I regard myself as certainly the most fortunate dean in theological education and probably the most fortunate one on the University of Chicago campus. I work in the service of an institution with a great history and terrific prospects. Our dilemmas here are those of the rich (in the intellectual rather than the pecuniary sense): what can we do best, of the many things that we might do and that need to be done? I serve a truly distinguished, brilliant, and collegial faculty; a student body that marries ability and resolve to an extraordinary degree; and I work with a staff that believes wholeheartedly in the School’s mission, and shares actively in the shaping of it. I did not have a checklist of hopes when I took this job, but what I have discovered plainly exceeds what I might have conjured if I had.

What is our mission? We are devoted to understanding religion, and to preparing people for professional lives in teaching and in ministry. Our central commitment is to the claim that evidence and argument are essential components of serious conversation on any topic, but perhaps especially when the topic is religion. To the degree that we may be said to do so, we privilege religion out of the conviction that few, if any, dimensions of the human adventure have had, and continue to have, such comprehensive import. And we seek to address the paradox that this truth’s corollary is the rate, but precisely in its acknowledgement of their complementarity. All truly interesting academic work crosses boundaries, and this must engage the constructive, the historical, and the cultural dimensions of its subject to do it full justice. This creative cross-stitching is crucial for at least two reasons. First, religions are overt and explicit about their existential claims: it is impossible to study religions are overt and explicit about their existential claims: it is impossible to study religion without experiencing its pull on you. Really to study a religion, to encounter it, means that the thing you study studies you in return. As the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas has put it: it returns your gaze. I know of no subject where this is so explicit as it is with religion. Second, those who teach religion and those who minister to people in churches must know how they themselves respond to this claim, this returning of the gaze, if they are going to excel at their chosen work. Ministry students, in my experience at Chicago, tend to grasp this more immediately than their counterparts in the doctoral program: you have to know what you yourself think about religion to engage it professionally.

In sum, then, the mission of the Divinity School is to produce scholarship that is fully attendant to religion as a manifold human phenomenon—scholarship that recognizes the capacity of religion to engage anyone existentially, whether one’s response is utter embrace, revulsion, or—far more common—something in between. And we propose to do this with rigorous adherence to the highest standards of evidence and argument, to ensure that the conversation about our responses to this multivalent, fascinating, and deeply complex dimension of human life is appropriately disciplined.

One of the ways we pursue and develop this mission is, of course, through the appointment of new faculty colleagues. This fall we welcome four new members to our ranks. You can read in this issue of Circa an interview with one of these, James Robinson, Assistant Professor of the History of Judaism. Joining Professor Robinson are Amy Hollywood, Professor of Theology and the History of Christianity; Jean-Luc Marion, John Noveen Professor of the Philosophy of Religion and Theology; and Christian Wedemeyer, Assistant Professor of the History of Religions. A brief sketch of their work maps in interesting ways onto my description of the Divinity School and its mission.

Hollywood, a scholar of medieval Christian thought and practice, and of gender in the study of religion, is an alumna of Chicago whose work marshals both classic historical methods and contemporary approaches (psychoanalysis, historiography) to think about the transmission of the Christian tradition among its classic thinkers, its neglected or lesser-known figures, and scholars who “recover” them. Marion, who comes to us from the Sorbonne, is both the preeminent interpreter of the philosophy of René Descartes, and one of the most important and innovative philosophical theologians whose work addresses the question of God. His current project includes a sustained investigation of Augustine’s theology, particularly as developed in The City of God.

Robinson, who has just completed doctoral work at Harvard under the supervision of the late Isadore Twersky and Bernard Septimus, focuses his work on medieval Jewish philosophy and exegesis, with special expertise in the Islamic East, in Spain and in France, and on the transmission of the classical heritage from the Islamic world to Christian Europe.

