

# CIRCA

News *from* the University of Chicago Divinity School

FOR AMERICANS THE PHRASE “FAITH OF OUR FATHERS” CAN HAVE A DOUBLE RESONANCE.

It references both the founders of the United States of America and is also the source of that “holy faith” of which Christian hymnody proclaims the singer’s fealty unto death. This double legacy, with all its implications—the exclusivist reference of Christianity, the questions of the extent of citizenship, the establishment of religion—has been pivotal to the nation’s history.

Its omnipresence is heightened in the year of a presidential election. How might we think well about “the religion of the republic” in this new century whose advent is so variously challenged, not to say troubled? In a world that is smaller than ever, and in which our information about the claims to faith of myriad institutions—not solely religious or political ones—is so detailed, how does one talk about the “faith” citizens might have in their nation?

These are urgent questions, but their answer today is embroiled far too exclusively in the adjudication of disputes about prayer in schools and the like. At the time of the founding of the nation, however, the phrase “religion” had a significantly varied reference in the hands of those who, like Benjamin Franklin, were deists and distinguished between belief in God and the theologies of the Christian religions (note the plural). Franklin’s own idea of faith links it not to a particular religious tradition, but to an attitude toward ideals and their realization. For Franklin, republican faith had as its object the nation’s Constitution. But Franklin was clear that the faith was directed not to the document itself, but to the ideals to which it offers partial declaration. Indeed for Franklin the religions were themselves exemplary of misplaced or overreaching faith. The chief difference, he remarked in his speech endorsing the new Constitution on September 17, 1787, between the doctrines of the Roman Catholic and the Anglican churches, was that “the Romish Church is infallible, and the Church of England is never in the wrong.”

Franklin’s republican faith had another, parallel antithesis: the habits of individuals. What he deplored in these “Sects” he found abundantly present as well in his fellow

## Letter from the Dean



Today our discussions of religion and democracy focus on matters of church and state and what sort of wall should exist between them in American public life. Individuals and institutions, whether political or religious, hold in common a predilection for settled opinion.

creatures of God, “the many private persons (who) think almost as highly of their own Infallibility as that of their Sect.”

Whatever republican faith might mean, for Franklin it must not partake of the certitude of infallibility. In doctrine, whether institutional or personal, resided despotism rather than democracy.

Republican faith, then, is the antidote of doctrinal faith precisely because doctrine implies infallibility. One might wonder what Franklin would have made of John Henry Newman’s later concept of the development of doctrine; whatever the answer, we can be sure that Franklin would only have embraced it if, and when, he was assured that development precluded dogmatism.

Today our discussions of religion and democracy focus on matters of church and state and what sort of wall should exist between them in American public life. Franklin’s notion of republican faith suggests that we would do better to consider the quality of the faith that is the prerequisite even to such adjudications. Individuals and institutions, whether political or religious, hold in common a predilection for settled opinion. For Franklin, such established creeds, whether by church or by state, were in fact despotic and thus the antithesis of democracy.

To guard against both tendencies in our behavior and our institutions is to promote and preserve the civility that is essential to our common life. The common religion of our republic is thus the resistance of all dogmatisms. In that way, and that way alone, we may retain the benisons of republican government bequeathed to us. And this may be the ultimate act of faith—to enshrine values of the past in the present, for the benefit of the future. □

Richard A. Rosengarten, *Dean*

# Faculty News and Notes



Above: Professor Rachel Fulton

This fall, the Divinity School welcomes one new full-time faculty member and two visiting faculty members to its fold. To access online faculty profiles, which include bibliographies, photographs, and contact information for each faculty member, please see <http://divinity.uchicago.edu/faculty/index.html>.

## Faculty Notes



### Fulton Receives Guggenheim

The John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation has named **Rachel Fulton**, Associate Professor of Medieval History in the Department of History and Associate Faculty in the Divinity School, a 2008 Guggenheim fellow. Fulton, who was selected from among 2,600 U.S. and Canadian applicants, will use her Guggenheim fellowship to pursue a project on the Virgin Mary and prayer.

She will look at the cognitive and experiential aspects of prayer in monastic culture, with an emphasis on the practices that developed from the tenth to fifteenth centuries

for prayer to the Trinity and the Virgin Mother of God. Those practices included the recitation of the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary, modeled on the monastic liturgy of the Hours, as well as meditation on the Joys and Sorrows of the Virgin through the recitation of the rosary.

“My immediate purpose,” she said, “is to find a way to describe monastic, Marian prayer as a practical art, that is, as a practice that takes skill and uses particular tools. My ultimate goal is to develop an understanding of the meaning and importance of worship as a creative act.”

Fulton will work on a book that will look at how medieval Christians came to understand God through praying to the Virgin Mother. One of her objectives is to break down the divide that has developed among the disciplines of history and the sciences, such as the psychology of “what we know by thinking and what we know by doing, about religion as well as about ourselves,” she said.

Fulton has published extensively on topics related to the Middle Ages and is the author of *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800–1200*.

### Doniger Receives AAR Award

**Wendy Doniger**, the Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions, has been awarded the American Academy of Religion’s 2008 Martin E. Marty Award for the Public Understanding of Religion. Professor Doniger will be featured at the Marty Forum held Sunday, November 2, at this year’s AAR Annual Meeting in Chicago.

The Martin E. Marty Award for the Public Understanding of Religion, established in 1996, recognizes extraordinary contributions to the public understanding of religion. The award goes to those whose work has a relevance and eloquence that speaks, not just to scholars, but more broadly to the public as well.

Doniger’s research and teaching interests revolve around two basic areas, Hinduism and mythology. Among her many books are three Penguin Classics: *Hindu Myths: A Sourcebook, Translated from the Sanskrit; The Rig Veda: An Anthology; 108 Hymns, Translated from the Sanskrit;* and *The Laws of Manu* (with Brian K. Smith). In progress are *Hinduism: An Alternative History* (for Penguin) and a translation



of the last four books of the Mahabharata.

