

CIRCA

News from the University of Chicago Divinity School

STAGE DIRECTIONS: SCENE TWO. MY ROOM 101.

(Enter Miriam.) A woman in her early 60s strides to the front of a large lecture hall, dark wood paneling. She waits for the class to quiet down, for the school bell to fade away.

MIRIAM: (holding the book up again) This is the most powerful, and the most dangerous...text... in American culture today. And so we'd better try to understand what's in it, don't you think?*

Earlier this month I stood backstage at Joe's Pub, a venue for public performance on the east side of New York City, with playwrights Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare, actors F. Murray Abraham and Micah Stock, and popular author Bruce Feiler, waiting to go out front and do a dramatic reading of four scenes from a play in progress, *The Good Book*. This play, commissioned by Court Theatre from the authors of the highly acclaimed *An Iliad*, will have its world premier at Court on March 19, 2015. My own association with the play goes back to the spring of 2012, when Steve Albert, Executive Director of Court, whose vision is to make the theatre all the more a theatre of and not just at the University of Chicago, asked me if the Divinity School would want to be involved in a sure-to-be controversial play about the Bible. Of course we do, I said.

A creative collaboration with Lisa and Denis on their play began in my office on a Saturday in April, 2012, and has since included many hours of keen conversation about the history of the Bible (starting with my question to them 20 minutes in to our first conversation, "which Bible are you talking about?")—in terms of its composition, distribution, translation, physical formats, etc.—the history of its reception through the centuries, and its impact in contemporary American culture, both on individuals and on public life. This is the process that led to my first and only off-Broadway theatrical performance on September 15, as I read stage directions for one scene, read the part of Lydia (of Thyatira, Acts 16), and, in my largest role, that of the self-described atheist biblical scholar, Miriam, whose lines I quoted above.

Miriam is a teacher who is exasperated by her students' easy familiarity with the Bible, sense of its naturalness or inevitability,

Letter from the Dean



its benignity. In rehearsal at Joe's Pub prior to the performance I had read Miriam's lines as challenging, provoking her students in a scolding tone, insisting that they leave all that they brought to the study of the Bible behind, and enter a new conversation with new rules about it. I read her as serious, deadly serious. In the notes after the first reading, Lisa said to me: Margaret, you really need to have more fun with Miriam. She is not as severe or completely serious as you are representing her. She is also a diva, a lecturer who is known for captivating and entertaining her audiences. I guess, I said to Lisa, I'm having a hard time conveying a character who seems so contradictory to me: while demanding that her students jettison

their experiences, beliefs and values, she goes on to share much more of her own on day one (including a recurrent childhood memory) than many teachers (myself included) would be comfortable with. But in the performance I did have fun with Miriam; I camped it up a bit with "first day of the semester" bravura, playing to a crowd of ersatz students who (while eating arugula and drinking Brooklyn lager) might mistake the professor for the subject matter (and would that be a mistake, in that context?!). Many of us who teach religion (normally in classrooms, not pubs) know how to do that, have done that, feel the pull, one not unique to us among educators, but surely in our pen. How to do so with integrity, both for the subject matter and for the students? I join Miriam as an educator in the ethical commitment not to soft-peddle but to address directly the ethical dilemmas the Bible has posed and continues to pose (whether in terms of Christian anti-Judaism, or treatment of women, the LGBTQ community, justification of slavery, attitudes towards the environment). However, as an educator I think that current readers empirically will not leave all their prior experiences and assumptions at the door, nor are there only two options (leave it, bring it wholesale), but that it is essential to teach in a way that students (and professors) must

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Divinity News and Notes



Stay up-to-date with news at the Divinity School: bookmark our website at divinity.uchicago.edu, find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and sign up for our weekly email on public events in Swift Hall.

Krause and Miller Join Faculty

Two new faculty members—Richard Miller and Karin Krause—have joined us in Swift Hall.



Richard B. Miller (PhD, University of Chicago, 1985) is Professor of Religious Ethics. He comes to us from Indiana University, where he was most recently Provost Professor in Religious Studies. From 2003–13 he was Director of the Poynter Center for the Study of

Ethics and American Institutions at IU. His research interests include religion and public life, political and social ethics, theory and method in religious thought and ethics, and practical ethics. Miller is the author of *Interpretations of Conflict: Ethics, Pacifism, and the Just-War Tradition* (University of Chicago Press, 1991); *Casuistry and Modern Ethics: A Poetics of Practical Reasoning* (University of Chicago Press, 1996); *Children, Ethics, and Modern Medicine* (Indiana University Press, 2003), and *Terror, Religion, and Liberal Thought* (Columbia University Press, 2010). He is currently at work on two projects: a collection of papers

on religion, ethics, and culture; the other a critical monograph on theory and method in the academic study of religion.



Karin Krause is Assistant Professor of Byzantine Theology and Visual Culture; Affiliate Faculty, Department of Art History. She is the author of *Die illustrierten Homilien des Johannes Chrysostomos in Byzanz* (Reichert Press, 2004) and the coeditor of *Bild und Text im Mittelalter* (Böhlau Press, 2011). She is currently working on two monographs, tentatively titled “Propaganda – Cult – Scholarship. The Response to Byzantine Artifacts in Venice (13th–18th c.)” and “Confirming Authenticity: Images of Inspiration in Byzantium and Beyond.”

Most recently she has been Lecturer at the University of Basel and Visiting Lecturer at the University of Vienna.

Krause’s research interests include phenomena of cultural exchange in the Mediterranean until the early modern period, visualization strategies and text reception in the visual arts from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages, the impact of the Classical heritage on Byzantine art, and Byzantine book culture.

William Schweiker elected President of Society for Christian Ethics

William Schweiker, the Edward L. Ryerson Distinguished Service Professor of Theological Ethics and Director of the Martin Marty Center for the Advanced Study of Religion, has been elected President for the Society of Christian Ethics. He will serve as Vice President during 2014–2015, and as President during 2015–2016. An international non-denominational scholarly association, the Society of Christian Ethics promotes scholarly work in Christian ethics and in the relation of Christian ethics to other traditions of ethics, and to social, economic, political and cultural problems. The SCE promotes research in the history of ethics and moral theology, theoretical issues relating to the interplay of theology and ethics, methodology in ethical reflection



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American Academy of Arts and Sciences 2014 New Members Include Faculty and Alumni



The American Academy of Arts and Sciences has announced its elected members for 2014, which include some of the world’s most accomplished leaders from academia, business, public affairs, the humanities and the arts. All four new members in the Religious Studies category for 2014 are Divinity School affiliates: **Hans Dieter Betz**, Shailer Mathews Professor Emeritus of New Testament and alumni Catherine L. Albanese (MA 1970, PhD 1972), John B. Cobb, Jr. (MA 1949, PhD 1952), and Helen Hardacre (PhD 1980).

One of the nation’s most prestigious honorary societies, the Academy is also a leading center for independent policy research. Members contribute to Academy publications and studies of science and technology policy, energy and global security, social policy and American institutions, and the humanities, arts, and education. Members of the 2014 class include winners of the Nobel Prize; the Wolf Prize; the Pulitzer Prize; National Medal of the Arts; MacArthur, Guggenheim, and Fulbright Fellowships; and Grammy, Emmy, Oscar, and Tony Awards.

“It is a privilege to honor these men and women for their extraordinary individual accomplishments,” said Don Randel, Chair of the Academy’s Board of Directors. “The knowledge and expertise of our members give the Academy a unique capacity—and responsibility—to provide practical policy solutions to the pressing challenges of the day. We look forward to engaging our new members in this work.”