Continued on back page
Faculty Announcements

Hollywood Appointed Professor of Theology and the History of Christianity
Amy Hollywood has been appointed Professor of Theology and the History of Christianity in the Divinity School, having served previously as Associate Professor of Christian Thought at Dartmouth College. She received her M.A. in 1996 and her Ph.D. in 1999 from the Divinity School, and is a historian of Christian thought specializing in mysticism, with strong interests in feminist theory, psychoanalysis, and continental philosophy. Her first book, The Soul as Virgin Wife: Mechthild of Magdeburg, Marguerite Porete, and Meister Eckhart (University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), is a study of the body and gender in late medieval Christian mysticism. It received the International Congress of Medieval Studies’ Otto Gruner Prize for the best book in medieval studies. Her second book, Sensible Ecstasy: Mysticism, Sexual Difference, and the Demands of History (University of Chicago Press, 2001), deals with Georges Bataille, Simone de Beauvoir, Jacques Lacan, and Luce Irigaray and their fascination with excessive bodily and affective forms of Christian mysticism. Hollywood is currently working on two new projects: one focused on the thirteenth-century Dominican Margaret Ehner, the other on the nineteenth-century Carmelite Therese of Lisieux.

Mahmood Accepts Position at the University of California at Berkeley
Saba Mahmood, who joined the Divinity School faculty in 1998 as Assistant Professor of the History of Religions, has accepted an appointment in the Anthropology Department of the University of California at Berkeley.

Piñón Appointed Assistant Director of Field Education and Church Relations
Santiago O. Piñón, a Ph.D. student in Theology, has been appointed Assistant Director of Field Education and Church Relations in the Divinity School. He received his M.Div. from the Divinity School in 2002, and is ordained minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). He brings fourteen years of ministry experience to the position, having served churches (both English- and Spanish-speaking) in a variety of capacities, including Pastor, Associate Pastor, and Youth Minister, and having worked at a social service agency. In addition, Piñón has taught classes at Waukegan Community College and the Disciples Divinity House of the University of Chicago. His theological interests concern the penal institution in Mexico and his current research is with a focus on empirical research on the relationship between human rights attitudes and religious attitudes among South African youth. In this latter field, he has published Is There a God of Human Rights? (University of Chicago Press, 2003), which was recently appointed editor of the Religious Studies Association.”

Robinson Appointed Assistant Professor of the History of Judaism
James T. Robinson has been appointed Assistant Professor of the History of Judaism in the Divinity School, having taught previously at the Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies at New York University. Read more about James Robinson in the interview on page 4.

Wedemeyer Appointed Assistant Professor of the History of Religions
Christian K. Wedemeyer has been appointed Assistant Professor of the History of Religions in the Divinity School, having taught previously at the University of Copenhagen. Wedemeyer received his M.A., M.Phil., and Ph.D. from Columbia University. His scholarly work centers primarily on the history, literature, philosophy, and praxis of Indian and Tibetan Buddhism(s). Within this very general domain, the focus of his research has been the esoteric Buddhist traditions of the Mahayana Tantras. His approach to the field of Buddhist Studies encourages a critical attention to issues of epistemology and ideology native to modern scholarly inquiry. He is a Professor of Comparative Empirical Theology at the University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands. He studies the relevance of empirical methodology for theology. In this field, he has published Practical Theology: An Empirical Approach. He conducts comparative empirical-theological research projects in various contexts (developed and developing countries) with regard to religious models of reality (referring to the belief in God, Jesus, guilt, salvation, theology) and models for reality (ethical and moral orientations, especially human rights). In this latter field, he has published God Reinvented: A Theological Search in Texts and Tables. Together with South African colleagues, he is completing a book, Is There a God of Human Rights? based on empirical research on the relationship between human rights attitudes and religious attitudes among South African youth. Van der Ven has applied insights from these projects of empirical-theological research in the fields of church development and moral education, especially in his books Ecclesiology in Context, Education for Reflective Ministry, and Formation of the Moral Self.
Wednesday community luncheons are held at 12:00 noon in Swift Common Room. They cost $4 at the door and must be reserved in advance by calling 773-702-8230, or by writing to jquijano@uchicago.edu.

**Wednesday Community Luncheons**

**OCTOBER 1**
Thomas Geoghegan, Attorney with Despres, Schwartz & Geoghegan and member of the Divinity School’s Visiting Committee, will speak about labor law, a subject on which he has written several books and one play.

**OCTOBER 8**
Jason DeRose, Religion Reporter for WBEZ, Chicago Public Radio, and graduate of the Divinity School’s M.Div. program, will speak about his experience on the job.

**OCTOBER 15**
Michael Lieb, Professor of English and Research Professor of Humanities at the University of Illinois at Chicago and Senior Research Fellow at the Martin Marty Center for 2003–2004, will present a paper entitled “Above Top Secret!: The Nation of Islam and the Advent of the Mother Plane.”