Previous winners of the Martin E. Marty Award for the Public Understanding of Religion include Andrew M. Greeley, John L. Esposito, and Cornel West.



## Appointments

### Stackert Appointed Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible



**Jeffrey Stackert** is a biblical scholar who situates the Hebrew Bible in the context of the larger ancient Near Eastern world in which it was composed. His first book, *Rewriting the Torah:*

*Literary Revision in Deuteronomy and the Holiness Legislation* (Mohr Siebeck, 2007), addresses literary correspondences among the biblical legal corpora and especially the



relationships between similar laws in Deuteronomy and pentateuchal Priestly literature. He also coedited the new volume *Perspectives on Purity and Purification in the Bible* (T&T Clark, 2008).

His current research is in the areas of biblical law, with special focus upon the book of Deuteronomy and its literary interactions with Israelite and non-Israelite sources; Priestly ritual texts and their ties to non-biblical ancient Near Eastern literature and practice; and the cultic and martial imagery of Amos's visions.

Stackert received his M.T.S. (in Hebrew Bible) from Boston University School of Theology and his Ph.D. (in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies) from Brandeis University. He joins the Divinity School from the University of Minnesota.

### Visiting Faculty

**Tzvi Abusch** is Visiting Professor of Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East, in residence Spring Quarter 2008–09. The Rose B. and Joseph Cohen Professor of Assyriology and Ancient Near Eastern Religion at Brandeis University, he has taught at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and has held a number of awards and fellowships. Most recently,



he was a member of the Institutes for Advanced Study in Princeton (2003–04) and in Jerusalem (2006). He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University.

**Ryan Coyne** is Visiting Assistant Professor of the Philosophy of Religion and Theology. A graduate of the Divinity School, Coyne studies both the history of Christian thought and modern continental philosophy. In the former field, he is especially interested in the history of Christian mysticism, as well as the relation between mysticism and scholasticism. In the latter field, his research interests include the development of the philosophy of religion, hermeneutics, phenomenology and deconstruction. He is currently working on a book exploring the role of Augustine's theological anthropology in the formation of Martin Heidegger's philosophy.



### Kass to Deliver Nuveen Lecture

**Leon Kass**, the Addie Clark Harding Professor in the College and the Committee on Social Thought, has been selected to deliver the 2008 John Nuveen Lecture. Kass is one of the nation's leading experts on medical ethics. His early research in molecular biology led him to contemplate the human consequences of science, an area of inquiry in which he has been engaged for more than thirty years.

Kass has written *Toward a More Natural Science: Biology and Human Affairs*, *The Hungry Soul: Eating and the Perfecting of Our Nature*, *The Ethics of Human Cloning* (with James Wilson), and the anthology *Wing to Wing, Oar to Oar: Readings on Courting and Marrying*, which he edited with his wife and fellow University faculty member, Amy Kass.

A Chicago native, Kass earned his S.B. and M.D. degrees at the University. He

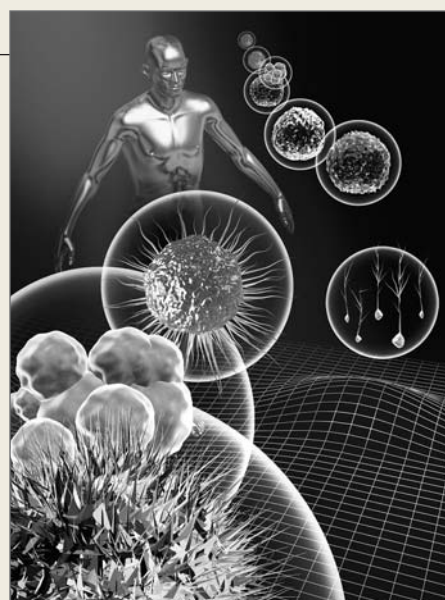


subsequently earned a Ph.D. in biochemistry at Harvard University.

He began his professional career as a member of the U.S. Public Health Service, serving as a researcher in molecular biology at the National Institutes of Health. In 2001, President Bush appointed Kass chairman of the President's Council on

Bioethics.

The John Nuveen Lecture was established



in 1972 by the Trustees of the Baptist Theological Union, who oversee an endowment that helps to support the University of Chicago Divinity School. Each year, a prominent member of the University's faculty is invited by the BTU and the Divinity School to deliver the lecture. A reception will follow the lecture.

**Thursday, November 20, at 4:00 p.m.** in Swift Lecture Hall. This event is free and open to the public. For more information, or special needs assistance, please contact Terren Ilana Wein at [terren@uchicago.edu](mailto:terren@uchicago.edu) or 773-702-8230.

# Other News and Notes



## Klauck Awarded Honorary Doctorate

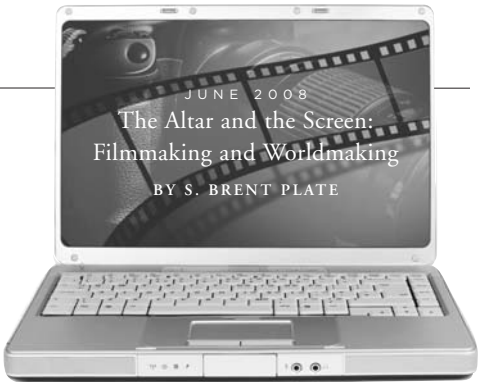
On April 26, 2008, during a *Dies academicus* celebrating the 175th birthday of the University of Zurich, Hans-Josef Klauck, the Naomi Shenstone Donnelly Professor of New Testament and Early Christian Literature, was awarded an honorary doctorate. The *doctor honoris causa* was given at the suggestion of the University's *Fakultaet*, or Protestant Theological School, in recognition of Klauck's valuable contributions to scholarship on history, literature and theology of Early Christianity and the New Testament.

## Alexander Hivoltze-Jimenez 1974 – 2008

The Divinity School community is deeply saddened by the sudden passing of Alexander Hivoltze-Jimenez, a first-year Ph.D. student in Theology. Alex passed away suddenly in May 2008 from a bacterial infection. Only two weeks prior, Alex had been awarded a Ford Foundation Diversity Pre-Doctoral Fellowship. Alex's research and writing focused on liberation theology and queer theology. He had previously studied at Oxford University, and held two master's degrees from Boston University. A promising scholar and good friend to many in the Divinity School, his death is a loss to friends and colleagues throughout the University community.