Professor Betz, the Shailer Mathews Professor Emeritus of New Testament in the Divinity School, the Department of New Testament and Early Christian Literature, and the Committee on the Ancient Mediterranean World, has been involved in international research and publication projects. He serves as editor-in-chief of the nine-volume lexicon *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, of which an English language edition, *Religion Past and Present*, is underway. Prof. Betz’s research interests focus on early Christian literature and its literary, religious, and cultural environment of the Greco-Roman world. He has published three influential commentaries in the *Hermeneia* series and several monographs, including *Lucian of Samosata and the New Testament*; *Discipleship and Imitation of Christ*; *The Apostle Paul and the Socratic Tradition*; *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount*; and two edited volumes on Plutarch and early Christian literature. Five volumes of his collected essays (in English and in German) have appeared (1990–2009) under the titles *Hellenismus und Urchristentum*; *Synoptische Studien*; *Paulinische Studien*; *Antike und Christentum*; *Paulinische Theologie und Religionsgeschichte*. A critical edition and commentary of PGM IV.475–820 appeared under the title *The ‘Mithras Liturgy’* (2003).

The Divinity School’s Alumna of the Year for 1991 and a scholar of American religious history, **Catherine Albanese** is J. F. Rowny Professor Emerita in Comparative Religions & Research Professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Her books include *Reconsidering*

Nature Religion, A Republic of Mind and Spirit: A Cultural History of American Metaphysical Religion; *America: Religions and Religion*, 5th. ed., and *Nature Religion in America: From the Algonkian Indians to the New Age*.

John B. Cobb, Jr., the Divinity School’s Alumnus of the Year for 1985, is Emeritus Professor, Claremont School of Theology and Claremont Graduate School. He has held many positions including Ingraham Professor of Theology at the Claremont School of Theology, Avery Professor at the Claremont Graduate School, Fullbright Professor at the University of Mainz, Visiting Professor at Vanderbilt, Harvard, and the University of Chicago Divinity Schools. His writings include *Christ in a Pluralistic Age*; *God and the World*; and (co-authored with Herman Daly) *For the Common Good*, which was co-winner of the Grawemeyer Award for Ideas Improving World Order.

Helen Hardacre is Reischauer Institute Professor of Japanese Religions and Society at Harvard University. Her research on religion focuses on the manner in which traditional doctrines and rituals are transformed and adapted in contemporary life. Her publications include *Marketing the Menacing Fetus in Japan* (1997), which won the Arisawa Hiromichi Prize, and *Religion and Society in Nineteenth-Century Japan: A Study of the Southern Kanto Region, Using Late Edo and Early Meiji Gazetteers* (2002). Her current research centers on the issue of constitutional revision and its effect on religious groups.

Since its founding in 1780, the Academy has elected leading “thinkers and doers” from each generation, including George Washington and Benjamin Franklin in the eighteenth century, Daniel Webster and Ralph Waldo Emerson in the nineteenth, and Margaret Meade and Martin Luther King, Jr. in the twentieth. The current membership includes more than 250 Nobel laureates and more than 60 Pulitzer Prize winners.

In Memoriam

Robert M. Grant, 1917–2014

Robert McQueen Grant passed away at his home in Hyde Park on June 10, 2014 at the age of 96. Grant was born on November 25, 1917 in Evanston, Illinois. He received the BA with distinction from Northwestern University, a BD from Union Theologic Seminary, and an STM and ThD from Harvard University. He was an ordained minister in the Protestant Episcopal Church. Grant was Carl Darling Buck Professor Emeritus of New Testament and Early Christian Literature at the University of Chicago Divinity School, where he taught from 1953 until his retirement in 1988.

Professor Grant was the most prolific and influential American historian of ancient Christianity of his generation. The author of over thirty-three books and countless articles, Grant’s work was characterized by philological exactness, a deep knowledge of the ancient world, and philosophical and theological finesse, together with a tight prose style and dry wit. Among his major works are *Miracle and Natural Law in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Thought* (1952); *The Letter and*

the Spirit (1957); *The Earliest Lives of Jesus* (1961); *Augustus to Constantine: The Rise and Triumph of Christianity in the Roman World* (1970; revised ed. 2004); *Eusebius as Church Historian* (1980); *Greek Apologists of the Second Century* (1988), *Heresy and Criticism* (1993); *Irenaeus of Lyons* (1995); and *Paul in the Roman World: the Conflict at Corinth* (2001).

Over his thirty-five year teaching career at the University of Chicago, Professor Grant taught many of the academic leaders in the field of ancient Christianity.

Grant was also an international authority on U-Boats in World War I, on which he published multiple volumes, including *U-Boats Destroyed: The Effects of Anti-Submarine Warfare 1914–1918* (1964) and, most recently, *U-Boat Hunters: Code Breakers, Divers and the Defeat of the U-Boats 1914–1918* (2004).

Over his extended career Grant received Fulbright and Guggenheim Fellowships, and held many honors, memberships and leadership roles in scholarly societies, such as president

of the Society of Biblical Literature, the Chicago Society of Biblical Research, American Society of Church History, and the North American Patristics Society. He was an elected member of the American Academy of Art and Sciences (1981).

Mr. Grant is survived by his wife, Peggy (née Margaret Huntington Horton) of Hyde Park, and their children Douglas, Peter, Jim and Susan, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



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and investigation, and comparative religious ethics. At the same time, the Society addresses in national and global contexts problems in applied and professional ethics, and various human rights and social justice issues. The SCE meets annually in conjunction with the Society for Jewish Ethics and the Society for the Study of Muslim Ethics. Among previous honors, Professor Schweiker has been Mercator Professor at Heidelberg University (2012), a Phi Beta Kappa Lecturer (2011–2012), and recipient of the University of Chicago Faculty Award for Graduate Teaching and Mentoring.

Davidson at the University Ca’Foscari

The University Ca’ Foscari, Venice will confer its highest honor on Arnold I. Davidson, naming him an honorary member of the faculty (Membro Onorario del Corpo Accademico). He will be the first American to receive this honor. The conferring of this title will take place in a formal ceremony presided over by the Rector of the Università Ca’ Foscari, Venezia and followed by a *Lectio Magistralis*. Davidson has given the *Lezioni Veneziane* and is a regular visiting professor in the Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage. Arnold Davidson is the Robert O. Anderson Distinguished Service Professor of the Philosophy



of Judaism and Philosophy of Religions in the Divinity School; he is also in the Department of Philosophy, the Department of Comparative Literature, the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, and the Committee on the Conceptual and Historical Studies of Science. He is also Director of the France-Chicago Center. In 2013 he was inducted as an *Officier dans l’Ordre des Palmes Académiques*.

Divinity Students Association Makes Gift for Current and Future Students

The Divinity Students Association (DSA), in partnership with the Grounds of Being Coffee Shop, has made a gift of \$40,000 to the University of Chicago Divinity School for the purpose of enhancing the academic and personal welfare of current—and future—Divinity School students.

“The student community at the Divinity School is diverse and continually changing. This gift reminds the student body that their voices matter and that they can have a positive and direct impact on improving student life at Swift,” said Sara-Jo Swiatek, the DSA President and a current PhD student (MA 2014), about the gift.

The DSA’s donation represents revenue from Grounds of Being, the student-run coffee shop that inhabits space in the Swift Hall basement, long famous for its irreverent tagline—“Where God Drinks Coffee.” All profits from Grounds of Being are administered by the DSA. The coffeeshop has been managed by History of Christianity PhD student Greg Chatterley since 2010 with help from financial manager Bethany Lowery, a PhD student in the Religions in America area. “The Divinity School Coffee Shop has always existed to serve the Divinity School and University communities,” said Mr. Chatterley. “We are beyond proud and excited to accomplish that purpose to the fullest extent by making this gift, and we are profoundly grateful for having the opportunity to do so.”

