field is dominated by North American scholars primarily interested in Protestantism. The discipline of religious studies provides a clear antidote to these perceived limitations. Therefore, we encourage contributions from academics not only studying Protestantism in North America but those who study the various religious traditions around the world. In particular, we would like submissions from scholars from all academic ranks across the lines of nationality, region, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc.

### *Topics:*

Below is a list of potential topics in which we are interested. These are merely suggestions, and we are open to a broad range of topics as discussed above. Suggested topics are alphabetized to indicate no particular preference. We encourage submissions on any topic deemed relevant.

Critical Religion  
Critical Sociology of Religion  
Critical Theory and Religion  
Feminism and Religion  
Marxism and Religion  
Postcolonialism and Religion  
Queer Studies and Religion  
Religion and Class  
Religion and Conflict  
Religion and Environmental Sociology  
Religion and Gender  
Religion and Ideology  
Religion and Inequality  
Religion and Political Power  
Religion and Social Stratification  
Religious Movements and Social Movements  
Religion and Race  
Secularization Theory  
Sociology of Islam

### *Co-Sponsored Session*

“No Method to the Madness? Sociological Approaches to the Study of Black Expressive Cultures”

We request paper submissions for a possible co-sponsored session with the Critical Approaches to Hip Hop and Religion Group. Topics should explore theory and method in the academic study of religion, in particular, sociological approaches to religion, with attention to race and class in urban contexts, in the domains of hip hop and black expressive cultures. We encourage proposals that consider/make use of varying cultural practices/data, cartographies and formats. The interpretation of cultural products and the analyses that come to bear on them have a tendency to rely on “meaning” (and religion) as/in self-evident ways. As such, this session proposes to wrestle with the challenges faced, overcome and unearthed through the scholarly handling of such materials through sociological/social scientific means.

### *Publication*

The Sociology of Religion Group of AAR regularly co-sponsors panels with the peer-reviewed print and online journal *Critical Research on Religion* (CRR) (<http://crr.sagepub.com>). Published by SAGE Publications, over

2500 libraries worldwide have subscriptions to the journal. Presenters of promising papers in SOR panels will be invited to turn their papers into articles and submit them for peer review to CRR.

#### *Submission*

Please submit paper and panel proposal through on-line system at: <http://papers.aarweb.org>

For further information, please contact SOR co-chairs:

Rebekka King, Middle Tennessee State University, [rebekka.king@mtsu.edu](mailto:rebekka.king@mtsu.edu)

Warren S. Goldstein, Harvard University, [goldstein@criticaltheoryofreligion.org](mailto:goldstein@criticaltheoryofreligion.org)

#### Mission Statement:

The Sociology of Religion Group of the American Academy of Religion serves as a bridge between religious studies and the subdiscipline of sociology of religion. It functions as a two-way conduit not only to import sociological research into religious studies but also to export the research of religious studies into both the subdiscipline and the broader field of sociology. Only through a cross-fertilization transgressing departmental boundaries can there be breakthroughs in research in both fields. The group has a wide conception of sociology of religion. It is open to a multiplicity of paradigms and methodologies utilized in the subfield and sociology more broadly: theoretical as well as empirical, quantitative, qualitative, and comparative-historical. By liaising with other Program Units, the Sociology of Religion Group is able to bring the rich diversity of critical and analytical perspectives that are housed in the American Academy of Religion into mainstream sociology of religion. Conversely, it aims to provide scholars of the study of religion with a deeper understanding of the landscape of sociology of religion.

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

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

#### Leadership:

Chair - Goldstein, Warren, Harvard University, [goldstein@criticaltheoryofreligion.org](mailto:goldstein@criticaltheoryofreligion.org)

Chair - King, Rebekka, Middle Tennessee State University, [rebekka.king@mtsu.edu](mailto:rebekka.king@mtsu.edu)

## Space, Place, and Religion Group

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#### Call Text:

We welcome individual papers, papers sessions, and roundtable proposals for topics exploring space and place as they relate to religion. We are particularly interested in papers and sessions that employ theoretically or methodologically self-conscious and innovative approaches to understanding space as it relates to, conditions, and constitutes aspects of religious life including: belief, ritual, meaning, aesthetics, and experience. We also welcome ethnographically-informed studies of sites and historically-informed studies of texts that shed light on the role of space and location in religious traditions.

Themes of interest emerging from our business meeting include:

- Studies of women and issues of gender in religious spaces
- Explorations of space in East Asia, especially Japan, Taiwan, and China

- Examinations of violence, social conflict, and political contestation at sacred sites
- Roundtable proposals examining a recent book in the field.

Scholars with questions or suggestions should not hesitate to contact the group's co-chairs.

**Mission Statement:**

This Group is a forum for exploring religious sites and the spatial dimensions of religions. We feature ethnographically-informed studies of living sites, historically-informed studies of texts and artifacts, and analyses of architecture and landscape. Our work seeks to shed light on the role of space and place in religious traditions and communities or to examine religious activity (performance, ritual, and practice) in spatial contexts.

This group recognizes that spaces and places, real and imagined/visionary, are constitutive elements in religious life; it is dedicated to investigating how they contribute to contemplative, ritualistic, artistic, economic, ethnic, or political aspects of religious life by using a variety of approaches and methods. We expect to include at least one session focused on spaces and places in Asia, in addition to sessions focused on other themes, regions, traditions or advancing the theoretical analysis of space and place.

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Bains, David, Samford University, [drbains@samford.edu](mailto:drbains@samford.edu)

Chair - Nichols, Brian J., Mount Royal University, [shilong.nichols@gmail.com](mailto:shilong.nichols@gmail.com)

## Stand-alone MA Programs in Religion Seminar

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**Call Text:**

The Stand-alone MA Programs in Religion Seminar seeks panelists to lead a discussion related to the shared interests and issues of programs that offer the MA in Religion in lieu of doctoral degrees. The Seminar is in its final year and will organize a session at the next Annual Meeting to conclude its work. Suggested topics for the Seminar's last panel include:

- 1) Developing Alternative Academic Partnerships
- 2) The Future of MA Programs in Religion: Where Do We Go From Here?
- 3) Religion in Public Life

AAR members who would like to speak on one of the above topics with reference to MA programs, or who would like to propose an alternative panel session, are invited to submit their proposal to the Seminar via the PAPERS submission system.

**Mission Statement:**

Across the country numerous departments of religious studies offer MA degrees, but not PhD degrees. Recently, leaders in these departments have gathered in formal and informal settings to address issues particular to these departments. Increasingly, we find that deans and presidents encourage us to begin offering PhD degrees without adequate understanding of the resources needed and the dim job prospects in

academia that graduates of such PhD programs face. In addition, in tough budget times it is increasingly important for us to identify external sources of funding for our faculty and this can be difficult when a department does not offer a PhD degree. And as the public conversation regarding the importance of liberal arts programs and degrees has heated up, we are being asked to make the case for religious studies as a relevant and helpful undergraduate major or graduate degree. Departments are being asked to “make the case” about how they contribute to the broader mission of higher education. This Seminar provides a multiyear workshop to address issues faced by stand-alone MA programs. We have gathered for a “state of the programs” information-gathering and review meeting and are seeking to articulate the strengths of and imagine the possibilities for these programs. We plan to:

Focus on implementation (i.e., how does an MA-only program grow into a viable PhD program)

Make the case to an administration that it is valuable as a Masters program

Shape MA programs to produce employable graduate students

When appropriate either during or after the three year Seminar series, we plan to produce materials that might be valuable to AAR members.