**OCTOBER 22**
The Dean’s Forum on Tikva Frymer-Kensky’s *Reading the Women of the Bible: A New Interpretation of Their Stories* (Schocken Books, 2002), which won a Koret Jewish Book Award in 2002. The forum will feature a discussion between the author and Anthony C. Yu, Carl Darling Buck Distinguished Service Professor in the Humanities and Professor of Religion and Literature in the Divinity School.

**OCTOBER 29**
Daud Richardson, Director of Neighborhood Relations/Educational Programs in the University Office of Community Affairs, and Pam Boceman-Evans, Director of the University’s Community Service Center, will speak about their programs and how students can get involved.

For calendar updates, please consult the Divinity School’s website at http://divinity.uchicago.edu/whatsnew/wednesdays.html.

**Frymer-Kensky Receives Koret Award**
Tikva Frymer-Kensky, Professor of Hebrew Bible and the History of Judaism, won a 2002 Koret Jewish Book Award for her *Reading the Women of the Bible: A New Interpretation of Their Stories* (Schocken Books, 2002). The awards, created in cooperation with the New York-based National Foundation for Jewish Culture, are a critical fixture of Jewish literary and intellectual life.

**Hollywood to Deliver Rockwell Lectures**
Amy Hollywood, Professor of Theology and the History of Christianity, has been invited by the faculty of the Department of Religious Studies at Rice University to deliver one of their three Rockwell Lectures during the spring semester of 2004 on the theme, “Mary Magdalene through the Ages.”

**The Rockwell Lectures** comprise the oldest lecture series at Rice, and are published in a series with Trinity Press International.

**Press Honors Lincoln with Laing Prize**
Bruce Lincoln, the Caroline E. Haskell Professor of the History of Religions, won the 2002 Gordon J. Laing Prize for his book *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship* (University of Chicago Press, 1999). Awarded annually since 1963, the Laing Prize is given to a Chicago faculty member who has published the book that adds the greatest distinction to the University of Chicago Press and to the University. *Theorizing Myth* also received the American Academy of Religion’s Award for Excellence in the Study of Religion in 2000.

Davidson Awarded Guggenheim Fellowship
Arnold I. Davidson, Professor of the Philosophy of Religion, was awarded a 2003 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship to conduct research on the history of the ideas of spiritual exercises and self-transformation. Guggenheim fellowships are awarded through annual competition to further the development of scholars and artists by assisting them to engage in research in any field of knowledge and creation in any of the arts, under the freest possible conditions.

**November 5**
Mark Strand, Andrew MacLeish Distinguished Service Professor of Social Thought at the University of Chicago and recipient of the 1999 Pulitzer Prize for poetry, will read and discuss his current work.

**November 12**

**December 3**
Issa Boulos, Palestinian-born composer, oud player, and teacher, will perform original music, ranging from Middle Eastern compositions to jazz.
James Robinson joined the Divinity School faculty this fall as Assistant Professor of the History of Judaism. He earned his M.Phil. from Oxford University in Modern Jewish Studies in 1996, and his M.A. (1996) and Ph.D. (2002) from the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University. He spent the past three years teaching at the Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies at New York University.

JTR: What are your fields of academic interest?

CIRCA: What are your fields of academic interest?

JTR: My main fields of interest are medieval Jewish philosophy and exegesis, which I study in the broader context of medieval intellectual and cultural history. The Islamic East, Spain, and southern France are my main geographical areas of interest, but what engages my imagination most fully is the medieval Mediterranean in general, where classical science and philosophy were translated, absorbed, and disputed as they moved from east to west and north to south, from the Islamic world to Latin Christendom.

JTR: Many years ago, as an undergraduate at the University of California at Berkeley, I studied mathematics, but was always very interested in philosophy and religion. When I finished my B.A., I decided to work my way to general philosophy through studying Jewish philosophy. Soon after beginning a postgraduate degree in Jewish Studies, I fell in love with Hebrew and modern Jewish philosophy and history in particular, first at Oxford and later at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. When I began my Ph.D. studies at Harvard, I had intended to continue to study modern Jewish history and thought, but this initial plan was quickly changed by my relationship with two extraordinary teachers: the late Isadore Twersky and Bernard Septimus. Their command of medieval history and philosophy, their vast erudition and real love for classical Jewish literature and thought moved me and inspired me in many ways. I felt I had found exactly what I was looking for, immediately changed my main focus to the medieval period, and have since devoted myself to studying the great texts of the Middle Ages, striving to follow the model of my teachers. I recognized early on in my studies the importance of looking at Judaism in relation to the surrounding cultures, and have striven not only to master the texts themselves but also to understand fully the contexts from which they emerged, both Jewish and non-Jewish. This led to my study of Islamic and Christian, as well as Jewish, philosophy and exegesis, a “three-fold cord” that is never really broken.