Dean Mitchell praised the group of student leaders who made this gift possible, saying, “the coffee shop under the current management is a wonderful business model of ecological sustainability and accountability to the community. It’s very fitting that coffee shop revenue should be used for the benefit of future students as well as current ones. The vision, foresight, and professionalism of the DSA leadership are simply remarkable and it will greatly benefit students now and in the years to come.”

The gift will be allocated in two ways: to set up the “Swift Care Fund” and to be added into the DSA Endowment. The Divinity Students Association Scholarship Fund, originally established in 1997 with funds from the DSA, has been renamed the Divinity Students



Association Endowment Fund. The new Swift Care Fund will support current Divinity students who are experiencing financial hardship due to a life crisis. Applications for these funds will be administered entirely through the office of the Dean of Students and will be strictly confidential.

According to Teresa Hord Owens, Dean of Students, “the Swift Cares Fund represents a legacy that will benefit Divinity School students both now and into the future. Life’s emergencies will happen, and Swift Cares will help to ease the temporary crises that many students face. I am immensely proud of our students for establishing such a tangible expression of compassion for their fellow students.”

The Endowment Fund, now called the Divinity Students Association Endowment Fund, is used to support Divinity School students and to enhance student life at the School. Possible uses include travel funds for students to attend or make presentations at academic conferences or enhancements to student-use common spaces. Use of the funds will be determined on an ongoing basis by the leadership of the DSA and the Dean and Dean of Students of the School.

The Divinity Students Association is run by and for Divinity School students and contributes to many spheres of life in the Divinity School: academic, professional, and social. The DSA funds student academic clubs, major events and conferences, and social events that contribute to student life and camaraderie outside of the classroom, such as quarterly pub nights, a weekly coffee hour, and the famous “4-to-8”s. Above all else, the DSA is committed to fostering a true community of Divinity students from every degree program.

While the gift was first publicly announced at a meeting of the Divinity School’s Visiting Committee on Thursday, February 27, 2014, it represents

the culmination of well over a year’s worth of work and planning. Conversations about this gift were initiated in 2012 between the administration and the then-leadership of the DSA, particularly Chris Hanley (MDiv 2013), President, and Peter Youngblood (MA 2013), Treasurer, but also including prior officers Michael LeChevallier, (MDiv 2011 and a PhD student in Religious Ethics), Jennifer Dixon (MA 2013), and Rachel Watson, a current PhD student in Religion and Literature.

The 2013–2014 officers slate then took over in the hard and time-consuming work of creating and administering the gift. Ms. Swiatek and Elijah Kindred, MDiv student and DSA Treasurer, worked with the previous DSA board, Divinity School administrators, professional accountants, and the rest of the current DSA leadership—VP and MDiv student Jem Jebbia, Graduate Council Representative and MA student Ted Good, and Secretary and MA student Marcella Wilkinson—to work out multiple questions raising from major points such as how to use the funds represented to examining crucial details such as monthly financial statements.

“DSA’s gift to the Divinity School reflects how much respect the students have for their School and how committed they are to supporting the professional and social needs of their peers,” said Ms. Swiatek. “It is my hope that with this gift, and the two funds we have set up this year, students will feel as though they have more support behind them as they pursue their rigorous studies.”

The DSA’s gift was formally recognized on Thursday, April 10, in the DSA space in the basement floor of Swift Hall with a reception—and cake.



Alumnus of the Year

Laurie L. Patton Named Alumna of the Year 2015

Dean **Margaret M. Mitchell** has announced that, upon recommendation from the Divinity School’s Alumni Council, the Board of Trustees of the Baptist Theological Union has named **Laurie L. Patton** (AM 1986, PhD 1991 in the History of Religions area) as the Divinity School’s Alumna of the Year for 2015.

Dean of the Trinity College of Arts & Sciences at Duke University, the Robert F. Durden Professor of Religion, and Professor of Cultural Anthropology, Patton is an accomplished scholar and the author or editor of eight books on South Asian history, culture and religion. In addition to two monographs on early Indian mythology and ritual, she has published two books of poetry, *Fire’s Goal: Poems from a Hindu Year* (2003) and *Angel’s Task* (2011). She also translated the classical Sanskrit text *The Bhagavad Gita* (2008) for the Penguin Classics Series. In 1996 she coedited *Myth and Method* with **Wendy Doniger**, the Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions.

Dean Patton has lectured widely on interfaith issues and religion and public life, and consulted with White House offices on faith-based initiatives as well as on civic engagement. In her capacity as a scholar of culture and society she has also worked as a consultant on branding and identity for several national and international corporations. Of the award, Dean Mitchell said “Dean Laurie Patton exemplifies the best of the University of Chicago Divinity School. While producing field-defining scholarship on Hinduism, and the Vedic traditions in particular, she has provided outstanding educational leadership at Duke, and before that at Emory, insisting on the highest academic standards and articulating the power and depth of the humanistic



disciplines within the research University and broader society.”

Previously the Charles Howard Candler professor of religions and inaugural director of Emory University’s Center for Faculty Development and Excellence in the office of the Provost, Patton served as chair of the religion department from 2000–07, founded and co-convened the Religions and the Human Spirit Strategic Plan, and received the Emory Williams Award—Emory’s most prestigious honor for teaching—in 2005.

During her first three years at Duke, Patton developed the first university-wide course, with her Arts & Sciences team sponsored the creation of the first and only global advising program in the country, and launched Scholars & Publics, a forum for scholars to engage in research in partnership with the community. In addition, she has established a grant fund to encourage collaboration and course development

by faculty and initiated hiring strategies for women and underrepresented minorities in the STEM fields. Last year she established and helped to design the “Language Arts and Media Program” (LAMP), an undergraduate program in effective communication in contemporary media (on-line, in person, in writing). She also sponsored a new online “My Advising Network,” a program that allows Duke undergraduates to see, develop, manage, and contact their advising network at Duke. Finally, she created a Less Commonly Taught Languages on-line partnership with the University of Virginia and created an Advising Task Force to launch key reforms for pre-major and major advising.

Please watch our website for further announcements regarding Dean Patton’s Alumna of the Year lecture and reception, to be held on April 23rd, 2015.

Chicago Commons Project

The Divinity School has received a \$475,000 grant from Lilly Endowment Inc to establish “The Chicago Commons Project,” a program of leadership development and enrichment for Chicago-area pastors. The Divinity School is one of several organizations across the country to receive grants as part of the Endowment’s Early Career Pastoral Development Initiative aimed at developing leadership programs for pastors in the early stages of their careers.

The Chicago Commons Project seeks to expand the capacity and extend the reach of promising young clergy, cultivating resilience, stamina and wisdom for the challenging work of religious leadership. The program will identify talented area clergy at a pivotal early stage in their careers, gathering them into ecumenically, theologically and racially diverse cohorts that will engage in significant conversations with influential civic leaders from across the spectrum of public life and the arts.

The Chicago Commons Project is a natural extension of the University of Chicago Divinity School’s long-standing commitment to educate and equip thoughtful, creative and courageous

religious leaders whose work enriches the common good. During a two-year period of intensive theological and civic reflection, program fellows will:

- develop deep and nourishing relationships with clergy leaders in their age cohort that can inspire and sustain them as they move into future positions of leadership in their churches and communities;
- cultivate a confidence in themselves, their traditions and in the contribution they make to public life that will energize their congregational leadership; foster collegial relationships and practices across professions that will help build communities’ capacity

- gain greater knowledge and insight about issues which pose significant challenges in Chicagoland and beyond;
- expand their imaginations about the ways that religious communities and their leaders are called to serve their communities.