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:  
Chair - Whitaker, Jarrod, Wake Forest University, [whitakjl@wfu.edu](mailto:whitakjl@wfu.edu)

Chair - Berkwitz, Stephen C., Missouri State University, [sberkwitz@missouristate.edu](mailto:sberkwitz@missouristate.edu)

## Student Lounge Roundtable

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Call Text:

The Graduate Student Committee invites scholars of religion to share their hard-earned wisdom in the Student Lounge Roundtable Series. We are looking for individuals who will be responsible for leading a conversation or workshop (60-90 minutes) about a topic of practical interest to student members. A variety of formats are welcome. Possible topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Online resources and computer programs to aid research, writing, or teaching
- Managing a specific stage of graduate school (courses, exams, thesis, ABD, etc.)
- Research project design or methods (Humanities and Social Sciences)
- Balancing graduate school with other dimensions of life and identity
- Creating or managing an online presence (websites, blogging, online portfolios, etc.)
- Job market (applications, interviews, alt-ac, etc.)
- Publishing (open access vs. peer review; alternative forms of publishing, etc.)
- Teaching (activities, online, technology, controversial issues, etc.)
- Presenting research to the public
- Networking
- Mentoring relationships

- Grant writing
- CV writing
- Leadership
- Identity politics

Please send a brief proposal (~150 words) and a CV to Rupa Pillai at [rpillai@uoregon.edu](mailto:rpillai@uoregon.edu) by March 1, 2015. Please indicate if you are willing to co-present if your topic aligns with another proposal. Roundtable time slots are flexible. This does not count toward the two-proposal submission limit within the PAPERS system.

Mission Statement:

The Student Lounge Roundtable Series consists of a series of workshops dedicated to professional development and the current needs of graduate students. The series is sponsored by the Graduate Student Committee and the workshops are led by graduate students, professors, and other professionals with relevant expertise to offer.

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

Method of submission:

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

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

Leadership:

Chair - Pillai, Rupa, University of Oregon, [rpillai@uoregon.edu](mailto:rpillai@uoregon.edu)

Chair - Slominski, Kristy, University of California, Santa Barbara, [slominski@umail.ucsb.edu](mailto:slominski@umail.ucsb.edu)

## Study of Islam Section

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Call Text:

This Section encourages individual paper, papers session, and roundtable proposals in all areas of Islamic studies. Successful proposals will reflect theoretical and methodological sophistication and engagement with existing scholarship along with innovative examination of Muslim practices, texts, and material culture in diverse contexts and geographies. As always, we welcome submissions dealing with the Qur'an and the Sunna, law, philosophy, theology, mysticism, ritual, gender and sexuality, modernity and globalization, teaching, religious pluralism, and other areas of general interest. Furthermore, we encourage proposals dealing with Shi'ism within and across these areas.

For the 2015 meeting in Atlanta we are especially interested in paper and/or panel proposals on the following themes:

- Muslims in the US South (with a focus on Atlanta)
- Killing/Sacrificing Animals
- Performing Muslims
- Islam and Theory (with reference to the work of Talal Asad)

- Borders and Borderlands
- Islam and the Digital Humanities
- Destruction of Sacred Space

The Study of Islam section seeks to encourage and facilitate dialogue between panelists before, during, and immediately following individual presentations. To this end, it is essential that presenters commit to providing the full text of their presentation for pre-circulation among panel participants at least three weeks before the conference (i.e., Monday November 2, 2015).

All proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria: a descriptive title, a clearly formulated argument; engagement with secondary literature; articulation of a contribution to the field; and clearly identified methodology and sources. Further suggestions for AAR proposal writers can be found in Kecia Ali's "Writing a Successful Annual Meeting Proposal":

<https://www.aarweb.org/annual-meeting/writing-successful-annual-meeting-...>

#### Mission Statement:

This Section is the home for the academic study of Islam within the AAR. This Section encompasses various approaches and subjects, from Qur'anic studies to modern reform movements, and from textual research to sociology. The Section also has an enduring interest in pedagogical issues associated with the teaching of Islam. The purpose of the Section is both to provide a forum for dialogue among differing approaches and projects within Islamic studies and to provide opportunities for the discussion of work that affects the overall field of the study of religion. We normally meet for five to seven sessions at each Annual Meeting. We coordinate our work with other Islam-related AAR Program Units, including the Contemporary Islam Group, the Islamic Mysticism Group, and the Qur'an Group.

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

#### Leadership:

Chair - Colby, Frederick, University of Oregon, [fscolby@uoregon.edu](mailto:fscolby@uoregon.edu)

Chair - Hammer, Juliane, University of North Carolina, [jhammer@email.unc.edu](mailto:jhammer@email.unc.edu)

## Study of Judaism Section

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#### Call Text:

This Section welcomes individual paper, papers session, and roundtable proposals from the wide scope of Judaism, Jews, and Jewish studies—from late antiquity to the present. For 2015, we are particularly interested in the following topics:

- Jews, Judaism, and Anthropology of Religion

- Judaism, Economics, and Class
- Teaching Judaism in the University Classroom
- Non-Jews and Jewish studies
- Judaism in light of horror and catastrophe (might include anything from climate change to ISIL to zombies)

Mission Statement:

The goal of this Section is to develop and expand the relationship between the study of Judaism and the broader study of religion. We work to meet this goal in three primary ways:

Methodologically

Topically

By co-sponsorship with other Program Units

First, this Section engages in active conversation with the methodologies common to the study of religion by exploring the historical, social, aesthetic, and political aspects of Jewish religion in its various contexts. All the while, we challenge methodologies in place at the AAR and offer new approaches to the study of religion through our focus on textual studies and the engagement between texts/doctrines and other aspects of religious culture. Second, we wrestle with topics of concern to the community of religious scholars in general, including community and commitment, gender, and the intersection between religion and politics. Finally, we actively pursue co-sponsorship with other AAR Program Units. Recently, we have worked with the Study of Islam Section, the Mysticism Group, the Theology and Continental Philosophy Group, and several SBL Sections. In the future, we look forward to continuing to work with various AAR — and, whenever possible, SBL — Program Units.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Imhoff, Sarah, Indiana University, Bloomington, [seimhoff@indiana.edu](mailto:seimhoff@indiana.edu)

Chair - Hughes, Aaron W., University of Rochester, [aaron.hughes@rochester.edu](mailto:aaron.hughes@rochester.edu)

## Tantric Studies Group

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Call Text:

The Tantric Studies Group invites individual paper, pre-formed paper panel, and/or roundtable panel proposals concerning subjects related to the study of Tantra across Asia and beyond. All methodological approaches are welcomed and supported by the Group. So too is the study of Tantra in all its various religious instantiations and in any historical time period from its earliest antiquity to the present. The following list of

panel themes, offered in no particular order, include those proposed at our annual Business Meeting in San Diego at the 2014 AAR National Meeting. Panel proposals for the 2015 meeting are *not* limited to these themes, and those listed are only some among the full range of possibilities. Those interested in the themes here catalogued should contact the persons who proposed the topics. Their contact information is included for just this reason. General queries can be addressed to the co-chairs of the Tantric Studies Group. We look forward to another productive program of the Tantric Studies Group in the 2015 Annual Meeting!

1. Tantra in Practice: Shifting Ground Realities (proposed by Sravana Borkatky Varma, [sb23@rice.edu](mailto:sb23@rice.edu) )
2. Tantra and Advaita (proposed by Jason Schwartz, [j\\_schwartz@umail.ucsb.edu](mailto:j_schwartz@umail.ucsb.edu) )
3. Tantra and Phenomenology (proposed by James Morley, [jmorley@ramapo.edu](mailto:jmorley@ramapo.edu) )
4. Tantra and Scholasticism (proposed by Jason Schwartz, [j\\_schwartz@umail.ucsb.edu](mailto:j_schwartz@umail.ucsb.edu) )
5. Tantric Practice and the Literary (proposed by John Campbell, [jrc4aa@virginia.edu](mailto:jrc4aa@virginia.edu) )
6. A possible joint panel with the Western Esotericism Group (proposed by Jason Schwartz, [j\\_schwartz@umail.ucsb.edu](mailto:j_schwartz@umail.ucsb.edu) )
7. Time and History in Tantra (Takahiko Kameyama, [takkame@gmail.com](mailto:takkame@gmail.com))
8. Tantric Studies and Methodological Issues in the Study of Religion (John Nemeč, [nemeč@virginia.edu](mailto:nemeč@virginia.edu) )