CIRCA: Tell us a little about your background, and what led you into the study of medieval Jewish history and thought.

JTR: What engages my imagination most fully is the medieval Mediterranean in general, where classical science and philosophy were translated, absorbed, and disputed as they moved from east to west and north to south, from the Islamic world to Latin Christendom.

JTR: I am currently preparing my doctoral dissertation for publication. It consists of three books: a critical edition, an English translation, and a historical-philosophical analysis of Samuel Ibn Tibbon’s commentary on Ecclesiastes, which was a seminal work of Maimonidean philosophy and exegesis. My research on Ibn Tibbon’s commentary is itself the first part of a larger study of the history of Ecclesiastes exegesis, and of philosophical exegesis in general, in Hebrew and Judaeo-Arabic. The examination of these important, but underappreciated, sources of history and philosophy, many of which remain in manuscript form, will focus on method and style as well as on the way in which certain biblical books, especially Genesis, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Psalms, and the works attributed to Solomon— the philosopher's Bible— served as the perfect conduit for the introduction of science and philosophy into classical Judaism. Ibn Tibbon is not only a central figure in the history of exegesis, but in the development of Maimonidean scientific culture. Two projects I am now beginning—a study of the transmission in Hebrew of Averroes’ treatises on immortality and a history of medieval Jewish texts on translation theory—focus on these other aspects of his life and work. I find the research into translation theory particularly interesting, for it connects with a subject of great contemporary concern in both philosophy and literature. This interplay between modern and ancient, medieval, while sometimes complex and potentially misleading, can add extra nuance to the study of any subject and provide a meaningful entranceway into the thinking of the past. It is often useful and frequently instructive to move from what is familiar to what is not, from the common notions of contemporary thought to the rich insights of the past.

JTR: We are living in a very exciting time for the study of medieval Jewish Judaism. Decades of textual and literary research have made available many of the basic texts and historical resources. The parallel study of Islam and Christianity, as well as the philosophy and literature of late antiquity, together with the development of powerful tools of historical and literary analysis, have made it possible to explore certain themes and problems with greater sophistication than ever before conceived. What I hope to do in my own research is to apply these tools to an under-appreciated source of history and thought: medieval exegesis in general, and philosophical exegesis in particular. These texts, which require knowledge of so many different disciplines—history of science and philosophy, cultural and intellectual history, literature and rhetoric, and hermeneutical theory— provide a perfect test case for exploring larger issues relating to the interaction between religion and science, to the complex interplay between tradition and change, between authority and innovation. Through...
Autumn and Winter Events

Hans Küng Lecture
Tuesday, September 30
5:30 p.m., Rockefeller Chapel
The Divinity School and Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company are cosponsoring a lecture by world-renowned theologian Hans Küng on the occasion of the publication of the first volume of his autobiography, My Struggle for Freedom. Küng is President of the Global Ethic Foundation (Germany/Switzerland), having served, until 1996, as Professor of Ecumenical Theology and Director of the Institute for Ecumenical Research at the University of Tübingen. Tightly woven with many of the most significant movements and moments in twentieth-century Christian history, his fascinating life story provides a valuable window into the developments of contemporary theology and church life around the world.

A Conversation in Divinity with W. Clark Gilpin
Thursday, October 2
5:30 p.m., Chicago Cultural Center, 78 East Washington Street, Southwest Meeting Room
“Action Proportioned to Nature: Solitude in the Career of Ralph Waldo Emerson” by W. Clark Gilpin, the Margaret E. Burton Professor of the History of Christianity and Theology in the Divinity School and the College, and Director of the Martin Marty Center. Professor Gilpin’s current research explores the history of a perva-sive assumption in American religion, namely, the notion that individuals are most likely to encounter God or the Absolute when they are in solitude. In this “conversation,” he will dis-cuss the crucial role of the orator and essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson in the development of this assumption and describe the role of solitude in Emerson’s distinctive form of social criticism. Conversations in Divinity, a quarterly series, is free and open to the public. To register, or for more information, contact Molly Bartlett at 773-702-8248, or at mbartlett@uchicago.edu.