## New Religion and Culture Web Forum Editor Named

**Spencer Dew** is the new Managing Editor for the *Religion and Culture Web Forum*, the Marty Center's monthly online forum for thought-provoking discussion on the relationship of scholarship in religion to culture and public life. Mr. Dew received a B.A. from the College of



Wooster and a Master's Degree from the Divinity School, where he is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Religion and Literature. A regular reviewer for *Rain Taxi Review of Books* and a member of the fiction staff of the *Chicago Review*, Dew is a former Martin Marty Dissertation Fellow and frequently contributes to the Marty Center's *Sightings*.

His primary research focus is on the political and ethical functionality of literature, particularly twentieth-century American writings. He is completing a dissertation titled "Pedagogy and Community: Kathy Acker's 'Talmudic Mode.'" Dew also has broader interests in public discourse on and about religion, especially representations of socially marginal, immigrant, and subaltern religious practices, be they of European Catholics or the religions of the African Diaspora.

Dew looks forward to continuing the robust conversations of the Web Forum, which he sees as an important venue for exploring the myriad manifestations of religious practice in human culture.

Read more about RCWF at <http://marty-center.uchicago.edu/webforum/index.shtml>.

## Dean of Rockefeller Chapel Appointed

**The Reverend Ms. Elizabeth Davenport** has been appointed the new Dean of Rockefeller Chapel. Her appointment was effective July 1, 2008. As Dean of Rockefeller Chapel, Davenport will provide vision and leadership on campus for students and other members of the University community seeking religious and spiritual meaning, including promoting a lively and robust interfaith dialogue, and furthering the understanding of religious diversity on campus.



She will supervise weekly religious services at Rockefeller Chapel, develop programming, coordinate the many independent Campus Ministries that serve students affiliated with particular faith communities, provide pastoral and spiritual care, oversee the robust musical programs at the Chapel, attract speakers and other special events to the Chapel, take on a role in University community involvement, and have the possibility of teaching.

"I'm looking forward to finding new ways of integrating students' questions about meaning and spirituality into their overall experience of life at the University of Chicago," said Davenport. "It's an exciting moment to be grounding this kind of work in the great intellectual culture of the University. I'm looking forward to building upon the work that already has been done to make Rockefeller Memorial Chapel a place of spiritual welcome for students and community members of all kinds of religious traditions."

Davenport, who was chosen by a search committee chaired by Kathryn Tanner, the Dorothy Grant Maclear Professor in the Divinity School, comes to Chicago after seventeen years at the University of Southern California, where she served as Episcopal chaplain and Assistant Dean of Student Affairs before becoming Senior Associate Dean of Religious Life. She is an accomplished musician, with experience in choral direction, organ performance and musical arranging. Originally from England, Davenport has a B.A. and M.A. in



Theology from Oxford University, a Th.M. in Intercultural Studies from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, and Ph.D. in Religion and Social Ethics from USC.

Rev. Davenport will deliver a Wednesday Community Luncheon at the Divinity School on January 14, 2009.



# Autumn and Winter Events



For calendar updates, please consult the Divinity School’s website at <http://divinity.uchicago.edu>. Access the most up-to-date events information, sign up for our events listserve (“At the Divinity School”), and get current news. Please see p.7 for detailed information on upcoming Marty Center conferences.

## EVENTS AUTUMN AND WINTER QUARTERS INCLUDE



### Alumni Receptions at the AAR and SBL Meetings

#### American Academy of Religion (AAR) Reception

**Saturday, November 1**

7:00 – 9:00 p.m., Swift Hall, Chicago

All Divinity School alumni and friends are invited to a reception in Swift Hall to be held in conjunction with this year’s annual meeting of the AAR in Chicago. Shuttle bus transportation will be provided to Hyde Park from downtown.

#### Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) Reception

**Sunday, November 23**

9:00 – 11:00 p.m., Boston, Massachusetts

We will continue the Divinity School’s tradition of a Sunday night reception for alumni and friends at the SBL meeting in Boston. All Divinity School alumni and friends are cordially invited.

For more information about either event, please contact Mary Jean Kraybill at 773-702-8248 or [mjkraybill@uchicago.edu](mailto:mjkraybill@uchicago.edu). See you there!

### Border Crossing Series

Now in its second of three years, the Border Crossing Project continues its work of connecting ministry and doctoral students around discussions of vocation. Three public conferences will explore the intersections and divergences of clergy and teachers’ intellectual interests and professional pursuits.

See <http://divinity.uchicago.edu/events/lilly/> for more information.

**September 26, 2008**

#### Authority and Intimacy: Forming Whole Persons for the Classroom and the Congregation

Mark Schwehn, keynote address



**January 2009**

#### Resisting Mission: Redefining Engagement

**April 24, 2009**

#### Fifth Annual Ministry Conference

The Border Crossing Project is generously supported by the Lilly Endowment.

### Annual John Nuveen Lecture and Reception

**Thursday, November 20**

4:00 p.m., Swift Lecture Hall

The John Nuveen Lecture was established in 1972 by the Trustees of the Baptist Theological Union, who oversee an endowment that helps to support the University of Chicago Divinity School. Each year, a prominent member of the University’s faculty is invited by the BTU and the Divinity School to deliver the lecture. This year’s speaker is Leon Kass. See more at <http://divinity.uchicago.edu/alumni/nuveen.shtml>. A reception will follow.

### Wednesday Community Luncheons

**Every Wednesday** *when school is in session*

12:00 noon–1:30 p.m., Swift Common Room

Lunches this year will include Paula Fasseas, the founder of PAWS Chicago; Dean’s Fora with Professors Christian Wedemeyer and Martin Riesebrodt; Natalie Moore, who covers the South Side of Chicago for Chicago Public Radio, and many more.