#### Mission Statement:

This Group brings together scholars who utilize a range of methodological and theoretical perspectives in their studies of the complex religious, social, and cultural phenomena known collectively as tantra. "Tantra" refers to a range of esoteric religious traditions that developed in India and were disseminated throughout Asia during the first millennium CE. These diverse traditions have used mental and bodily disciplines, devotional and ritual practices, and gendered cosmologies, and have created elaborate artistic as well as sociopolitical systems. The collective study of tantra has led to several important conclusions:

The demonstrated diversity of tantric practices and ideologies demands a plurality of methods, theories, and interpretative strategies by scholars

These richly varied tantric traditions became, by the twelfth century CE, central to many Asian religious and sociopolitical systems, including those of India, Nepal, Tibet, Mongolia, Cambodia, Japan, and China

Since the early twentieth century, various traditional Asian forms of tantra have been brought to the Western world and are undergoing a vital process of reinterpretation and appropriation. Our goal is to provide a venue for scholars of different areas of tantric studies to collaborate across traditional boundaries of religious traditions (e.g., Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism), present-day nation-states, geography (e.g., India, Tibet, China, Japan), and academic disciplines (e.g., history of religions, anthropology, art history, linguistics, sociology). We seek to be a cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary enterprise. Tantra as a set of practices — a religious technology — and as a set of doctrines explaining, justifying, and rationalizing those practices in fact exists across religious, national, and geographical boundaries. For example, an adequate understanding of Japanese Tantric Buddhist practice and doctrine requires not only locating it in an East Asian Buddhist context, but also in an Indian and South Asian context where the juxtaposition of Buddhist and Hindu tantras can fruitfully reveal aspects that might otherwise remain obscured. Similarly, by setting Buddhist materials in relation to Hindu traditions — both of which might otherwise be seen either as uniquely Hindu or Buddhist — will be highlighted as part of a broader, shared tantric discourse. This Group will also allow scholars to present new methodologies for the study of tantra and help to bridge more traditional academic approaches, such as textual-based and fieldwork-based studies. We seek to further the study of tantra as a global, transnational phenomena and as an important new religious movement. Finally, the Group will also explore new perspectives for studies of gender, power, identity, and sexuality that are so germane to modern religious scholarship.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Nemeč, John, University of Virginia, [nemec@virginia.edu](mailto:nemec@virginia.edu)

Chair - Biernacki, Loriliai, University of Colorado, [loriliai.biernacki@colorado.edu](mailto:loriliai.biernacki@colorado.edu)

## Teaching Religion Section

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Call Text:

Teaching Religion Section

Call for Papers:

This Section critically examines pedagogical theory and practice. Proposals are sought 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. For 2014, paper and panel proposals that address the following themes are especially welcome:

Teaching Tactics:

1. Teaching a tactic: We invite the demonstration of a teaching tactic and participating with the audience. Please submit a short description of what you will do in the allotted time (approximately 15 minutes). The tip should be submitted in the format available on the Wabash Center for Teaching Theology and Religion webpage: <http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/journal/article2.aspx?id=14417>
2. Teaching tactics on reading: How do we help students to read effectively and critically? The tip should be submitted in the format available on the Wabash Center for Teaching Theology and Religion webpage: <http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/journal/article2.aspx?id=14417>
3. We invite papers for the following:
  1. A co-sponsored session with SARTS: teaching through music: what does it mean to privilege a musical text rather than to use it as illustration.
  2. Service Learning 2.0: Developments in service learning: engaged learning, working with community partners, etc.
  3. Using technology practically: How can we use classical technology (like PowerPoint) and new technologies (like e-readers, iPhones, etc.) in practical ways in the classroom? How can these devices aid in assessment and in student learning in critical thinking skills?
4. Open call

Mission Statement:

This Section critically examines pedagogical theory and practice. We invite proposals that join innovative teaching practice with the scholarship of teaching and learning. Preference will be given to presentation formats that model engaged, interactive, and experiential pedagogy.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Bassett, Molly, Georgia State University, [mbassett@gsu.edu](mailto:mbassett@gsu.edu)

Chair - Howell, David B., Ferrum College, [dhowell@ferrum.edu](mailto:dhowell@ferrum.edu)

## Theology and Continental Philosophy Group

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Call Text:

We invite proposals for papers or panels that take up theological reflection in any religious tradition in response to: Hardt and Negri's critique of political theology; New Materialisms, Object Oriented Ontologies, and/or relational ontologies; critiques of the secular (Asad, Mahmood, Agrama, e.g.); intersections of yoga's theological and ethical traditions (contemporary and historical) and continental philosophy.

Another focus comes from a quad-sponsored proposal with the Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Group, the Lesbian-Feminist Issues in Religion Group, and the Queer Studies and Religion Group. With this focus, we are especially interested in papers that discuss Lynne Huffer's books *Mad for Foucault* (Columbia University Press, 2009) and *Are the Lips a Grave?* (Columbia University Press, 2013) for an "author-meets-critics" panel.

Proposals that address topics of interest not mentioned above are also welcome.

Finally, we encourage submissions that explore the intersections of yoga's theological and ethical traditions (both contemporary and historical) with those of continental philosophy (for a possible co-sponsored session with the Yoga in Theory and Practice Group)

Mission Statement:

This Group seeks to further discussions at the intersection of post-Kantian philosophy in its various permutations with historical and contemporary theological reflection. While we remain centered on continental European thought on the philosophical side, the term "theology" in our parlance extends to critical reflection on a range of religions worldwide. Contact the Program Unit Chairs if you seek further information on the Group's activities.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Armour, Ellen T., Vanderbilt University, [ellen.t.armour@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:ellen.t.armour@vanderbilt.edu)

## Theology and Religious Reflection Section

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Call Text:

The section invites proposals that address the following topics and issues:

1. Tyler Roberts, *Encountering Religion: Responsibility and Criticism after Secularism* (Columbia): we invite proposals responding to this text, especially as they relate to the Annual Meeting's theme of "valuing the study of religion".
2. Angels and Demons: we invite papers drawing from both historical and contemporary sources to consider how these categories have been appropriated in the past and/or might be revised and put to new use in the present.
3. Mapping the "Material Turn" in Religion: this call invites proposals that engage in meta-analysis regarding the state of the field. What are the next questions that we should be asking about the study of religion and bodies?
4. God and Religion in the Next U.S. War: how might scholars enhance public deliberation about military action? How might theology and religion be used to support or resist the next run-up to war?
5. Womanism and the Phenomenological Tradition. What resources and liabilities do phenomenologists such as Merleau-Ponty, Marion, and others bring to womanist discourses?
6. Posthumanism and religious experience. How does the reorganization of the human sensorium through shifts in digital connectivity and/or isolation impact religious experience?
7. Models for "Public Theology": what does public theology include? What are its advantages, liabilities, institutional parameters, personal risks, and more effective modes?

Religion, Class, and the Academy: For a quad-sponsored session with the Liberation Theologies Group, the Religion and Cities Group, and the Class, Religion, and Theology Group we are inviting papers that address the relevance of issues of class, religion, and theology to the academy and academics, including issues of academic labor and how class affects academic production more broadly conceived (in particular teaching and writing). In these papers we also encourage reflections on place. How do issues of class, religion, and theology shape up in the academy in relation to the various locations of academic production in large cities, towns, and rural areas?

We will participate in a prearranged quad-sponsored author-meets-critic session on Reggie Williams's *Bonhoeffer's Black Jesus: Harlem Renaissance Theology and an Ethic of Resistance* (Waco: Baylor,

2014). Critics: Jennifer McBride, J. Kameron Carter, Keri Day, Clifford Green. The session is quad-sponsored with the Black Theology Group, the Bonhoeffer: Theology and Social Analysis Group; the Christian Theological Research Fellowship. This panel will be prearranged, proposals will not be considered. Advance inquiries, however, are welcome via email to the group chairs.

**Mission Statement:**

This Section promotes new constructive work that is in dialogue with the historical theological traditions on the one hand, and with all aspects of the contemporary context on the other — intellectual movements, methodologies, multiple theological and religious perspectives, and ethical/social/political contexts. We have continued to indicate more specific topics in our annual call for papers, which we believe adds to the relevance and interest of the sessions.