Women and American Religion: Reimagining the Past
Wednesday, October 8–Friday, October 10
Swift Hall
From October 8 to 10, more than forty historians will gather in Swift Hall to share their research on the history of women and religion in America. For more informa-tion, see page 6, or go to http://womenandreligion.uchicago.edu.

Alumni Events with Dean Rosengarten
Wednesday, October 22
Seattle, Washington
Thursday, October 23
San Francisco, California
Richard A. Rosengarten, Dean and Associate Professor of Religion and Literature in the Divinity School, will deliver a lecture entitled “The Christian Sophocles: Flannery O’Connor and the Religious Uses of Violence” at these events for Divinity School alumni. Renowned for combining a stark vision of human behavior with a rich religiosity, Flannery O’Connor (1924–64) wrote stories in which the most intense moments of revelation are inextricably yoked with acts of violence. This “conversation” will explore that fact with explicit reference to the stories and to Thomas Merrow’s judgment that O’Connor, like the greatest of Greek trage-dians, was a consummate artist whose vision of the relationship between human and divine never flinched. For more detailed information on this event, go to http://divinity.uchicago.edu/alumni/events.html.

Humility before God: Contemporary Faces of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Ethics
Tuesday, October 21–Thursday, October 23
Swift Lecture Hall
From October 21 to 23, the Divinity School will bring together a group of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic scholars—philoso- phers, theologians, ethicists, and legal thinkers—for the 2003 D. R. Sharpe Lectures, entitled “Humility before God: Contemporary Faces of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Ethics.” For more information, see page 6, or go to http://sharplectures.uchicago.edu.

A Lecture by Jehu Hanciles
Thursday, November 6
4:00 p.m., Swift Lecture Hall
Jehu Hanciles is Associate Professor of Mission History and Globalization at the School of World Mission of Fuller Theological Seminary. He has published widely in the areas of African Christianity and Missions. Title TBA. For calendar updates, please check the Divinity School’s website at http://divinity.uchicago.edu.

Conference on Religion and the Democratic Prospect
Thursday, November 6–Friday, November 7
Time and location TBA
This will be the first in a series of four confer-ences hosted by the Martin Marty Center’s new project on Religion and the Democratic Prospect. Franklin Gamwell, W. Clark Gilpin, Kristin Van Heyningen, and Douglas Stump will present papers, abstracts of which can be found at http://marty-center.uchicago.edu/research/religion.shtml. See page 6 for more details about this project.

Wabash Center Lecture in the Arts of Pedagogy
Thursday, November 13
4:00 p.m., Swift Lecture Hall
“Make-Believe: Teaching Religion and Being Religious” by Paul J. Griffiths, Schmitt Professor of Catholic Studies at the University of Chicago. This lecture is part of the Chicago Forum on Pedagogy and the Study of Religion. See page 7 for more details.

AAR/SBL Reception
Sunday, November 23
9:00–11:00 p.m., Hilton Atlanta and Towers, Salon E, Atlanta, Georgia
All Divinity School alumni and friends are invited to a reception at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR) and Society for Biblical Literature (SBL), to be held this year in Atlanta, Georgia. For more infor-mation, contact Molly Bartlett, Associate Dean for External Relations, at 773-702-8248, or at mbartlett@uchicago.edu. We look forward to seeing you there!

A Conversation in Divinity with Dean Rosengarten
Thursday, January 22
5:30 p.m., Chicago Cultural Center, 78 East Washington Street, Southwest Meeting Room
“The Christian Sophocles: Flannery O’Connor and the Religious Uses of Violence” by Dean Richard A. Rosengarten. (See description under Alumni Events, above.) Conversations in Divinity, a quarterly series, is free and open to the public. To register, or for more information, contact Molly Bartlett at 773-702-8248, or at mbartlett@uchicago.edu.

Violence and the Latino Reality
Wednesday, February 18–Thursday, February 19
Swift Lecture Hall
From February 18 to 19, the Divinity School will host the regional meeting conference of the Hispanic Theological Institute, entitled “Violence and the Latino Reality.” Conference speakers will include Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz (Drew University) and William Schweiker (University of Chicago). Further details will be announced on the Divinity School’s website later this fall.