Please see <http://divinity.uchicago.edu/news/wednesdays.shtml> for upcoming dates and speaker information.

Lunch itself (a vegetarian meal; a vegan option is available by prior request) is prepared and served by our creative and energetic student staff. Those interested in attending should reserve a lunch in advance by emailing [divinitylunch@gmail.com](mailto:divinitylunch@gmail.com) or by calling 773-702-8230.

### Bond Chapel Worship

**Every Wednesday** *when school is in session*

11:30 a.m.–12:00 noon

Joseph Bond Chapel, 1050 East 59th Street

Bond Chapel worship is a brief midweek service of music, prayer, readings, and preaching in an ecumenical spirit, offered by and for the students, staff, and faculty of the Divinity School and the wider University community. The weekly gathering provides regular space and place for reflection, wonder, and praise. All are welcome!

# An Interview with Kevin Hector



**K**evin Hector is Assistant Professor of Theology and of the Philosophy of Religion. He began his appointment in autumn of 2007. In this interview Hector discusses his goals for an upcoming course, his forthcoming work, and his reflections on his year in Swift Hall.

**CIRCA:** You're teaching an introduction to theology course next year. What are you seeking to accomplish in that class?

**KH:** The course was originally developed to fill a need in the M.Div. curriculum, and while it has been designed to serve a wider audience, let me begin by saying something about what we hope it will accomplish for ministry students. The goal, simply stated, is to provide students with the tools to become public theologians, that is, to be able to think theologically about the world around them (where "the world" may include a classroom, a halfway house, a public demonstration, a pulpit, or any number of other circumstances), and to do so in a way that is publicly intelligible, publicly accountable, and publicly relevant. In my view, one learns how to engage in a practice—to speak a language, for instance—by trying to go on in the same way as those whom one recognizes as knowing how to do so. In order to teach students how to engage in the practice of theology, therefore, we have organized the course into three components: first, lectures to provide students with an overview of the theological tradition and a model of theological practice; second, each student will choose a theologian (or theological movement) whom he or she sees as a skilled practitioner and will read his or her works throughout the course; and third, we will meet each week for a critical conversation about the week's themes and readings. The idea is that by attending carefully to at least one figure whom they recognize as knowing how to theologize—and being responsible contributors to an ongoing theological conversation—students will become better equipped to carry on the practice themselves.

**CIRCA:** How has teaching in a school with one theology curriculum for both doctoral and ministerial education inflected the way you organize your classes?

**KH:** I don't suppose that it has, and while that may say something about me, I suppose it says more about our ministry program and the Divinity School in general. One of the Divinity School's greatest strengths is its uncompromising commitment to rigorous, critical inquiry—we are constantly holding one another accountable for clarifying our claims, demonstrating our entitlement to them, relating them to the claims of other discourses, etc.—a net effect of which is that Swift Hall is no respecter of persons: whether one is a ministry student, a doctoral student, or a faculty member, one is expected to become a contributing member of an ongoing conversation wherein one holds others responsible and expects to be held responsible, too."

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**"... one of the temptations to which theologians (and, for that matter, philosophers and other "theorists") are liable is to appeal to "metaphysics" in order to solve an explanatory problem."**

too. It is not surprising, therefore, that ministry students take classes alongside doctoral students, especially when one keeps in mind our vision for ministry education. One of the ministry program's key hypotheses, I take it, is that the best way to prepare students for ministry is to teach them how to engage in the sort of critical inquiry to which the entire School is dedicated. If so, then ministry students ought to be included in classes the same way everyone else is; namely, by virtue of their ability to contribute to the careful examination of a variety of claims.

**CIRCA:** Tell us about your forthcoming book, and about future research projects.

**KH:** As I see it, one of the temptations to which theologians (and, for that matter, philosophers and other "theorists") are liable is to appeal to "metaphysics" in order to solve an explanatory problem; that is, if we have trouble explaining some phenomenon in terms of that which is ordinary and accessible to us, the temptation is to posit an extraordinary, inaccessible, yet nevertheless "real" something-or-other that bridges the explanatory gap.

This leads to several problems, two of which are especially relevant to the present discussion: first, given that our understanding of ordinary phenomena is supposed to depend upon their relationship to some extraordinary phenomenon, it is crucial that we be able to explain how the two phenomena are related—but because we have located the *explanans* in a strata of "reality" that is apparently unrelated to ordinary phenomena, it is exceedingly difficult to see how we could render this relationship intelligible. This is customarily referred to as the problem of "dualism." The second problem is related to this: so that, for instance, that which is "extraordinary" is frequently identified with some characteristic of those who are dominant, while that which is "ordinary" is identified with those who are dominated. The over-simplified picture that emerges thus looks something like this: explanatory gaps tempt theologians (and others) to posit "metaphysical" gap-fillers, these gap-fillers stand in a dualistic relationship to the ordinary phenomena they were trying to explain, and this dualism is frequently used to underwrite certain social arrangements.

I argue that, by providing thoroughly "ordinary," non-reductive explanations of theological phenomena, we can free ourselves from the temptation to posit a "metaphysical" *explanans*, from which it follows that we can do without the consequent



# Marty Center News and Events



The Martin Marty Center builds on a long-standing conviction of the Divinity School that the best and most innovative scholarship in religion emerges from sustained dialogue with the world outside the academy. In all of its projects, the Center aims to serve as a robust circulatory system that strengthens, deepens, and extends scholarly inquiry by moving it through the deliberating bodies of the students, faculty, and public. — William Schweiker, *Director of the Marty Center*

## Marty Center Conferences

### Schleiermacher, the Study of Religion, and the Future of Theology: A Transatlantic Dialogue

**Wednesday–Friday, October 29–31, 2008**  
Swift Hall

**and Saturday, November 1, 2008**

The Annual Meeting of the American  
Academy of Religion, Downtown Chicago

The past three decades have witnessed a significant transatlantic and trans-disciplinary resurgence of interest in the early nineteenth-century Protestant theologian and philosopher, Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834). As the first major Christian thinker to theorize religion in a post-Enlightenment context and re-conceive the task of theology accordingly, Schleiermacher holds a seminal place in the histories of modern Christian thought and the modern academic study of religion alike. Whereas his ‘liberalism’ and humanism have always made him a controversial figure



among theological traditionalists, it is only recently that Schleiermacher’s understanding of religion has become the target of polemics from Religious Studies scholars keen to dis-

associate their discipline from its partial origins in liberal Protestantism. The purpose of “Schleiermacher, the Study of Religion, and the Future of Theology” is to bring leading experts from Europe and North America together to probe the viability of key features of Schleiermacher’s theological and philosophical program in light of its contested place in the study of religion.