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

**Method of submission:**

PAPERS

**Leadership:**

Chair - Moore, Brenna, Fordham, [brmoore@fordham.edu](mailto:brmoore@fordham.edu)

Chair - Jones, Tamsin, Trinity College, [tamsin.jones@trincoll.edu](mailto:tamsin.jones@trincoll.edu)

## Theology of Martin Luther King Jr. Group

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**Call Text:**

The Theology of Martin Luther King Jr. Group invites proposals that identify new functional narratives of the Civil Rights Movement in the current moment of social activism. For our 2015 meeting, we are especially interested in proposals that address the following:

Theological praxis for the Church and the role of clergy in social protest

The relevance of Martin Luther King, Jr. in the twenty-first century

Artistic expressions (graphic arts, music, spoken word, etc.) as transmission vehicles for nonviolent principles

Martin Luther King Jr. and militarism

Bridging the current generational divide among civil rights scholars and activists

The Civil Rights movement and new iterations of public protest, with special attention to reconsiderations of the Montgomery Bus Boycott on the occasion of its 60th anniversary (for a possible co-sponsored session with the Afro-American Religious History Group).

**Mission Statement:**

The work of this Group is focused on creating conversations around the unique contributions of Martin Luther King Jr. to the Christian theological tradition in the twentieth century and to the religious, cultural, political, and economic consequences of his work. We are particularly interested in the many facets of the

Civil Rights Movement, of which King was a significant part. These explorations have included a focus on the role of women in the movement, the economic dimensions of King's work, and his use of both the theological traditions and rhetoric of the Black Church. In all of our sessions we are interested in fostering inter- and multidisciplinary approaches to this project.

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Jackson-Weaver, Karen, Princeton University, [kjweaver@princeton.edu](mailto:kjweaver@princeton.edu)

Chair - Mingo, AnneMarie, Pennsylvania State University, [annemariemingo@aol.com](mailto:annemariemingo@aol.com)

## Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Group

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Call Text:

The Tibetan and Himalayan Religions Group promotes scholarship about all aspects of religion in Tibet and Himalaya, broadly defined. We solicit proposals for individual papers, fully formed panels, and roundtables in sessions lasting 90 or 150 minutes. Preference is generally given to complete panels. Additionally, we encourage proposals that make creative use of the ninety-minute session and that foster discussion and group engagement.

Possibilities include short sessions with just 1 or 2 presenters (or perhaps one presenter and a respondent), reading a text together, book panels, precirculating papers, etc. We further encourage proposals that seek cosponsorship with other AAR program units.

Specific topics of interest for 2015 mentioned at the recent THRG business meeting include:

- "Tibet and the Himalaya in Pop Culture", contact Adam Krug (UCSB) at [adam\\_c\\_krug@umail.ucsb.edu](mailto:adam_c_krug@umail.ucsb.edu)
- "Female Narrative Literature in Tibet," contact Jue Liang (UVa) at [jl4nf@virginia.edu](mailto:jl4nf@virginia.edu)
- Animals in Tibetan and Himalayan Religions. Eric Mortensen (Guilford College) [emortens@guilford.edu](mailto:emortens@guilford.edu)
- Tibetan Teachers and Performativity in Narratives. Liz Monson (Harvard) [elmonson@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:elmonson@fas.harvard.edu)

Mission Statement:

This Group's mission is to create an environment that promotes discussion among scholars taking diverse approaches to the study of Tibetan and Himalayan religions. Our identity and cohesion derive from the fact that we deal with a delimited geocultural space, but the intellectual excitement comes from the fact that we are specialists in different historical periods and cultural areas, from the fact that we are interested in different religious traditions, and from the fact that we have different methodological approaches to the study of religion. In particular, we encourage scholarship that approaches Tibetan and Himalayan religions through a wide range of approaches:

Multidisciplinary Focus — we are committed to methodological diversity and to promoting scholarship that challenges the traditional disciplinary dichotomies through which the field has defined itself, such as text/practice, written/oral, philology/ethnography, and humanistic/social scientific study

Transregional Focus — we encourage a holistic approach to the study of Tibet and the Himalaya as a region, albeit a diverse one. One of the most important features of religious traditions in our field — perhaps in every field — is the degree to which they are inextricably connected, and it is only through the exploration of such interconnections that the phenomenon of religion in the Tibeto-Himalayan region can be understood. Such interconnections often cut across ethnonational boundaries

Focus on Cultural History — in the last decade, the study of Asian religions has taken a drastic cultural/historical turn. Nowhere is this more evident than in the study of Tibetan and Himalayan religions. A previous generation of scholars was concerned principally with elite religious institutions — and more specifically with their doctrinal/philosophical texts. Today scholarship is much more diverse. A new generation of scholars is concerned, for example, with folk religious practices, religion and material culture, the politics of religious institutions, the representation of Tibetan religions in the media, and the historical construction of the field itself.

This Group is committed to fostering such a multifaceted approach to the cultural history of Tibet and the Himalayas.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Bogin, Benjamin, Georgetown University, [bbogin@skidmore.edu](mailto:bbogin@skidmore.edu)

Chair - Jacoby, Sarah, Northwestern University, [s-jacoby@northwestern.edu](mailto:s-jacoby@northwestern.edu)

## Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture Group

Call Text:

In honor of the 50th anniversary of Paul Tillich's death on October 13, 1965, we call for papers that assess Tillich's impact in a variety of areas, such as philosophical theology, religion and science, black theology, feminist theology, Asian theology, art(s) and religion, and popular culture.

We are also interested in papers that explore future possibilities for incorporating Tillich's ideas. For example, in his last public lecture in Chicago, Tillich specifically stated that his hope for the future of Christian theology lay in its encounter with world religions. What progress has been made in interreligious dialogue, and what remains to be accomplished? Papers that address other aspects of the range, diversity, and depth of Tillich's thought, past, present, and future, are welcome.

We also welcome suggestions for roundtable sessions. A roundtable session has one announced theme and participants in the session address that theme but do not present separate formal papers. Please provide information about the theme under consideration, a list of participants' names and institutions of affiliation, the name of the person who will preside, and the name of the person(s) asked to respond (if applicable.)

Mission Statement:

This Group fosters scholarship and scholarly exchanges that analyze, criticize, and interpret the thought or impact of Paul Tillich (1886–1965) and that use his thought — or use revisions of or reactions against his thought — to deal with contemporary issues in theology, religion, ethics, or the political, social,

psychotherapeutic, scientific, or artistic spheres of human culture. We cooperate with the North American Paul Tillich Society (a Related Scholarly Organization of the AAR), which is linked with the German, French, and other Tillich societies. Papers at our sessions are published in the Society's quarterly Bulletin without prejudice to their also appearing elsewhere.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

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

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

Leadership:

Chair - Burch, Sharon Peebles, Interfaith Counseling Center, San Anselmo, CA, [spburch@att.net](mailto:spburch@att.net)

Chair - Ray, Stephen G., Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, [stephen.ray@garrett.edu](mailto:stephen.ray@garrett.edu)

## Traditions of Eastern Late Antiquity Group

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Call Text:

For the AAR meeting in Atlanta, Nov 2015, we would like to propose two panels:

- 1) In this panel we will review Shai Secunda's new book, *The Iranian Talmud: Reading the Bavli in its Sasanian Context* (U Penn, 2014). The panelists will be pre-chosen and invited to participate by the steering committee. Shai Secunda will serve as respondent.
- 2) Our second session will be an open call for papers in our general topic: We will consider all papers that study 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 in late antiquity.
- 3) We are cosponsoring a session with the SBL Religious Worlds of Late Antiquity group. This session focuses on the concepts of "Christianization" and "Islamification" in Late Antiquity. We are particularly interested in proposals that wed focused examination of specific case studies with broader critical reflection on the terminology, categories, and questions at play within these fields of study.
- 4) We are also cosponsoring a session with IQSA in their new Late Antiquity session on pre-Islamic Arabia.