The principal investigator for the Chicago Commons Project is Rev. Cynthia Lindner, Director of Ministry Studies and Clinical Professor for Preaching and Pastoral Care at the Divinity School. Rev. Lindner was the PI for the Divinity School’s recent “Border Crossings” project, also funded by the Endowment, which fostered collaborations in classrooms and congregations between faculty, clergy practitioners, PhD students and MDiv students. In addition to her work with MDiv students, Rev. Lindner maintains a clinical practice at the Center for Religion and Psychotherapy of Chicago where she facilitates clergy workshops and peer education groups, and is researching clergy narratives and ministerial multiplicity for an upcoming book on pastoral identity and practice.

Ministry Program Update

Creating an Open Space: Remodeling Midweek Worship

“...A time to hear bells rung, not as a way of keeping time, but as a way of reflecting on the ways that time keeps us...A time to put our secular, popular sensibilities in perspective, and hear all twelve tones.

Noon Prayer is a time to locate one’s self in the middle of an impossibly long arc, without a clear trajectory. Sometimes in life, things fly by. But often, they are long. Today is going to be a long day. Writing a constructive theological paper is long. Marriage is long. Watching for the arrival of the Kingdom of God is long. Standing in the middle of these tasks can be disorienting. The horizon may stretch in all directions equally. At the beginning of the day, the paper, the relationship, the direction is clear. The sun is heading that way. I can’t wait to be intimate with that person. The Emancipation Proclamation is going to move our country towards that kind of equality.

Today, we take time recognize that we are in the middle of many long arcs, long journeys. After a morning of work and travel, engaging our tasks, earning our keep, sweating from our efforts, we are in danger of being consumed by our physical hunger. We are hungry for food. We are hungry for tangible results. Let us take time to recognize our hunger for meaning. Let us take time to recognize our hunger for a deeper sense of communion with one another. Let us take time to retrace our steps. Let us take time to reorient ourselves, being guided by our consciences. Perhaps we may find new directions.”

—Paul Goodenough, recent MDiv graduate and music coordinator for Open Space, 2013–14 excerpted from his reflection on Noon Prayer, “Howling at the Noon”

The recent renovation of Bond Chapel for the installation of the Reneker organ was the

catalyst for other significant changes around the Chapel: midweek worship at the Divinity School continues to experience its own season of transformation. While the Chapel was closed for remodeling during the 2012-13 school year, the long-standing Wednesday morning chapel service was temporarily relocated to the Divinity School’s lecture hall. A student committee rose to the challenge of hosting a weekly worship experience in those more austere academic surroundings, initiating a rich conversation about the relationship of study and prayer and exploring the particularity of ritual and meaning in a multi-religious community. After many years of sitting in Bond Chapel pews facing a preacher or presider, the worship planners experimented with multiple seating patterns, a variety of preaching/teaching and musical styles, and a variety of ways to offer prayers—silently, as the participants remained seated, or written while on our knees at prayer “stations” and offered up on slips of paper to be read aloud during the corporate prayer. It was as if the open space of the lecture hall invited—perhaps demanded—that worshippers bring heightened levels of openness and intentionality to their practice. Words and forms that seemed consonant with the community’s experience in the Bond Chapel venue yielded to more hospitable and innovative expressions of prayer and solidarity in the plain light of the third floor lecture hall.

When the midweek service returned to its Bond Chapel home a year ago, moveable chairs replaced the traditional pews, and restored woodwork and new organ pipes gleamed. While some of the original student planning team

had graduated, others continued to work on “Wednesday Worship,” recruiting additional student leaders to join their ongoing exploration of prayer forms and styles of reflection that might honor participants’ particularity, while at the same time offering an open space for the sharing of a common humanity. In the early days of their inclusive efforts, planners created litanies and song lyrics that sought to be welcoming to all but still seemed protestant in form. Last year’s group developed a different strategy, inviting individual members of the community to share leadership of the service by reflecting on their own spiritual practice and sharing some aspect of that practice with the group. Participants in the service were free to join, or watch, or to meditate on their own. While leaders, practices and music changed from week to week, an “open space” for offering prayers—silent and aloud, enacting through candlelighting or petition-writing—was an enduring feature of every gathering.

As student planners/leaders Megham Freytag and George Arceneaux (both current MDivs) explained, “we understand this time to be an opportunity to provide a space to authentically express, and encounter with openness, the variety of ways members of this community practice living before the transcendent. As far as we know, there is no other space, either on campus or in Chicago, that provides people being trained in religious scholarship and leadership with the opportunity to authentically encounter the rituals and traditions of those from a variety backgrounds and have the opportunity to ask questions,

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Dean’s Letter

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acknowledge and reevaluate their governing assumptions, and be responsible for the arguments they make with like and non-likeminded others on the basis of those assumptions and the evidence.

Miriam’s classroom is not exactly my classroom, but Miriam’s room 101 will be in my classroom in Swift 106 this spring, as I teach the Introduction to the New Testament, and the class and I together will engage in dialogue around the play, both in terms of its accounting of the history of the (Protestant) Bible, the history of its reception and forms of serious and responsible pedagogy around this text Miriam so urgently claims is “the most dangerous text

in American culture today.” Art and education are not the same thing (and I have not become either an actor or a playwright!), but they are and should be in continual, mutually enriching conversation, such as *The Good Book* collaboration to date has represented beautifully. And now that conversation is being extended to broader audiences in New York, Chicago, and beyond. A conversation to be continued!

*Stage directions and text from *The Good Book*, by Denis O’Hare and Lisa Peterson (used by permission). *Front-page image: Photo of Aquila’s Greek translation of the Bible, with liturgical poetry by Yannai written over it, assigned palaeographically to the 6th c. CE, (University of Cambridge)*

***The Good Book* will have its world premiere at the Court Theatre, the professional theatre on campus at the University of Chicago, on March 19, 2015, and run through April 19th. Tickets can be purchased online anytime or by calling the box office at (773) 753-4472.**

For more information, please visit http://www.courttheatre.org/plays/the_good_book

reflect on their experiences, and gain new understanding of one another's and one's own practices. This space is not about remaining in the comfort of the familiar. Rather it is to wrestle with and bear witness to the tensions inevitably present in a multi-religious world."

In the new academic year, that cherished practice of keeping "open space" is continuing, and now lends its name to the entire enterprise. The rationale and practice what is now known as "Open Space," continues to evolve, inviting the Divinity School community to "a unique opportunity for conversation, reflection, and fellowship around the things that enliven us, weigh on our hearts and minds, and give our work here meaning. All are welcome to come

hear from diverse members of the community, to be opened and buoyed by music that points us beyond ourselves, and to wrestle (sometimes ritually) with the tensions we—as individuals who are apart but yet a part—see in our lives and in our world." In keeping with the students' resolve to host midweek reflection that is hospitable to all, the service has moved from its long-standing Wednesday schedule, where it occupied the 30 minutes before Wednesday lunch, to a new day and time: Tuesdays at noon, accommodating more students' course schedules and offering Divinity School students an additional opportunity for mid-day community. Moving the gathering away from the Wednesday lunch allows students to linger,

continuing the conversations that these reflections often ignite. At the first Open Space gathering of the new academic year, the community included PhD students, MA and MDiv students, faculty and staff members. Participants from Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Christian traditions—as well as those who do not identify with a tradition at all—enjoyed instrumental music, poetry, a spoken reflection, and an extended period of quiet for meditation, prayer, lighting a candle, walking a labyrinth, and, most significantly, opening the space for wonder, and for each other.

—Cynthia Gano Lindner,
Director of Ministry Studies

An Interview with Richard B. Miller



Richard B. Miller is Professor of Religious Ethics. He spoke with us about his work and his return to Swift Hall.

CIRCA: As an alumnus of the Divinity School, what are you most looking forward to, as you return to join the faculty?

RM: I'm looking forward to joining a community of scholars who are devoted to the study of ideas for its own sake, as an intrinsic good. I am committed to imparting skills of criticism, original research, and independent thinking as well as resources for an intellectually robust and imaginative life. I'm excited by the opportunity to train the next generation of scholars in light of those values.