Co-sponsored by the Martin Marty Center of the University of Chicago Divinity School and Stanford University, in cooperation with the Schleiermacher Group of the AAR and the Schleiermacher-Gesellschaft, with additional financial support from the German Academic Exchange Service and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft.

Visit <http://marty-center.uchicago.edu/conferences/schl/index.shtml> for more details.

**Schleiermacher holds  
a seminal place in the histories  
of modern Christian thought  
and the modern academic study  
of religion alike.**

### UPCOMING IN 2009

### Culturing Theologies, Theologizing Cultures: Overtures toward Interdisciplinary Theories and Theologies of Culture

**Wednesday–Thursday, April 22–23, 2009**  
Swift Hall

Christian theology, especially theologies of culture, currently confronts an interdisciplinary and intercultural reconfiguration: the need to take into consideration the various ways in which culture has engaged with theology. Recent trends in theology demonstrate a growing appreciation for interdisciplinary approaches that readily embrace the methodologies of other increasingly specialized fields, and increased attention on and participation by the once “Third” and “Fourth” worlds of colonized and indigenous peoples respectively have both challenged and contributed corrections to various disciplinary methodologies, including those in theology. These recent

trends suggest a decisive move for a comparative, interdisciplinary approach to the perennial reflection upon ideas of and concern for the divine *in, through, and before* cultures.

This conference will explore such questions and themes from various perspectives, especially from the perspective of contemporary and emerging theological work in culture. It will also include critical work from other human sciences as they reflect on religion and theology. The central focus will be emergent reconfigurations of theologies of cultures framed as a new kind of conversation in the vein of sustained previous approaches.



### Upcoming Events at the Marty Center

**“Public Religion and Types of  
Secularism” with Charles Taylor**

February 13

**The Sharpe/Hoover Lectures**

April 22 and 23

Please visit our website for  
more information.

# Marty Center Fellowship Programs

## A Report from the Wilson Teaching Fellow

Each year, the Alma Wilson Teaching Fellowship, made possible by a generous endowment gift, provides one advanced graduate student in the Divinity School an opportunity for supervised teaching experience in the University of Chicago's undergraduate college. **Marsaura Shukla**, a Ph.D. candidate in Theology, reflects on her year of teaching.



This past spring, as the Alma Wilson Teaching Fellow, I taught a class in the College on the Bible as a problem within modernity. What constitutes the sacredness of sacred texts? What sort of norming power ought they to have? In what does their truth consist and how is it to be appropriated and applied? The historical separation and difference between the world of the Bible and that of the contemporary Christian for whom the Bible is to be normative is one of the definitive problems for post-Enlightenment Christian thought. The categories and concepts developed in the course of wrestling with this problem echo in various ways through contemporary debates about fundamentalisms of all sorts. My course this spring, entitled “Historical Knowledge and Biblical Faith,” investigated a crucial turning point and development in the treatment of this problem through a focus on the biblical theology and hermeneutics of Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976).

As a key figure in the Dialectical theology movement in the 1920s and 30s, Bultmann joined in the revolt against the assumptions and methods of nineteenth-century liberal theology, particularly as those informed the search for historical information about Jesus in the New Testament. He went on to formulate a theory of biblical interpretation

and theology influenced by the existential philosophy of Martin Heidegger, which set him at odds with the leader of the Dialectical theology movement, Karl Barth. The issue between them was the accessibility of the subject matter of a text as ancient and foreign as the Bible. Rudolf Bultmann and Karl Barth, in what their positions share and in their differences, set the parameters of the conversation about the Bible as sacred text for much of the twentieth century and, in many ways, still today.



**“The opportunity to explore the conceptual landscape and passionate life-world of theology with University of Chicago College students was truly a privilege.”**

On an unseasonably cold April Fool's day, I and my seventeen intrepid students “rushed in” to see what is at stake in these various and sometimes dauntingly complicated formulations of and responses to the problem posed by the Bible for theology in light of historical consciousness.

As we quickly discovered, this fairly specific issue opens into abiding theological questions about the relation of God to the world, the nature of faith as the human response to God, and the role of philosophical argument in explicating that response of faith. It was exciting

to figure out together how the larger theological questions motivate and also get refracted through the more focused terms of the debate, to see how theology—as a particular form of thinking about religion—happens on a conceptual level. Apart from serving as an introduction to the conceptual landscape of theology, though, the class readings illustrated what might be

called the “life-world” of theology.

Through reading letters and sermons along with essays and more formal theological arguments, the students were introduced to what being engaged with the questions of theology looks like. Bultmann and his interlocutors are different enough from us for this portrait to be arresting while at the same time being similar enough to raise fruitful questions. The opportunity to explore the conceptual landscape and passionate life-world of theology with University of Chicago College students was truly a privilege. □

## Martin Marty Center Senior Fellows Symposium



The Senior Research Fellow Symposia, instituted in 2007, allow Senior Fellows to present their work in a public forum. The symposia are free and open to the public. All symposia are on Thursdays from 4:00–6:00 p.m. in Swift Hall. Visit the Marty Center website at <http://marty-center.uchicago.edu> for updates. Please see page 9 for more information on the Fellows and the Marty Center fellowship programs.

November 13, 2008

### Clemens Six

Clemens Six's project is tentatively titled “Modernity and Religion: The Reception of Indian Theories to Rethink a Historical Relationship.” Six is a recent Ph.D. in South Asian Economic and Social History from the University of Vienna and recently authored *Hindi-Hindu-Hindustan. Politik und Religion im modernen Indien*.