Mission Statement:

This program unit focused on Late Antiquity in the East aims to provide a home for the study of religious traditions that are rooted in Mesopotamia, Persia, and western Asia, particularly those parts that were outside the Roman cultural reach such as Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, and Mandaeism. While the group will focus on late antiquity, many of these traditions, and particularly their extant texts come to us from much later periods, and this scholarly issue will be part of our discussions. In addition, many of the traditions that were born in this time and place also spread to other parts of the world, and the study of them in those forms and contexts also has a place within this program unit, as does investigation of their response to the rise of Islam in the region. In addition, this group's focus is not exclusively on those traditions that developed uniquely in this region, but also those which, when transplanted there, had significant evolutions in that milieu that differ from their counterparts in other times and places (e.g. Christianity, Judaism). We likewise encourage research which focuses on the interaction between the various communities and traditions of this place and time.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

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

Leadership:

Chair - McGrath, James, Butler University, [jfmcgrat@butler.edu](mailto:jfmcgrat@butler.edu)

Chair - Koltun-Fromm, Naomi, Haverford College, [nkoltunf@haverford.edu](mailto:nkoltunf@haverford.edu)

## Transformative Scholarship and Pedagogy Group

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Call Text:

Call for Papers

This Group offers a forum for developing transformative strategies for integrating activism, education, and scholarship. This includes learning and research in conversation with activist communities, thus allowing our understanding of religious traditions, culture, and knowledge itself to be challenged and shaped by such engagement. We invite proposals on the following topics:

- Papers, paper session, or roundtable discussions that explore engagements between scholars, teachers, and activists in the Atlanta area.
- Individual papers or a coordinated papers session exploring any of the following: teaching climate change in religion/religious studies classrooms: strategies, projects, partners; the impacts of Katrina, ten years later, on pedagogies and scholarship; pedagogies for racial justice in today's police state; issues surrounding "work/life balance" in the academy and in activism, including critical approaches to the use of this terminology itself, for possible publication on an expanded site for AAR's *Religious Studies News* focusing on work/life balance.
- For a possible co-sponsored session with the Liberal Theologies group: Teaching for transformation in online environments--What are best practices to connect students with activist communities in geographically dispersed online teaching? How do virtual bodies impact transformative online teaching? Does online education open up possibilities for transformation that face-to-face education limits?
- The Group will also participate with the History of Christianity Section; the Practical Theology Group; the Latina/o Religion, Culture, and Society Group in a quad-sponsored panel that takes its starting point from the just-published third volume on theological education in North America by historian Glenn Miller. This quad-sponsored panel takes its starting point from the just-published third volume on theological education in North America by historian Glenn Miller. The volume, *Piety and Plurality* (Cascade Press, 2014), covers the tumultuous period between 1960 and today. [The previous volumes, which Dr. Miller has been at work on since the 1970s, are *Piety and Intellect* (the Colonial era up to the Civil War) and *Piety and Profession* (1870-1970). We welcome papers engaging ways to understand both the diversification of places of theological education as well as multiplication of theologies and pedagogies used which force rethinking the landscape of North American theological education in its broadest sense. We are especially interested in theological education at the popular level, including Bible Institutes, but also base communities, and independent networks and institutes. Of special interest are theological educational developments within Pentecostal and Latino/a traditions, and mega-church-based models. We also seek examples of theological education rooted in transformative pedagogies, experiential learning, or other alternative models for theological education.

Creative presentation formats are encouraged.

Mission Statement:

This Group seeks to provide a forum for exploring transformative scholarship and pedagogy across religious traditions and scholarly disciplines, challenging the traditional boundaries between scholarship and activism while experimenting with alternative teaching strategies, address pedagogical issues in relation to social transformation. We seek to develop models of transformational pedagogy that assist educators to combine social analysis, social action, and academic vocations of teaching, administration, and research.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Ray, Darby, Bates College, [dray3@bates.edu](mailto:dray3@bates.edu)

Chair - Lettini, Gabriella, Starr King School for the Ministry and Graduate Theological Union, [glettini@sksm.edu](mailto:glettini@sksm.edu)

## Transhumanism and Religion Group

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Call Text:

This Group welcomes papers on any aspect of transhumanism and religion and seeks perspectives from a variety of religious traditions. We encourage feminist, queer, postmodern, and postcolonial analyses and more overtly philosophical critiques of posthuman discourse. Original research is a priority. Papers may identify and critically evaluate any implicit religious beliefs, practices, and values that might underlie key transhumanist claims, goals, values, and assumptions. For example, are there operative notions of anthropology, soteriology, ethics, embodiment, and eschatology at play in transhumanist quests? Papers might consider how transhumanism challenges religious traditions to develop their own ideas of the human future; in particular, the prospect of human transformation, whether by technological or other means. Papers may provide critical and constructive assessments of an envisioned future that places greater confidence in nanotechnology, cognitive science, robotics, and information technology to achieve virtual immortality and create a superior posthuman species. In accordance with the 2015 AAR theme ("Valuing Religion"), we are particularly interested in papers that address why religion is important to the transhumanist conversation.

We also are interested in receiving proposals that focus on potential modification of the human mind for a possible session cosponsored with the Cognitive Science of Religion Group.

Topic/Title: "Can we now hack the religious mind?" (for possible co-sponsorship with the Transhumanism and Religion Group)

Papers Session Proposal Organizer: Don Braxton, [don.braxton@gmail.com](mailto:don.braxton@gmail.com)

"Cognitive Science has made significant progress in explaining how the normal human mind produces religious ideas. What it has not done, and cannot do as a science, is offer advice on how to put that knowledge to use to improve human life. By contrast, transhumanism seeks explicitly to put scientific knowledge to work to improve human life beyond its normal functioning. This panel wants to place these two intellectual currents in dialogue to see how the mind, as cognitive science explains it, can be upgraded in

terms of the quality of religious life. What counts as an upgrade is left to the panel participants to articulate and defend.

Papers are welcome on topics that include:

- How can we limit or eliminate the least desirable outputs of religion (e.g. tribal violence, science denial, etc.) in our world given what cognitive science tells us?
- How can we encourage the most desirable outputs of religion (e.g. prosocial behavior, self-esteem improvement) in our world given what cognitive science tells us?
- Are there novel forms of religion that might be possible with a little mind-tweaking? If so, what are they, and why do you think such novel forms are possible?"

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, enhancing human mental and physical abilities deemed desirable and the ameliorating aspects of the human condition regarded as undesirable. These enhancements include the radical extension of healthy human life. If these enhancements become widely available, it would arguably have a more radical impact than any other development in human history — one need only reflect briefly on the economic, political, and social implications of some of the extreme enhancement possibilities. The implications for religion and the religious dimensions of human enhancement technologies are enormous and are addressed in our Group. We are interested in encouraging and providing a forum for a broad array of input from scholars, including Asian and feminist perspectives. To be placed on a very occasional mailing list, contact Calvin Mercer, East Carolina University, [mercerc@ecu.edu](mailto:mercerc@ecu.edu) .

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Cole-Turner, Ronald S., Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, [coleturn@pts.edu](mailto:coleturn@pts.edu)

Chair - Trothen, Tracy J., Queen's University, [trothent@queensu.ca](mailto:trothent@queensu.ca)

## Vatican II Studies Group

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Call Text:

Catholicism vis-à-vis Modernity and Beyond: Religious Liberty, Other Faiths and "Signs of the Times"  
The Second Vatican Council marked a historic turn to the world by the Catholic Church, reflecting a renewed consciousness of its mission. Fifty years ago, in 1965, the Council approved two landmark documents on religious freedom and on the Church in the modern world. For the 2015 AAR annual convention we invite contributions to the ways in which the Declaration on religious freedom (*Dignitatis Humanae*) and the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in modern and contemporary times (*Gaudium et Spes*) are emblematic of a new attitude of engagement with society, culture, and the religious other, on their reception and continuing significance in the context of the twentieth- and twenty first centuries. Among topics that might be considered:

- The drafting, composition, disagreements and controversies over the texts of *Dignitatis Humanae* and *Gaudium et Spes*, as well as key conciliar and scholarly figures involved;
- The debate in the United States and other contexts concerning religious freedom and public life, in light of *Dignitatis Humanae* and *Gaudium et Spes*;
- The role of *Dignitatis Humanae* in the resistance to the Second Vatican Council by traditionalists;

- Discerning the “signs of the times” (*Gaudium et Spes*, par. 4) emerging in twenty-first century;
- The legacy and continued relevance of *Gaudium et Spes* for differing pastoral and missional contexts today (e.g. in Latin American, Africa, Asia, or with reference to pope Francis' ecclesial priorities).