Along with that, I'm looking forward to entering into collaborations that cut across established disciplinary boundaries and that aim to create new frontiers of knowledge. The academic study of religion requires scholars to acquire a broad set of diagnostic skills and methodological literacy across several domains. Scholars of religion must be heteroglossic, conversant with different methodological languages, the history of ideas, and frames of analysis. I am looking forward to joining an intellectual community that is fluent across a range of conversations, theoretical programs, and debates in the academy.

In these and other ways, I know that I will have a true home at the University of Chicago.

CIRCA: How did your own training at Chicago shape your research and teaching?

RM: My training gave me the resources to be a scholar and social critic in the history of Western thought, with special attention to matters of religion and public life. At Chicago I was provided with a foundation for taking up questions in both the academy and public culture that are of historical and current importance. I was given the confidence to take chances and to resist the culture of risk-aversion that too often characterizes work in the academy. I hasten to add that my research and teaching have been shaped from their inception by the democratic promise of higher education. I am committed to the notion of a liberal education in the classical sense, namely, one that frees

the mind from slavish habit and custom in order to explore problems with fresh angles of vision that empower learning across diverse regions and controversies. My Chicago training built upon and deepened those commitments.

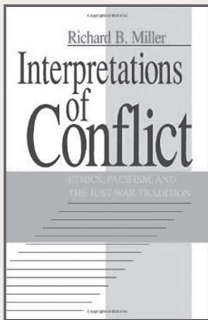
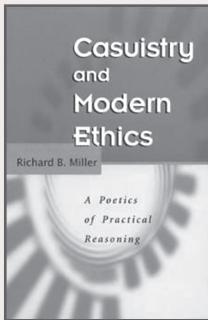
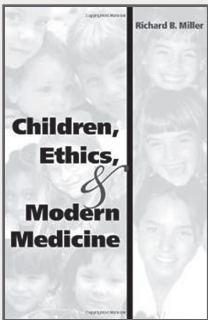
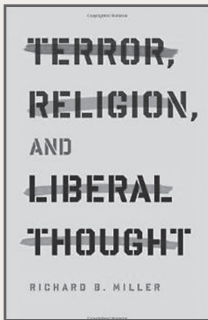
CIRCA: What are the major questions in your work right now?

RM: I am currently finishing up a collection of published and unpublished papers that coordinate research in religion, ethics, and culture. The thread that organizes that collection is the idea that our lives oscillate between encounters with alterity and experiences of intimacy. I use those ideas as touchstones in several focused chapter-length discussions about different kinds of relationships. I'm also in the middle stages of a small book on theory and method in the study of religion. My view is that virtually everything written at the theoretical level of the academic study of religion has failed to articulate a clear, confident, and robust justification of the field. Religious Studies is plagued by an obsessive attention to method without sufficient attention to its proper ends. In the language of ethics, the field is driven by an underlying deontology rather than a clear teleology. What passes for "theory" in Religious Studies is preoccupied with articulating the proper protocols or duties of research without due regard for its wider purposes. My own proposal as a corrective is to tie the academic study of religion to an account, informed by the work of Dewey, Said, and Nussbaum, of what I'm calling the epistemic virtue of critical humanistic understanding. When that manifesto is done, I want to turn to a longer-term project on the moral authority of nature as a basis for

evaluating, and at times re-imagining, the claims of religious authorities and institutions. That will be a study in intellectual history that aims to re-format how we understand modernity's various interrogations of religion, ranging from early modern natural law thinkers through Freud. So I have a number of irons in the fire.

CIRCA: What contributions do you see yourself making to the conversational community at the Divinity School?

RM: I tend to organize my research under the rubric, "social criticism and the ethics of belief." Social critics assess conventions, practices, and norms that guide the direction of institutions and aspirations of public culture. The ethics of belief, as I use the term, consists of examining religion's obligations given the demands of moral virtue, political justice, and concerns about social cooperation and well-being. As a social critic addressing the ethics of belief, I critically explore how normative claims that are generated by religious thought and practice provide guides to human conduct in public life, and I do so in dialogue with moral and political philosophy. I hope to add those ideas and predilections to conversations in the Divinity School and beyond. I see myself as offering expertise in the history of ideas, political thought, moral philosophy, and the academic study of religion. I am also engaged by various contemporary currents in cultural theory. I hope to enable colleagues and students to think about the normative implications of their work and, together with them, to advance the public, critical understanding of religion at the University of Chicago.



Marty Center News and Events



The Martin Marty Center's Religion and Culture Web Forum continues to feature exciting new areas of research and theoretical thinking about religion, bringing together scholars from an array of academic disciplines for lively and informed conversation about the manifestations of religion in societies and cultures, past and present.

Religion and Culture Web Forum

Emily D. Crews has been named the new Managing Editor of the *Religion and Culture Web Forum*, the Martin Marty Center's monthly online forum for discussion about the relationship of scholarship in religion to culture and public life.

Crews received her BA in religious studies from Agnes Scott College in Atlanta, Georgia and spent several years as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Southern Africa before beginning her MA at the University of Chicago Divinity School. She is currently a PhD student at the Divinity School. Her research concerns the broad themes of religion, gender, and reproductive and sexual health in African communities in Africa and the United States. She is specifically interested in how religion in its many forms is interwoven with Africans' practices and ideas of health-

care, particularly as they are related to HIV and AIDS and childbirth.

Crews brings to the Web Forum considerable academic editing and web management experience. She has served as an editorial assistant at *History of Religions*, published by the University of Chicago Press, and managed several websites and social media networking accounts. In her position as Managing Editor Crews looks forward to participating in the long tradition of public engagement and critical inquiry fostered by the Martin Marty Center.



Our gratitude to outgoing editor, Vince Evener (PhD, History of Christianity, 2014), whose vision, professionalism, and collegiality have been greatly appreciated.

This year's fora featured contributors, papers, and respondents from a wide range of disciplines. We were especially pleased that to feature the work of Divinity School PhD candidates writing on areas little explored by previous web fora.

September 2013 Ellen Amster (University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee) presented "Healing the Body, Healing the *Umma*: Sufi Saints and God's Law in a Corporeal City of Virtue," from her book, *Medicine and the Saints: Science, Islam, and the Colonial Encounter in Morocco, 1877–*

1956 (University of Texas Press 2013). Shahzad Bashir (Stanford University), Neil Kodesh (University of Wisconsin, Madison), and Scott Kugle (Emory University).

October 2013 David Nirenberg (University of Chicago) presented the chapter, "'To Every Prophet an Adversary: Jewish Enmity in Islam,"

from his *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (W.W. Norton and Co. 2013; from Fred Donner (University of Chicago), Robert Gleave (University of Exeter), and Angelika Neuwirth (Frei Universität Berlin).

November 2013 Alexander Keith Rocklin, a 2012–13 Martin Marty Center Jr. Fellow, presented "Haunting Violence: Obeah, the Translation of Spirits, and the Management of the Living and the Dead in Colonial Trinidad." Ayisha Khan (New York University) and Paul Johnson (University of Michigan), and Lindsey Harlan (Connecticut College) responded.

December 2013 Allison Gray presented "Encounters with a Homicidal Bath Demon: Gregory of Nyssa's Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus." Janet Spittler (Texas Christian University) responded.

January 2014 Matthew J. Milliner (Wheaton College; Art History) presented "The Sexuality of Christ in Byzantine Art and in Hypermodern Oblivion." Robert Nelson (Yale University),

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Join the conversation

The Web Forum welcomes contributions from established scholars; please send inquiries to religionandculturewebforum@gmail.com

Alma Wilson Teaching Fellow Report

The course I had the pleasure to teach as the Alma Wilson teaching fellow was called “Race and Religion in the Americas,” and it looked at the social constructions of race and religion. The primary goal of the course was not to suggest that race “doesn’t exist” or even simply to argue that the categories race and religion are social constructs (although this latter point was crucial to the sustained argument over the quarter).