February 26, 2009

### Vincent Rougeau

Associate Professor and Director of the Center on Law and Government, University of Notre Dame Law School

April 16, 2009

### Sarah Macfarland Taylor

Associate Professor, Department of Religion, Northwestern University



# Marty Center Fellows 2008–2009

The Martin Marty Center, continuing its emphasis on global interactions and aspects of religion, will have four senior fellows, one associate, and twelve dissertation (junior) fellows in 2008–09.

This year's Marty Center dissertation seminar is being offered in two sections, one led by William Schweiker, Director of the Center; the other led by Malika Zeghal, Associate Professor of the Anthropology and Sociology of Religion and of Islamic Studies.

The Senior Research Fellows and Junior Dissertation Fellows, listed below, will participate in the seminar, which is designed to advance interdisciplinary research in all areas of religious studies. Dissertation Fellows will be required to present their individual projects not only within the seminar, before their peers, but before public interlocutors at a special spring meeting. The seminar's goal is to advance scholarship mindful of the public setting of all inquiry. The spring meeting helps participants articulate their projects in ways that will be intelligible to specialists and non-specialists alike.

## Senior Research Fellow Symposia

The Senior Fellow Symposium will allow a Senior Fellow to present her or his work in a public forum to members of the seminar, the entire Divinity School community, members of the University, and interested persons. Please save these dates: November 13 (C. Six); February 26 (V. Rougeau); April 16 (S. Macfarland Taylor). All symposia are Thursdays from 4–6:00 p.m. in the Common Room.



## Senior Research Fellows

**Jiangyang Dong**, a Visiting Research Scholar from China for the 2008–09 Fulbright Scholar Program, will pursue a research project entitled “A Study on the Relationship Between the Christian Church and the Government in the USA and its Potential Meanings Toward China.” His project focuses on a comprehensive and interdisciplinary study of the historical, religious, political, philosophical and sociological dimensions of church-state relations.

**Vincent Rougeau** will be working on a project tentatively titled “Faith and Citizenship in the New Millennium: Christian Witness in a Pluralist Society.” Rougeau is currently Associate Professor and Director of the Center on Law and Government at Notre Dame Law School; he recently completed a book with Oxford University Press entitled *Christians in the American Empire: Faith and Citizenship in the New World Order*.



**Clemens Six** will be working on a project tentatively titled “Modernity and Religion: The Reception of Indian Theories to Rethink a Historical Relationship.” Six, who will be working with Martin Riesebrodt, Professor of the Sociology of Religion, is a recent Ph.D. in South Asian Economic and Social History from the University of Vienna and recently authored *Hindi-Hindu-Hindustan. Politik und Religion im modernen Indien*.

**Sarah McFarland Taylor** will be working on two projects tentatively titled “Eternally Green: American Religion and the Ecology of Death” and “Religious Responses to Global Climate Change.” Taylor is currently Associate Professor at Northwestern University's Department of Religion, where she also teaches in the American Studies program and the Environmental Policy and Culture program. She published *Green Sisters: A Spiritual Ecology* with Harvard University Press in 2007 and has two book projects currently underway.



## Associate

**Wu Guo** is a professor of the Institute of Religious Studies, Sichuan University. His field of specialty includes Taoism, especially two Taoist sects: Quan-zhen (perfect verity) and Jing-ming (purity and sunniness). He comes to the Marty Center from the Harvard-Yenching Institute, where he was working on a research project titled “Taoism in Modern Chinese Society and Trends of Contemporary Neo-Taoism.”

## Dissertation Fellows

Of our twelve dissertation (junior) fellows, seven are Divinity School students and five are extradepartmental.

### Divinity School Fellows and their Dissertations

**D. Maurice Charles**, “Heresy, Treason, and Royal Perogative: Henry VIII and the Plenitude of Power”

**Carrie Dohe**, “The Wandering Archetype: C.G. Jung's Wotan and the Coming Religion in Early Twentieth Century Pan-German Culture”

**Cooper Harriss**, “Ralph Ellison: Religion, Race and the Irony of African-American Literature”

**Anne Knafl**, “Forms of God, Forming God: A Typology of Divine Anthropomorphism in the Pentateuch”

**Carlos Manrique**, “Religion, Subjectivity and the Political in Derrida's Reading of Kant”

**Daniel Shin**, “The Public Theology of Hans W. Frei: Hermeneutics, Christology, and Theological Ethics”

**Sally Stamper**, “Horror and Its Aftermaths: A Psychological Reading of Human Suffering from Friedrich Schleiermacher to Marilyn McCord Adams and Jonathan Lear”



## Extradepartmental Fellows

**Catherine Bronson**, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, “The Eve of Islamic Exegesis”

**Urmila Nair**, Department of Anthropology, “When the Sun's Rays are as Shadows: The Rituals of the Nechung Deity in Tibetan Exile”

**Xiaoli Tian**, Department of Sociology, “Relocating Science: Western Medicine in 19th-Century China”

**Jeremy Walton**, Department of Anthropology, “Constructing Civic Virtue in a Superior State: Islam and Civil Society in Contemporary Turkey”

**Jennifer Westerfield**, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, “In the Shadow of the Sphinx: Pharaonic Sacred Space in the Coptic Imagination”



dualisms and undercut the support these dualisms lend to inegalitarian relationships. The book I am just finishing, tentatively entitled *On God-Talk: Theological Semantics and Pneumatological Pragmatics*, exemplifies

this strategy. The prevailing view maintains that God-talk cannot be a species of ordinary talk, and thus commonly appeals to extra-ordinary bridge-concepts to explain how God-talk could be meaningful, true, or about God. As a result, God-talk’s answerability to God appears incompatible with its answerability to us, such that God-talk is all-too-often called upon both to elevate the status of a particular agenda and to insulate that agenda from criticism. I counter all of this by providing an “ordinary” account of God-talk: by explaining the semantics (meaning, truth, “aboutness,” etc.) of ordinary language in terms of the norms implicit in our recognition of certain language-use as correct, and then explaining the sense in which the normative Spirit of God-talk is likewise mediated through an ongoing process of mutual recognition, I argue that we can understand God-talk as a species of ordinary talk, that we can thus avoid “metaphysics” and dualisms, that we can understand God-talk’s answerability to God precisely in terms of our answerability to one another, and so on.