The Second Vatican Council represents a shift in the attitude of the Catholic Church towards non-Christian religions both at the theological and existential level. This was manifest especially in the declaration *Nostra Aetate*, approved and promulgated fifty years ago, on October 28, 1965: “The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions” (Vatican II, *Nostra Aetate*, par. 2).

Along with the Ecclesiological Investigations Group, the Interfaith and Interreligious Studies Group, and the Jewish-Christian Dialogue and Sacred Texts Group (SBL), the Vatican II Studies Group welcomes proposals on the following topics related to the declaration of Vatican II *Nostra Aetate* on non-Christian religions:

The appreciation of the importance of the Jewish people and their covenant for Christians in *Nostra Aetate* paragraph 4.

The role of the Buddhism and Hinduism as “*religiones antiquae*” (paragraph 2), and of Muslims (paragraph 3) in relationship to Judaism in the history of the text of *Nostra Aetate*.

The role of the Shoah in placing the “Jewish question” on the conciliar agenda and the political and religious history of the Middle East as the background of the theological debates on inter-religious dialogue in the (Catholic) Church(es) in the 1960 and at Vatican II.

The intervention of political-diplomatic tensions between Israel and Arab countries in the agenda of Vatican II about inter-religious dialogue.

The reception of *Nostra Aetate* in its intertwining with the history of religious coexistence in these last 50 years.

The role of *Nostra Aetate* and its reception in the theology of religions, in the emergence of comparative theology, and in inter-religious dialogue today.

#### Mission Statement:

From 2012 to 2016, this Group will pay scholarly attention to the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), one of the most significant events in the history of the Catholic Church — an event that had wide-ranging implications for other faiths, other Christian churches, and for the wider world alike. This Group has a double focus. On one hand, we focus on deepening the understanding of the history of Vatican II, its link with movements of renewal in Catholic theology and in the Church in the decades prior to Vatican II, the history of the reception of the Council, and the redaction history of the different documents of the Council. On the other hand, we have a strong theological focus and will pay attention both to hermeneutical issues connected to methods of interpreting conciliar teaching and to the interpretation of the most important documents of Vatican II in the year of their anniversary, starting with the liturgical constitution (1963–2013). By looking more closely at the past, our Group hopes to promote conciliarity and synodality in the Christian churches in the present.

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

#### Leadership:

Chair - Faggioli, Massimo, University of St. Thomas, Minnesota, [massimo.faggioli@gmail.com](mailto:massimo.faggioli@gmail.com)

Chair - De Mey, Peter, Catholic University of Leuven, [peter.demey@theo.kuleuven.be](mailto:peter.demey@theo.kuleuven.be)

## Video Gaming and Religion Seminar

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### **Mission Statement:**

Just like films helped to illuminate and expose the religiosity of the twentieth century, video games now depict the religious within the twenty-first century. "Video games" describes electronic forms of play across all platforms, from personal computers, consoles to mobile devices. Often in the religious studies video gaming is not taken seriously. We aim to correct this by establishing and maintaining a multidisciplinary network for the discussion of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of religion and video gaming. We will collect, systematize and develop the various recent multidisciplinary approaches to research and teaching. We have two specific deliverables for the end of the five-year period. First, we will craft an edited volume, tentatively titled *Video Games and Religion: Methods and Approaches* that will bring together the cutting edge work of leading scholars in this emerging field. Second we will publish our results from our seminar in a special issue of the online journal *gamevironments*.

### **Call for Papers:**

In the first year of the seminar in 2015 we are planning a pre-arranged roundtable to present and critically discuss possible contributions to the edited volume on *Video Games and Religion: Methods and Approaches*.

### **Method:**

PAPERS

### **Process:**

Other (please explain below)

### **Comments:**

Pre-arranged roundtable only.

### **Chairs**

Chair - Grieve, Gregory, University of North Carolina-Greenville, [gggrieve@uncg.edu](mailto:gggrieve@uncg.edu)

Chair - Radde-Antweiler, Kerstin, University of Bremen, [radde@uni-bremen.de](mailto:radde@uni-bremen.de)

## Wesleyan Studies Group

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### Call Text:

1) "Wesleyan Culture and the Public Square since the Mid-Twentieth Century"

This session will focus on late twentieth and early twenty-first century leaders whose lives in the public square have been explicitly influenced by Wesleyan perspectives. Papers must draw explicit connections between the person's work in the public square and the influence of Methodism. Political leaders might include Nelson Mandela, Margaret Thatcher, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, George W. Bush, or Boris Trajkovski. Public figures might include Beyoncé, Martin Luther King, Jr. (relating to his formation at Methodist-related Boston University), Branch Rickey, or Jackie Robinson.

2) "Unity/Disunity in the Wesleyan Family"

This session will focus on key moments when divisive issues have led to significant fracturing and realignment within in the Wesleyan family. We call for papers that will examine such key moments that emerged with respect to ethical, theological, social, racial, gender, sexual, and economic issues. Question of particular interest are the following: What factors lay in the foreground and background? How long lasting were these divisions? Did they contribute in the end to weakening and/or strengthening the Wesleyan family? Did they contribute to different forms of unity? How might the contemporary Wesleyan family learn from these moments?

### 3) "The Role of Arminius in Wesleyan and Reformed Theology" [Jointly Sponsored with the Reformed Theology Group]

This session calls for papers that consider Jacob Arminius and the reception of his theological perspective in Wesleyan and Reformed communities. How have these communities historically represented Arminius? Do these perspectives prove to be historically accurate? For instance, to what extent can 18th century Anglicanism be characterized as Calvinist? To what extent can Methodism be seen as an expression of Calvinism? Could a reconsideration of Arminius contribute to a rapprochement between Reformed and Wesleyan churches? Historical and constructive proposals that address issues broadly pertaining to both of these traditions and communities are encouraged.

#### Mission Statement:

This Group seeks to promote the critical understanding and appropriation of Wesleyan traditions. Our sessions are purposefully structured to encourage not only historical/sociological studies, but also theological reflection, critique, and extension. We understand Wesleyan traditions to include Methodist, Holiness, and other related strands of Christian tradition.

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

#### Leadership:

Chair - Campbell, Ted, Southern Methodist University, [tedc@smu.edu](mailto:tedc@smu.edu)

Chair - Pope-Levison, Priscilla, Seattle Pacific University, [popep@spu.edu](mailto:popep@spu.edu)

## Western Esotericism Group

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#### Call Text:

The Group considers proposals on any aspect in the study of Western esotericism. This year the Group invites paper proposals on the following topics:

- Western Esotericism and Animals (for a possible joint session with the Animals and Religion Group). Animals have always been a very significant presence in western esoteric discourses and practices, yet, strangely enough, they have not received much attention by scholars so far. We will have a preference for proposals dealing with the actual presence of animals in rituals and practices (as companions or as tools). However, discussions of the symbolical or allegorical presence of animals in texts and discourses will also be considered.

- Western Esotericism and Food (possibly for a joint session with the Religion and Food Group). Another case of a significant presence that has received little attention by scholars so far. Being often at the creative end of techniques for improving bodily health, rejuvenation, or even immortality, western esotericism has had a long interest in nutrition and in the preparation of elixirs and medicaments, but also in dietary requirements and regimens. Esoteric metaphors sometimes refer to processes of ingestion, digestion and excretion, and rituals of purification include indications about the preparation and consumption of food. Papers are welcome on any of these aspects.