Rather I was trying to get across to my undergraduate students a problem that I was struggling with in my own research, the somewhat challenging (even for me) notion that the way we define and understand one social category, like race, and another, like religion (but also class, gender, and sexuality, among others), are dependent on one another. Who or what has gotten to count as “religious” has changed over time, and how those changes have unfolded has been intimately connected with other categories. My course traced the contours of such unfoldings with respect to the lived categories of race and religion in the history of the colonial and postcolonial Americas.

Bouncing around the globe, following a rough chronology, and introducing key theoretical terms along the way, the sweep of the course took us from the caste system and inquisition trials in sixteenth century Mexico to Hindu ritual theatre and the politics of color in twenty first century Trinidad. The first week of the course began with some theoretical reflections, to give the class a common vocabulary to facilitate our conversations about the problems we were approaching. Over the following weeks we looked at the category witchcraft; we also explored the ways in which racially diverse practitioners of what we would call Afro-Caribbean religions began to articulate what they were doing, which was being called “witchcraft,” in the more acceptable terms of “religion.” We then moved to focus on the twentieth century US, looking at African Americans’ reimaginings of Islam as a way to side step and redefine oppressive racial hierarchies. We also traced the history

of South Asian migration to the Americas as a way to interrogate the concept of “whiteness.” And we ended with the tragic and difficult events of the suicides of the Peoples Temple at Jonestown.

I was really quite pleased with what the students were able to do with the challenging questions of the course. For the midterm, the students had to watch the musician Sun Ra’s ambiguous and surreal film “Space is the Place,” part philosophical treatise, part 70s exploitation movie. Their paper on Sun Ra’s film allowed the students to experiment and play with the pieces we had read in the course so far. While some assignments, for instance the final exam, importantly demonstrated the students’ concrete understandings of the course materials, for this assignment the students let loose on a blank canvas of sorts, a strange text we had not discussed together. In their responses I got to see them wrestling with Ra’s movie using our previous class discussion and readings (both theoretical and comparative examples). And they truly shone.

Some of the most gratifying times in class were the surprising moments when students had realizations about the texts we were reading. Sometimes these were moments of understanding, when a student finally got a key point we had been working through in class.



Sometimes the surprise was mine, when students offered the class a different or novel interpretation of our readings that had not struck us before then. The former were moments when it seemed most clear to me that the ideas I was trying to teach were getting across, that the concepts from the course were slowly assembling into an intellectual tool kit with which students could take apart an example and try to make some sense of it. The latter were moments where I was learning something, my students pushing me to think about the issues and examples of the course in new ways. Together and on balance these sorts of moments make teaching the exhilarating task it is.

—Alexander Rocklin

W. Clark Gilpin Named Interim Director



W. Clark Gilpin, the Margaret E. Burton Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus of the History of Christianity and Theology, will serve as Interim Director of the Center during the 2014–2015 academic year. He served as dean of the Divinity School from 1990 to 2000; from 2000 to 2004 he directed the Martin Marty Center, and he has also served as the director of the university’s Nicholson Center for British Studies and as a member of the executive council of the university’s Scherer Center for the Study of American Culture. Gilpin studies the history of modern Christianity, especially in relation to literature, and is currently writing about the letter from prison as a genre of religious literature in early modern England.

Martin Marty Center *Sightings*

During the past academic year, *Sightings* sighted and analyzed religion as it touched lives in the United States as well as in places like Israel, Palestine, Syria, Germany, Russia, Italy, India, Pakistan, and Ghana. It also paid tribute to several influential scholars who died this year: Will C. Campbell, Robert Bellah, Jean Bethke Elshtain, and Ian Barbour. In addition, it served as a platform to engage flashpoint issues directly impacting the Divinity School such as Penguin Publisher’s decision to withdraw its India edition of Wendy Doniger’s *On Hinduism* after conservative Hindus there threatened a lawsuit.

On Mondays, *Sightings* continues to publish analyses by the ever-popular Martin Marty, who draws on the resources of his seemingly inexhaustible memory-bank and on a wide-range of media and online discussions to provide illuminating commentary about important current events. Though he usually focuses on U.S. happenings, Prof. Marty offered his informed perspective on events abroad on several occasions. On Thursdays, *Sightings* publishes essays often, but not always, written by University of Chicago PhD alums as well as Divinity School faculty, MA, MDiv, and PhD students and candidates. During the first six months of 2014, the two 2013-14 Senior Fellows, and several of the Junior Fellows in the Marty Center wrote *Sightings* pieces, bringing to bear their areas of scholarly expertise on today’s religious scene.

A big change for *Sightings*: every week, Martin Marty’s pieces are re-posted, with attribution, in the *Huffington Post*’s “Religion” section. *Sightings* saw a significant jump in email-subscriptions after it began to appear in the *Huffington Post*. As for *Sightings* distributed by email, after several months of experimentation with various banners and image lay-outs, its appearance has stabilized. It now has its own banner, an image to illustrate the theme of the piece, as well as thumbnail images of the author and editor. Another big change: the graphically stunning and easy-to-navigate website for the Divinity School and the Marty Center “went live” last fall. *Sightings*, which is posted to the Marty Center’s website, also got a makeover of its online appearance. It now sports a polished look and features an image to give it greater eye-appeal.

Sightings continued to take notice of religion’s role in social justice issues and to assess whether this role advanced or set back justice. It commented on social justice issues that included fasting for immigration reform, faith-based prisons, gun-control, Quebec’s struggle to make space for religious minorities, lawsuits by privately-held corporations seeking to opt out of providing health-care coverage for birth control, same-sex marriage, the cancellation of the reality show “Duck Dynasty” after its patriarch made anti-gay statements, the Boycott-Divestment-Sanctions movement targeting Israel, the death penalty, the high incarceration rates of young black men, and more.

Sightings also looked for religion’s influence, for good or for ill, in events around the globe. It highlighted the tenth anniversary of 9/11, President Putin’s targeting of gay and lesbian Russians backed by the Russian Orthodox Church, the precarious status of Christian Syrians, the sectarian aspects of the Syrian uprising, diaspora Ghanian-Christians who rely on shamans and medical doctors when ill, the use of military drones by the United States, and the way that Israel’s commitment to being a Jewish nation impacts its conflict with Palestinian.

Sightings also explored issues important to identity groups: the conversion of significant numbers of Romani to Evangelical Christianity in central Europe, the rise of conservative

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Marty Center Fellows 2014–2015

The Marty Center, continuing its emphasis on global interactions and aspects of religion, welcomes fourteen dissertation (junior) fellows and three senior fellows.

This year’s dissertation seminar is being offered in two sections, one led by Wendy Doniger, Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions, and the other by W. Clark Gilpin, Margaret E. Burton Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus of the History of Christianity and Theology and Interim Director of the Martin Marty Center. The seminar is designed to advance interdisciplinary research.

Read more from our Fellows and learn what they hope to accomplish during their year by visiting <https://divinity.uchicago.edu/marty-center-fellows>.



Senior Fellows

We welcome three Senior Fellows this academic year: Susan Shapiro, Loren Lybarger and Betty Bayer.

Betty M. Bayer joins us for her second year as an MMC Senior Fellow. Bayer is professor of Women’s Studies at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, NY. While a senior fellow at the Martin Marty Center she will be working on her book “Revelation or Revolution? Cognitive Dissonance and Persistent Longing in an Age Psychological.” This book entails a history and rethinking of the renowned 1956 book *When Prophecy Fails* by social psychologists Leon Festinger, Henry Riecken and Stanley Schachter.