**CIRCA:** What have you found to be the prospects for interaction with other areas of study in the Divinity School? In the University?

**KH:** It seems to me that in order to count as a “good citizen” of Swift Hall—and of the wider University—one must be committed to critical inquiry (as opposed to dogmatism) and exhibit a certain catholicity of interest (as opposed to parochialism). In view of the latter, it is perhaps unsurprising that several colleagues have already turned out to be invaluable conversation partners: in addition to ad hoc conversations on everything from critical theory and the nature of “practice” to politics and personal life, I have especially enjoyed participating in a reading group that Dan Arnold and I facilitated (on some key figures in contemporary philosophy), as well as a faculty-wide seminar, convened by William Schweiker, that has been discussing Charles Taylor’s *A Secular Age*. I find such conversations tremendously helpful, and I look forward to cultivating more of them. □

# Dean of Students’ Report

## Enrollment

This fall, the Divinity School enrolled ninety-seven entering degree candidates: five A.M.R.S., sixty-one M.A., fourteen M.Div., and seventeen Ph.D.

## Convocations

### Summer 2007

**M.A.**  
Brian James Clites  
Alan Jay Dagovitz  
Justine Farrell Howe  
Shaily Shashikant Patel  
Nathan Hearing Phillips  
Gary Neil Shapiro

**Ph.D.**  
Catherine Selene Adcock  
Anthony Michael Cerulli  
Erik Christopher Owens  
Shubha Pathak

### Winter 2008

**M.A.**  
Stephen Harding Blackwell  
Diana Katherine Frantz

**Ph.D.**  
Mihwa Choi  
John M. Freymann  
Lea Faye Schweitz  
Kristin Diane Van Heyningen

### Spring 2008

**M.A.**  
Ellen Alexis Ambrosone  
Scot Andrew Ausborn  
Melissa Susan Blaschke  
Daniel Patrick Borland  
Paul H.B. Chang  
Joshua Andrew Connor  
Mark Peter Dankel  
Jeannette Marie Darcy  
Ellyn Rachelle Farrelly  
Thomas Scott Ferguson

Donald Edward Frederick  
Aaron Phillips Hammes  
Kaylon Elizabeth Hammond  
Susan Hoshang Karani  
Elizabeth Eleanor Kevern  
Hannah Kathleen Lawrence  
Elizabeth Ann Lasar Muir  
Kimba A. Levitt  
Lauren Therese O’Connell  
Mark Robinson  
Toby C. Siegel  
Brian James Sweeney  
Megan Nicole Wade Antieau  
Kyle Adam Wagner  
Peter Jonathan Walford  
Erica Ilardi Wovsaniker  
Hongmei Zhao

**M.Div.**  
Aaltje Marie Baumgart  
Jonathan Andre Friesen  
George Ryan Gilbert  
Edmund Immanuel Harris  
David W. Johnson  
Casey Lee Karbowski  
Laura Elizabeth Koepke  
Kinndlee Shea Lund  
Ryan Christian Singleton  
Tedd Patrick Steele  
Wesley Su-Ming Sun  
Catherine Emily Schrement Turner

**Ph.D.**  
Elliot Joe Cosgrove  
Ryan David Coyne  
Joel Sebastian Harter  
Ante Jeronic  
Benjamin Elliot Sax  
Jeffrey Charles Shirkey  
Courtney Suzanne Wilder

## Student Fellowships, Grants, and Awards 2007–2008

**American Association of University Women Fellowship**  
Gabriel Amber Robinson

**The Armstrong Voss Scholarship**  
Lindsey Erin Braun

**The Wayne C. Booth Graduate Student Prize for Excellence in Teaching**  
Carlos Andres Manrique

**Foreign Language and Area Study Fellowships**

*Academic Year*  
Ellen Alexis Ambrosone  
Maria Eugenia Albina  
Erin Hillary Epperson  
Randall Moore  
Antje Postema

*Summer*  
Ellen Alexis Ambrosone

**Ford Foundation Pre-Doctoral Diversity Fellowship**  
Alexander Phillip Hivoltze-Jimenez (deceased)

**Furstenberg Fellowship**  
Ruchama Jerusha Johnston-Bloom  
Chaim Meir Neria

**The Louisville Institute Dissertation Fellowship**  
Sandra Jeanne Sullivan Dunbar

**Provost’s Summer Fellowships**  
Emmanuelle Neuman Burton  
Megan Elizabeth Doherty  
Carlos Andres Manrique  
Anne Taylor Mocko  
Seth Perry  
Garry G. Sparks

## College Graduates in Religious Studies 2007–2008

Nine students completed fourth-year B.A. papers in Religious Studies this year, led by the B.A. paper preceptor, Hillel Gray. They and their topics are (advisors’ names follow in brackets):

**Wallace Bourgeois**, “Conceptions of Human Perfection from Neitzsche and Christianity” (W. Schweiker)

**Joseph Bozdech**, “And the Future, King?: Hege-monic Validation in Ancient Mesopotamian Omen Correcting Rituals” (C. Faraone)

**Sarah Jackman**, “Eschatology and Exploration: Rethinking the Historical Columbus” (C. Gilpin)

**Nate Hainje**, “Beliefs and Ideals: The Role of Thomas Jefferson’s Religious Beliefs within the Formation of his Concept of Religious Freedom” (C. Gilpin)

**Mark Holum**, “Death, Sex, and Horses: The Paradoxes of the Superlative King in the Mythology of the Asvamedha” (W. Doniger)

**Alexandra Jamali**, “Congratulations and Condolences: The Aesthetics of Martyr Imagery in the Films of Mohsen Makhmalbaf” (F. Lewis)