- Western Esotericism and the Comparative Study of Religion (for a possible joint session with the Comparative Studies in Religion Section). Western esotericism has been considered by specialists as a culture-bound phenomenon, related to a specific cultural context, roughly corresponding to the Euro-American and Mediterranean geographical area and to the historical development of monotheisms. However, it would be interesting to consider in which way it could be compared to phenomena, movements, currents, and traditions from other religious cultures. Both theoretical proposals about possible approaches for comparative work on western esotericism and proposals on specific case studies are welcome.

- Western Esotericism and Ritual Studies: We are particularly interested in receiving proposals that focus on the way in which esoteric discourses often oscillate between normativity and transgression when they become embodied in rituals, for instance in gender roles and sexuality as well as in other areas. Any other aspect of the relationship between western esotericism and ritual studies will also be considered (for a possible joint session with the Ritual Studies Group).

#### Mission Statement:

This Group seeks to reflect and further stimulate the current process — reflected in the recent creation of new teaching programs, international associations, journals, book series, and reference works — of professionalization and scholarly recognition of Western esotericism as a new area of research in the study of religion. For more information on the field, see the websites of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism (ESSWE, <http://www.esswe.org>), the Association for the Study of Esotericism (ASE, <http://www.aseweb.org>), and the Center for the History of Hermetic Philosophy and Related Currents at the University of Amsterdam (<http://amsterdamhermetica.nl>). Information about the academic journal Aries and the Aries Book Series can be found on the website of Brill Academic Publishers (<http://www.brill.com/aries>; and <http://www.brill.com/publications/aries-book-series>).

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

#### Method of submission:

PAPERS

#### Leadership:

Chair - Pasi, Marco, Universiteit van Amsterdam, [m.pasi@uva.nl](mailto:m.pasi@uva.nl)

Chair - Fanger, Claire, Rice University, [claire@celestiscuria.org](mailto:claire@celestiscuria.org)

## Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Group

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#### Call Text:

Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Group

## Mission

This Womanist Approaches to Religion and Society Group provides a forum for religious scholarship that engages theoretically and methodologically the four-part definition of a Womanist as coined by Alice Walker. We nurture interdisciplinary scholarship, encourage interfaith dialogue, and seek to engage scholars and practitioners in fields outside the study of religion. We are particularly concerned with fostering scholarship that bridges theory and practice and addresses issues of public policy in church and society.

Call for Proposals:

For 2015, the Group invites critically developed individual papers, papers session, or roundtable proposals on the following topics:

- Womanist interventions against sex trafficking and mass incarceration
- Womanist thought and signifying narratives in public discourse mediated through popular culture such as in Shonda Rhimes' *Scandal*, *How to Get Away with Murder*, or Kenya Barris' *Blackish*
- Womanist methodology and interdisciplinary studies, and global perspectives on Womanist Thought

## Mission Statement:

This Group provides a forum for religious scholarship that engages theoretically and methodologically the four-part definition of a Womanist as coined by Alice Walker. We nurture interdisciplinary scholarship, encourage interfaith dialogue, and seek to engage scholars and practitioners in fields outside the study of religion. We are particularly concerned with fostering scholarship that bridges theory and practice and addresses issues of public policy in church and society.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Lightsey, Pamela, Boston University, [ronnice@bu.edu](mailto:ronnice@bu.edu)

Chair - Hucks, Tracey, Haverford College, [thucks@haverford.edu](mailto:thucks@haverford.edu)

## Women and Religion Section

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Call Text:

The Women and Religion Section invites individual papers and panel proposals from a variety of religious and cultural traditions exploring women's experiences in local and transnational contexts. We encourage the use of alternate presentation formats. We are particularly interested in proposals related to one of the following themes:

- women, gender, and secularism, secularity, and/or the secular
- religious marginalizations of and responses to abuse of female bodies
- religious texts and women: issues of exclusion/inclusion
- colonial/postcolonial (in)visibilities of women and gender
- theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of women and religion, including but not limited to: how to engage in comparative work without essentializing; ethnographic methods and questions of politics;

positionality and self-reflexivity; neocolonialism and knowledge production; the question of women's agency and problematizing the use of the term "subversive"

-sex trafficking of women and girls, particularly in Atlanta/the southern U.S.

-neoliberalism, corporate capitalism, and valuing women's bodies

-women's participation in civil rights/racial justice movements

-women and food (storage, preparation, etc)

-approaches to teaching women, gender, sexuality and religion

-gendered labor in the academy, including issues such as gender and unseen costs, paid and unpaid labor, contingent/adjunct faculty.

For a possible cosponsored session with the Religion and Migration and Childhood Studies Groups: Families in Migration: intersections between migration, women and children in any region of the world, including their religious practices and beliefs, reconstructions of religious identity, responses of religious organizations, and causes and contexts of their voluntary or forced migration (violence, economics, law, etc.).

For a possible cosponsored session with the Religion in Southeast Asia Group: Women religious in Southeast Asia: themes might include labor and relations with the state, changing ideals of domesticity and bodily comportment, and rival conceptions of agency, gender and tradition, though proposals may also be submitted on other topics.

For a possible cosponsored session with the Moral Injury and Recovery in Religion, Society, and Culture Group: moral injury in relation to issues of women and gender.

For a possible co-sponsored session with the Religions, Medicines, and Healing Group: responding theoretically and empirically to women's participation in religious healing practices; discourses of women, gender, health, and healing; and/or exploring the "gendered divisions of labor" in religious healing.

For a possible cosponsored session with the Quaker Studies Group to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Elizabeth Cady Stanton's birth: we invite papers that offer critical, historical and theological approaches to Quakerism, women and gender; present perspectives on Stanton, Mott, Anthony, and other First Wave feminist reformers; delve into tradition-specific treatments of women's religious authority, human liberation, and justice, then and now; explore ways collaboration across religious and other lines of difference have shaped women's religious thought; and/or assess contemporary engagements with the life and thought of First Wave foremothers; or compare women's theological and political coming of age in a U.S. context with the developments in feminist movements elsewhere.

Mission Statement:

This Section seeks to promote inclusivity and excellence in scholarship. We have been intentional about including participants and presenters from interdisciplinary approaches and we encourage nontraditional ways of sharing scholarly work on women in religion. In the process of making selections for Annual Meeting sessions, we work collaboratively with other Sections, Groups, and Seminars to promote scholarly conversations across fields and methodologies. We are committed to providing an inclusive scholarly environment where new voices can be heard and critical analyses of women, gender and religion can be advanced.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Whitehead, Deborah, University of Colorado, [deborah.whitehead@colorado.edu](mailto:deborah.whitehead@colorado.edu)

Chair - Abraham, Susan, Loyola Marymount University, [susan.abraham@lmu.edu](mailto:susan.abraham@lmu.edu)

## Women of Color Scholarship, Teaching, and Activism Group

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Call Text:

This group welcomes proposals in any area related to women of color scholarship, teaching, and activism. For the 2015 meeting, we are particularly interested in proposals that focus on:

women and environmental justice

immigration

constructive responses to Ferguson/Staten Island/Cleveland (police brutality/violence against black and brown bodies)

activisms around human trafficking

activisms around female incarceration

constructive approaches to violence against women (i.e. domestic violence, Nigerian girls kidnapping)

decolonization and anti-black racism

intercommunal and global responses to racism and empire (i.e. Ferguson, Walmart strikes, 43 missing Mexican students)

Mission Statement:

This Group fosters intellectual exchange in the fields of religious studies and theology as they are developing in diverse communities of color from a gendered analysis. While the AAR features Program Units from diverse communities of color, we provide a space for conversation between communities of color. This Group does not assume a prior “women of color” identity, but centers a woman of color analytic that deconstructs the intersecting logics of gender and race. At the same time, we do not hold to a “post-identity” framework and are also concerned with the status of women of color in the academy, the politics of pedagogy, and the relationship between women-of-color-centered activism and scholarship. Understanding identity as performative and shifting, we make the very category of “women of color” itself a site for political and intellectual engagement.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Marshall Turman, Eboni, Duke University, [eturman@div.duke.edu](mailto:eturman@div.duke.edu)

Chair - Kim, Grace Ji-Sun, Georgetown University, [gjskim@hotmail.com](mailto:gjskim@hotmail.com)

## World Christianity Group

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Call Text:

The World Christianity Group welcomes proposals for papers, panels, and other types of presentations on the following topics:

(1) The production of knowledge in the teaching of World Christianity, with a particular focus on Latin American Christianities. This topic has methodological, ethical, pedagogical, and other dimensions. We are open to explorations of the learning, teaching, and research use (and lack of use) of Spanish- and Portuguese-language Latin American historical, theological, sociological, and other texts and sources (oral, visual, et al.) from and about Christianity in Latin America, and to holding a bilingual session (probably Spanish/English).