Loren D. Lybarger (PhD 2002), also joining us for a second year, is an associate professor in the Department of Classics and World Religions at Ohio University, Athens, Ohio. He is completing research for his second book, titled, *Secularism and the Religious Return among Palestinians in Chicago: Transformation of Identity in Exile*.

Susan Shapiro is Associate Professor, Department of Judaic and Near Eastern Studies and Chair, Program in Religious Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. During her year at the MMC she hopes to complete two books: “Freud and the Jewish Uncanny: the Modern Nation State and its Discontents” and “Reading for Gender in Jewish Philosophy.”

Junior Fellows

Katherine Alexander
East Asian Languages and Civilizations

Jason Bartulis
English

Jason Cather
Philosophy of Religions

Andrew Durdin
History of Religions

Allison Gray
New Testament/Early Christian Literature

Sean Hannan
History of Christianity

Justin Howell
Bible

Andrew Langford
Bible

Herbert Xunyu Lin
Theology

Marc LiVecche
Ethics

Samuel Perry
Sociology

Charles S. Preston
History of Religions

Daniel Yingst
History of Christianity

Xiao-bo Yuan
Anthropology

Hinduism in India, the appeal of Evangelical Christianity to Hispanic Catholics, the murder of an anti-superstition activist in India, the growing numbers of Hispanic Muslims in the U.S., the encounter between Mormons and Native Americans, the question of who counts as Catholic, the increasing numbers pursuing Church of England priesthood, the selling of Scientology in super-bowl ads, and Muslim perspectives on Christmas.

Fortunately, *Sightings* wasn't shy about touching upon lighter subjects, too, exploring Bible apps for mobile devices, the relationship between Colbert and catechesis, the niche market occupied by church pipe organs, the role of religious architecture, and "grace" and its various expressions in Anna Devere Smith's recent documentary theater.

Subscribe and read archived articles at <http://divinity.uchicago.edu/sightings>.

Myriam Renaud, PhD Candidate in Theology at the University of Chicago Divinity School. A 2012–13 Junior Fellow in the Marty Center, Ms. Renaud co-organized the April 2014 Marty Center conference, "God: Theological Accounts and Ethical Possibilities," and is looking forward to the work of editing the conference presentations into a book.

Sightings: Divining Grace

Grace—a word of such command, and, yet, one seldom spoken today. Has the word fallen out of favor? Or has grace itself? And, if we aren't talking about grace, does that mean we are not living it? Do we prefer to keep our distance from matters (or reminders) of a fall from grace?

I sensed any number of such currents and crosscurrents in Anna Devere Smith's new documentary theatre, *Conversations on Grace*, performed recently in Chicago's Harris Theatre.

I could also feel something larger at work, from the show's soulful opening to the finale, in the notes played by cellist Joshua Roman and vocalized by Smith. Smith's acting and Roman's cello music create a *pas de deux* of twelve conversations about grace. Each "conversation" is an artistic rendering of Smith's dialogues and interviews with scholars, religious figures (Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish), citizens, politicians, singers, and academics.

Smith's twelve conversations on grace call to mind the Kharites, or Three Graces, of ancient Greek mythology whose plurality signified the many ways in which beauty manifests itself beyond our own individual selves, bringing us into relation with others and raising questions of reciprocity—moral, ethical and aesthetic. They also bring to mind American philosopher and psychologist William James's ideas on a pluralist universe. Think of pluralism, writes James, as a "strung-along type, the type of continuity, contiguity or concatenation." Grace is a string of lived experiences, observations, wishes, hopes, fears, dreads, loves, reconciliations and struggles that form neither an absolute whole nor unity.

Snippets from Smith's conversations illuminate this plurality. In the words of one religious leader, and recalling the I-Thou of the Jewish thinker, Martin Buber, grace unfolds in "relations with others." That is, relations are pieces of others already in us. A whole heart is a heart in pieces.

Another religious leader finds that grace is not something one possesses but rather how God works through us. And, for yet another leader, to inquire into grace in this way is

already to name (and limit) grace as Christian.

Is the question of grace, contemplation on what God wants one to be?

There are many words in Islam to describe God's self-disclosure. Grace? Hear it in the call to prayers. In voice.

Or, find the idea of grace in Buddhist thought about the symmetry between happiness and goodness, in being free from suffering.

Or, as a philosopher asks: could one have grace without subscribing to a religion? Keeping in mind the story of Job, the philosopher conceived of grace as remaining intentionally open in the face of loss (material or spiritual)—indeed, a moment of openness often marks recovery—and then moved to her association of this with the song "Is that all there is," a song inspired by Thomas Mann's nineteenth-century short story, "Disillusionment" ("...death, I know it already, death, that last disappointment!").

Listening to Smith's conversations I began to think about author Terry Tempest Williams' meditation on beauty in a broken world as akin to the workings of a mosaic: "a conversation between what is broken." To Smith's question about grace, one academic replied that communities shy away from talk of beauty (in museums and in universities). But grace as beauty finds its place in justice and hope, twisting itself around other inspiring manifestations of "non-selling" ways. Grace could, we imagine, disarm violence or reconcile injustices; when Smith asked a politician about grace, he recalled a police chief who had recently apologized for the treatment by police officers of civil rights activists in Montgomery decades ago.

We can ask ourselves what it means to tell of grace or find grace in a world where conflicts are not local, as one Rabbi put it. To think of grace as a pluralistic universe may prove useful. Also useful—to explore the contrast between grace in William James' notion of "more" and our "union with it," and grace as an immanence visible in the here and now, composing us whether we talk directly about it or not (see Miller below).



Starting our own conversations about grace may serve to loosen the hardening boundaries between those who call themselves religious and those who call themselves spiritual-but-not-religious (or "None"), redirecting fruitless conversations about values and voting blocs (or political theatre) to the art of dwelling here together, in the polis, with grace.

Resources:
UChicagoNews. "Resident artists Anna Devere Smith and Joshua Roman to stage 'On Grace'." December 3, 2013. <http://news.uchicago.edu/article/2013/12/03/resident-artists-anna-devere-smith-and-joshua-roman-stage-grace>.

James, William. *A Pluralistic Universe*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 1908/2011.

Miller, Adam *et al.* *Speculative Grace: Bruno Latour and Object-Oriented Theology*. First edition. Perspectives in Continental Philosophy. New York: Fordham University Press, 2013.

Williams, Terry Tempest. *Finding Beauty in a Broken World*. New York: Vintage Books, 2008.

Author, Betty M. Bayer, is Professor of Women's Studies at Hobart and William Smith College. Recent publications include "Enchantment in an age of occupy" (2012, *Women's Studies Quarterly*). She is working on a monograph: *Revelation or Revolution? Cognitive Dissonance and Persistent Longing in an Age Psychological*.

“We can ask ourselves what it means to tell of grace or find grace in a world where conflicts are not local ...”

Dean of Students Report

This Fall, the Divinity School enrolled 93 entering degree candidates: 53 MA, 12 AMRS, 10 MDiv, and 18 PhD.