**Jamal Jones**, “The Folk Within and the Folk Without” (B. Lincoln)

**Hannah McConnaughay**, “Civil Religion in South Africa: Two Regimes, Shared Narratives, and the Importance of Diversity” (C. Gilpin)

**Meredyth Richards**, “Petrus the Teacher: Reason and Instruction in the *Dialogue Against the Jews*” (J. Robinson)

**Some of our Ph.D. graduates are available for appointment. Their resumes can be accessed online at: <http://divinity.uchicago.edu/resumebook/index.html>.**

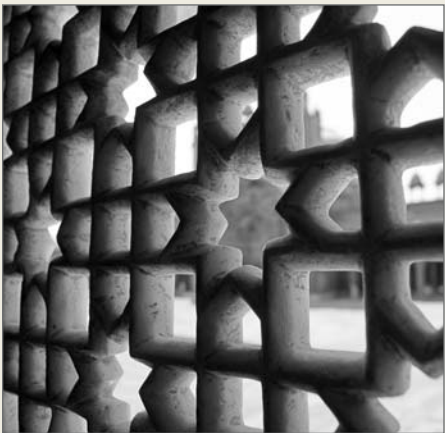


# Ministry Program Update



## Global Perspectives on Ministry

Ministry students often tell us that they choose Chicago’s Master of Divinity program for its characteristic emphasis on the public engagement of religious communities and religious leadership. The program is engineered to be contextual—students are able to design courses of study that are both wide-ranging and deeply rooted, electing courses throughout the university and the Hyde Park seminaries and taking advantage of internship opportunities in congregations and agencies throughout the city and its surrounding areas. Increasingly, the program’s public horizons are broadening.



The heightened profile of religions in world events, Christianity’s explosion in the global south, and the interests of our current students who come to us with their thought worlds shaped by internet communications all combine to shape our conversation about the possibilities and parameters of religious life and leadership.

This summer M.Div. students traveled to Kenya, Tanzania, and India to study ministry and ministry education in a variety of cultural contexts. Erin Bouman, a rising third-year student who taught school in Tanzania before her matriculation in the Divinity School,

returned to Tanzania this summer to research the role of women and women’s ordination in the Lutheran church there. Matthew Robinson, a rising third-year whose academic interests include the transmission of texts and hermeneutics, is spending ten weeks in Kenya improving his Swahili and observing the role of scripture study in the formation of pastors in congregational Bible schools. Classmate Bethany Lowery traveled through northern India investigating the ecumenically based Church of North India as a model for ecumenical partnership in a religiously plural culture. All three students have been documenting their observations and insights on blogs and in journal reflections; they will be reporting on their studies for their colleagues at the Divinity School in presentations to be held throughout the coming academic year.

International study and travel is not new among Divinity School students—certainly many of our Ph.D. students do research and language study abroad, and it is not uncommon that our students come to our programs having lived or studied in another culture during their undergraduate work, or afterward. Many of our ministry students come from denominations that have historically

“... Christian communities in Kenya, Tanzania, and India are helping our students to think more creatively and critically about our common practice ...”

engaged in “missions” or development work abroad, and some have been deployed thus. The shift in these current international study projects, however, is a significant one—rather than being seen as destinations for missions or recipients of outreach, the Christian communities in Kenya, Tanzania, and India are helping our students to think more creatively and critically about our common practices—leadership formation, ordination and ecumenical relationships—as reflection partners and teachers, helping to shape a generation of religious leaders with truly global perspective.

Matthew’s and Bethany’s studies abroad were made possible by the first International Ministry Study grants to be issued by the



Divinity School, thanks to generous matching gifts by the Carpenter Foundation and the Baptist Theological Union. The ministry program will be receiving applications for next year’s international study grant recipients during the upcoming fall quarter; currently, the funding for this program will extend for four years of travel grants. Erin received funding for her study from the ministry fellows program of the Fund for Theological Education. Though our students are impressively resourceful in designing their research projects and establishing international conversation partners, *Circa* readers are encouraged to contact the Director of Ministry Studies if you have contacts or ideas about noteworthy international ministries. □

— Cynthia Lindner, *Director, Ministry Program*

# Spring Convocation

The University of Chicago held its 494th Convocation in June of 2008. Degrees were conferred upon candidates from the Divinity School during Session II, held on Friday the 13th at 2:30 p.m. Wendy Doniger, the Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor in the Divinity School, delivered the Convocation address at Sessions I, II and III. Her speech, entitled “Thinking More Critically about Thinking Too Critically” will be printed in a forthcoming issue of *Criterion*.



Circa Images © Cover: Scott Rothstein. Pg 2: Fulton, Beth Rooney; Medieval stone figure, Tony Baggett. Pg 3: Torah, Fotolia; Bible, Stephen Ortillo; Wall, Sam Spiro; Kass, Chronicle Archive; Medical Collage, Elena Pankova. Pg 4: Computer, Robert Mizerek and Douglas Freer; Davenport, Steve Kagan; Rockefeller, Sam Spiro. Pg 5: Trees, Elena Elisseeva; Manuscript, Vladislav Gurfinkel; Group, Alexey Klementiev; Boy, MW Productions. Pg 6: Hector, Steve Hagan. Pg 7: Hands, Marcin Kempicki; Streetscene, Anita Romero. Pg 8: Book, Paul Bodea; Shukla, Steve Kagan; Arch, Robin Winge. Pg 9: Streetscene, Dan Low; Shop, Fotolia; Mosaic, Yali Shi; Head, Andrea Danti. Pg 10: Hector, Steve Hagan; Leaves, Barbro Bergfeldt. Pg 11: Arrows, Juice Images; Frerwork, Jgr; Woman, Juan Llompert. Pg 12: Convocation, Steve Hagan.



**For calendar updates**, please consult the Divinity School’s website at <http://divinity.uchicago.edu/news/>. Access the most up-to-date events information, sign up for our electronic events calendar —“At the Divinity School”—and get current, and archived, news.