(2) Radio, television, internet, film/video, and other media technologies in the practice and spread of World Christianity.

(3) Representations of Christianity as a world religion in United States public spaces – “including but not only in legislatures, schools, prisons, courtrooms, hospitals, airports, news media, the state department, the military, the arts, and popular culture.”

(language taken from AAR president-elect Thomas Tweed’s theme for the 2015 meeting, *Valuing the Study of Religion*)

(4) Historical and contemporary perspectives on mission (North-South, South-South, and South-North), gender, and postcolonial and decolonial settings.

(5) Christianity/ies in present-day China: histories and structures; denominations, churches, and non- or post-denominational Christianities; theology and ideology; religion, identity, and national politics; Christianity and socio-economic and cultural contexts; persecution; mission; relationship with other religious and wisdom traditions; regional (urban, rural) realities; worship and liturgy; Christian education and proclamation; gender, sexuality, and religion; public and private, official and covert communities and realities. (Other angles also welcome.)

(6) The World Christianity Group will also quint-sponsor a panel on Birgit Meyer's forthcoming book, *Sensational Movies: Video, Vision and Christianity in Ghana* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), in collaboration with the Anthropology of Religion Group; the Religion, Film, and Visual Culture Group; the African Religions Group; the Religion, Colonialism and Postcolonialism Group. Selection of panelists will be pre-arranged so that they may read Meyer's book as provided by the press in advance of the meetings in order to comment on it. Prof. Meyer will summarize her book's argument, and at least one panelist will comment on the methodological aspects of Prof. Meyer's book. We are soliciting no papers for this session but encouraging our members and other interested parties to attend for what will be a truly multi-disciplinary discussion focused on religion and Africa.

As always, the World Christianity Group welcomes feminist and other gendered perspectives and methods and a variety of methodological approaches.

Mission Statement:

This Group seeks to explore the intercultural, interconfessional, and interreligious dynamics of Christianity as a world religion, bringing into conversation scholars in the disciplines of history, mission studies, ecumenical studies, theology, sociology of religion, anthropology of religion, and religious studies.

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

As a rule, we use anonymous submissions via PAPERS and adhere to this conscientiously. Exceptions include special sessions, e.g. author-meets-critics sessions.

Leadership:

Chair - Hermann, Adrian, University of Munich, [adrian.hermann@gmail.com](mailto:adrian.hermann@gmail.com)

Chair - Redmont, Jane Carol, [jane.redmont@post.harvard.edu](mailto:jane.redmont@post.harvard.edu)

## Yoga in Theory and Practice Group

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Call Text:

This Group seeks individual paper, papers session, or roundtable proposals on the topic of Yoga in theory and practice from a variety of perspectives, including sociology, anthropology, history of religions, philosophy and theology, and cultural studies. We prefer complete session submissions rather than individual paper proposals whenever possible. You are encouraged to contact the co-chairs for more information about the suggested topics and to suggest other possible topics.

Suggested topics include:

Comparing the moral dimensions of yoga and other meditation or body practices (for a possible co-sponsored session with the Comparative Religious Ethics Group)

Yoga and neuroscience (for a possible co-sponsored session with the Contemplative Studies Group)

The intersections of yoga's theological and ethical traditions (both contemporary and historical) with those of continental philosophy (for a possible co-sponsored session with the Theology and Continental Philosophy Group)

Teaching yoga in the academy

Digital yoga and other yoga sites outside the ashram

Andrea R. Jain's *Selling Yoga: From Counterculture to Pop Culture* (Oxford University Press, 2014)

Mission Statement:

This Group seeks to elucidate the religious and sectarian representations of yoga in South Asian history and the contemporary yoga culture that has emerged in the past century. Among other topics that are addressed in our Group is the emergence of modern yoga out of the encounter between Indian and European cultures in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In connection with this, it examines the relative pervasiveness of spiritual and religious ideologies in manifest or latent forms within the contemporary yoga scene, and the overarching sociological relevance of yoga within global culture. We also examine changing paradigms with respect to the nature and function of yoga in the larger South Asian religious context. Our

goal is to provide a venue in which the body of scholars working in this area can collectively evaluate this timely material. We actively pursue scholars from Europe, Asia, and other areas that have worked at length on these issues, so as to bring an important international component to the Group.

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

Method of submission:  
PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Nicholson, Andrew J., Stony Brook University, [andrew.nicholson@stonybrook.edu](mailto:andrew.nicholson@stonybrook.edu)

Chair - Jain, Andrea, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, [andrjain@iupui.edu](mailto:andrjain@iupui.edu)

## Yogācāra Studies Group

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Call Text:

The Yogācāra Studies Group welcomes submissions for papers or panels relating to the philosophy, literature, or history of Yogācāra in India, East Asia, or its current influence. Successful proposals will demonstrate well thought out ideas for research and will focus on primary texts in Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese, Japanese, or other languages. Those that are innovative and that promise to break new ground in the field are most likely to be successful, as are proposals that engage with state of the art methodologies in philosophy, literary studies, or cultural studies.

At the Business Meeting, several suggestions for a text discussion panel were made: (1) the Tattvārtha chapter of the Bodhisattvabhūmi; (2) the Bahyārtha-parīkṣā chapter of the Tattvasaṃgraha; (3) the Daśabhūmika-sūtra; and (4) the Akṣayamatīrdeśa-sūtra. Anyone interested in participating in a discussion of one of these texts is encouraged to submit a proposal. Panels that are fully formed are particularly welcomed, and anyone interested in forming a group to discuss one of these texts is encouraged to recruit others to form a panel. Submissions for other texts for discussion are also welcomed.

Suggestions for topical panels are also welcomed. At the Business Meeting, the following topics were proposed: (1) how Yogācāra is read by other traditions; (2) subjectivity; (3) Yogācāra and philosophy of language. Submissions of individual papers or panels on other topics are also encouraged. We particularly encourage fully formed panels with a clear focus and conceptual coherence.

For a co-sponsored session with the Buddhist Philosophy Group and the Kierkegaard, Religion, and Culture Group, we invite proposals that address methodological and substantive issues concerning Kierkegaard and Buddhism. Possible topics include comparative approaches to issues such as the nature of the self/non-self, the scope and limits of the first-person perspective, the role of suffering in understanding the human condition, and the possibility or impossibility of seeing Kierkegaard's implicit ontology and Buddhism in phenomenological terms.

Mission Statement:

The Yogācāra tradition within Buddhism provides the seminal basis for many forms of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Yogācāra was the preeminent Buddhist school for many centuries in India, East Asia, and Tibet. Even after its relative decline as a distinct tradition, its teachings continued to provide the basis for both the theory and

practice of subsequent Buddhist Mahāyāna schools throughout Asia, and it has seen a resurgence in the 20th and 21st century in Asia, including in China, Hong Kong, Japan, and among Tibetans.

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

Method of submission:

PAPERS

Leadership:

Chair - Powers, C. John, Australian National University, [john.powers@anu.edu.au](mailto:john.powers@anu.edu.au)

Chair - Tzohar, Roy, Tel-Aviv University, [roytzo@post.tau.ac.il](mailto:roytzo@post.tau.ac.il)