College Graduates in Religious Studies

Four students completed fourth-year BA papers in Religious Studies this year. The BA paper preceptor for the year was Larisa Reznik. They and their topics are (advisers' names follow in brackets):

Hilary Clifford, “No Man Knows my History: Strategy and Authority in Mormon Women’s History.” (Brekus)

Rachel Gittelman, “Ryan and Cooper: American, Catholic Progressives and their Denouncement of Contraception (1916–1930).” (Evans)

Jason Quino McCreery, “Compassion, Wrath, and Hermeneutics: Exploring the Nature of Wrath in the Buddhist Tantras and Tibetan Hagiographies.” (Wedemeyer)

Aenea Raskin, “Inter-Class Interactions in the Mahabharata and Ramayana.” (Doniger)

Convocations

Winter 2014

MA
Elizabeth Kendig
Clara Hope Mitchell
Therese Allen Nelson
Drew J. Strait

Spring 2014

MDiv
Leah Marie Boyd
Brandon Marshall Cook
Paul Edward Goodenough
Eleanor Margaret Kahn
Alexandra Nicole McCauslin
Steven Michael Grafton Philp
Matthew Craig Richards
Walter Joseph Thorne
Elijah Robert Zehyoue

MA
Susan Melissa Balding
Jonathan Lawrence Brent
Russell Stephen Burk
Erin Hillary Clark
Stephen Paul Durchslag
Michele Mosser Ferris
Hannah Gray Glasson
Sarah Marie Glynn
Sarah Heiden Gomer
John Theodore Good
Kathryn Michelle Gulleen
Randolph Keith Gunn
Diane Elizabeth Hall
Nathan Jeffrey Hardy
Jason D. Hitchcock
Lee Douglas Hoffer
Cody Charles Jones
Jonathan David Majhanovich
Antonio Musto
Timothy William O’Brien, S.J.
Darcie Marilyn Price-Wallace
Leah Michelle Richmond
Karl Thomas Schmid
Sara Jo Swiatek
Andrew Sword
Jamila Thomas
Laura Toth
Hannah Nicole VanVels
Philosophy E. Walker
H. Thomas Heneghan Weiler
Thomas Edward Ian Whittaker
Cornelia Wolf Wilson
Haniya Yameen

PhD
Joseph Nathaniel Ballan
“Infinite Ambiguity: Elements of Vladimir Jankelevitch’s Philosophy of Religion”

Vincent Matthew Evener
“‘Enemies of the Cross’: Suffering, Salvation, and Truth in Sixteenth-Century Religious Controversy”

Alexander Keith Rocklin
“Religion under Contract: The Regulation of Religion and the Making of Hinduism in Colonial Trinidad”

Joseph Edward Steineger IV
“The Naturally Implanted Knowledge of God’s Existence: Two 13th Century Scholastic Interpretations of John of Damascus and Anselm of Bec”

Summer 2014

MDiv
Olivia Bustion
Erin Margaret McCarthy

MA
Ahmed Arafat
Christopher Scott Crawford
Andrew Carl Kunze
Femia Lukose Maroor
Adam Murray O’Brien
Lubomir Martin Ondrasek
Christopher Armando Rodrigues Unseth
Anthony Weiss
Jeffrey Scott Wilson, Jr.

PhD
Emanuelle Neuman Burton
“Fantasy and Responsibility: Phronesis and Ethical Meaning-Making in the Chronicles of Narnia”

Patricia Ann Duncan
“Novel Hermeneutics: Gospel Exegesis in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies”

Tarick Fathi Elgendy
“Power, Complicity, and Resistance: Rereading “The Powers” with Karl Barth and Michel Foucault

Adrian Nicolae Guiu
“Reading Scripture, Unifying Creation: Becoming the Officina Omnium in John Scottus Eriugena’s Periphyseon”

Alexs Delaney Thompson
“Rereading al-Tabari: Towards a Narratological Interpretation of the History”

Autumn 2013

MA
Jennifer Signa Paulson
Kristin Nicole Pomykala
Justin Nathaniel Smolin
Andrew Michael Soleim
Stephen Williams

PhD
Elizabeth Sweeney Block
“The Virtue of Conscience: Valuing the Labor of the Moral Life”

Kelly Leigh Brotzman
“Experience and Theological Ethics: A Schleirmacherian Investigation and Proposal”

Rana Choi
“Erich Auerbach and His Interlocutors: A Comparison of Literary Critical Methodologies”

Matthew Richard Petrusek
“Catholic Social Ethics and the (In)vulnerability of Human Dignity”

Prizes and Fellowships

Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship Summer 2014

Jenae Marissa Gurley
Elizabeth Anne Sartell
Yonatan Tzvi Shemesh
Sarah Violet Zager

Academic Year

Hassan Shakeel Awaisi
Marielle Burr Harrison
Mary Ellen Jebbia
Andrew Dresden Kerr
Chime Chodon Lama
Viraj Patel
Malini K. Singh

Nicholson Center for British Studies: Nicholson Graduation Fellowship

Philippa Rose Koch

Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship

Philippa Rose Koch

Inter-University Center for Japanese Studies Supplemental Grant

Paride Stortini

Chicago Center for Jewish Studies

Jessica Hope Andruss
Alexandra Kathryn Zirkle

William Rainey Harper Dissertation Fellowship

Joshua Andrew Connor

Mellon Humanities Dissertation Fellowship

Sean Michael Hannan

Provost Dissertation Fellowship

Jeremy Gantz Morse

Fuerstenberg Fellowship

Jessica Hope Andruss
Dov Natan Lerner
Ori Werdiger
Ezra Blaustein

Tikva Fryer-Kensky Memorial Prize

Liane Marquis

John Gray Rhind Award

Leah Marie Boyd
Steven Michael Grafton Philp

The Milo P. Jewett Prize

Steven Michael Grafton Philp



Divinity School Honor Roll



The Divinity School benefits from the generous support of alumni, friends, and organizations. The Dean, the faculty, and the students of the Divinity School extend their sincere thanks to all who contributed cash gifts during the 2013–2014 fiscal year. (July 1, 2013–June 30, 2014)

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Glenn Peers (University of Texas at Austin) and Rachel Fulton Brown (University of Chicago) responded.

February 2014 RCWF presented two chapters from Richard Foltz's book, *Religions of Iran: From Prehistory to the Present* (Oneworld 2013). The featured chapters were "Mithra and Mithraism" and "Two Kurdish Sects: The Yezidis and the Yaresan"; they represented collectively Foltz's effort to study the diversity of Iranian religious history through "Pool Theory." Carlo G. Cereti of Sapienza, University of Rome, and Eszter Spät of Central European University responded; Foltz himself is professor and director of the Centre for Iranian Studies at Concordia University (Canada).

March 2014 S. Brent Rodríguez-Plate (Hamilton College) offered "A History of Religion in 5 ½ Objects"—an essay adapted from his new book

of the same title (Beacon Press 2014). Lisa Bitel of the University of Southern California and Jonathan H. Ebel (PhD 2004) of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign responded to Plate's contention that "religious history is incomplete if it ignores the sensing body, and the seemingly trivial things it confronts."

April 2014

"Community Conflict and Collective Memory in the Late Medieval Parish Church," was presented by Kristi Woodward Bain, who asked about the role of conflict in the "the formation of community identity." Bain is an advanced PhD student in religious studies at Northwestern University. The respondents were John Craig (Simon Fraser University) and Katherine French (University of Michigan).

May 2014 May's forum featured the work of Loren D. Lybarger (PhD 2002) one of the two 2013–2014 Martin Marty Center Senior

Fellows. Based on his symposium, the forum is entitled, "A Disenchanted Exile: Secularism and the Islamic Revival among Second-Generation Palestinian Immigrants in Chicago." Alain Epp-Weaver (MDiv 1999, PhD 2002) of the Mennonite Central Community, Louise Cainkar (Marquette University) and Naomi Davidson (University of Ottawa), responding.

June 2014 In June, the forum presented the work of 2013–2014 Marty Center Senior Fellow, Betty M. Bayer (Hobart & William Smith Colleges); the forum presentation is based on her symposium, "Endings Without End: *When Prophecy Fails* and the Rise of New Age Spirituality and Cognitive Dissonance."

July-August 2014 And finally, Seth Perry (PhD 2013); Princeton University) wrote on patriotic American editions of the Bible.



What's the best way to find out about events at the Divinity School? Online. Our online calendar can be found on our homepage —<http://divinity.uchicago.edu>— as can detailed information about conferences, lectures, and workshops. You can also join our Facebook community. Find us under "University of Chicago Divinity School."

Alumni are most welcome to join the conversation!