Wabash Arts of Teaching Panel
Friday, February 20
9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Swift Lecture Hall
The Chicago Forum on Pedagogy and the Study of Religion will hold a one-day conference entitled “The Teacher and Religion,” which will examine both the legal and pedagogical relationships of the teacher to religion. See detailed description on page 7.
**Martin 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 wider society. In all of its projects, the Center ought to serve as a robust “circulatory system” that strengthens and extends scholarly inquiry by moving it through faculty, student, and public bodies of deliberation.

—W. Clark Gilpin, Director of the Martin Marty Center

### Religion and the Democratic Prospect

Those committed to democracy have abiding reason to seek clarity about the perils and possibilities that, in a given time and place, define the future of government by the people. They may also have special reason to do so at the beginning of a new millennium, in a nation and world marked by unprecedented interdependence and forms of vulnerability. Last spring, the Martin Marty Center discussed launching a sustained common inquiry into the present prospects for democracy, with emphasis on its problems and possibilities and the relation of both to religious beliefs and practices.

The core working group of this venture will consist of thirteen faculty members from the Divinity School and other University Departments (Daniel Bradley, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Tikva Frymer-Kensky, Franklin I. Gamwell, W. Clark Gilpin, Larry Greenfield, Omar McRoberts, Paul Mendes-Flohr, Joseph Petrini, Richard A. Rosengarten, William Schweiker, Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, and Kathryn Tanner) and nine doctoral students from the Divinity School (Catherine Adcock, Barbra Barnett, Francisco Benzioni, Kenneth Bigger, Jerome Copulsky, Michael Kessler, Erik Owens, Noah Salomon, and Kristin D. Van Heyningen). Their activities will center on planning and participating in a series of four small conferences, one each during the autumn and spring quarters of the next two academic years. The first conference is scheduled to take place from November 6 to 7, 2003, the second from May 6 to 7, 2004. At each conference, approximately three papers, typically, but not necessarily, offered by members of the core group, including its student participants, will be presented for discussion. The core group will also meet during the winter quarter of each year, perhaps to discuss an important recent book related to the defining topic.

Beyond the discussions themselves, the immediate aim of the project is to develop a set of scholarly papers that would be submitted to the *Journal of Religion* for publication, one of which would appear in each of several successive issues, so that together they constitute a continuing series on the topic. The participants also hope that the work pursued might have some importance for the larger public, perhaps especially religious communities. Having initially offered an essay to the scholarly community, some or all of the authors might then be encouraged to re-present their argument in an article directed to a wider audience, for submission to an appropriate journal.

If you have questions or would like to see brief descriptions of the papers proposed by project participants, go to [http://martycenter.uchicago.edu/research/religion.shtml](http://martycenter.uchicago.edu/research/religion.shtml).

**Fall Conferences**

This fall, the Martin Marty Center will host two public conferences in the month of October. The first, “Women and American Religion: Reimagining the Past,” will take place from October 8 to 10 in Swift Hall. It will bring together more than forty historians to share their research on the history of women and religion in America. Speakers will introduce conference participants to a group of fascinating women who have been largely absent in narratives of American religious history, including “witches,” evangelical slaves, Mormon wives, Native American converts, Protestant health reformers, Catholic sisters, African American performers, women rabbis, and feminist theologians. Most important, speakers will ask larger questions about what difference it makes to include women’s stories in our narratives of American religious history, and why women’s history matters. The conference is free and open to the public, but pre-registration is strongly encouraged. For more information, go to the conference website at [http://womenandreligion.uchicago.edu](http://womenandreligion.uchicago.edu), or call Judith Lawrence at 773-702-8233.

The second conference, the 2003 D. R. Sharpe Lectures, entitled “Humanity before God: Contemporary Faces of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Ethics,” will take place from October 21 to 23 in Swift Hall. It will bring together a group of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic scholars—theologians, ethicists, and legal thinkers—to examine the shared ways in which the three monotheistic faiths in the Abrahamic tradition conceive the idea of humanity before God, and how each contributes to contemporary understandings of fundamental claims about the inalienable sanctity and dignity of human life. Invited speakers will reflect on and explore three dimensions of the complex idea of human life in connection to the image-of-God motif in Genesis or the theme of vice-regency in the Qur’an: (1) the distinctiveness of human being; (2) natural and embodied life; and (3) the social, political, and cultural dimensions of life. The conference will feature a keynote address by Hilary Putnam, Cogan University Professor Emeritus at Harvard University; a closing keynote address by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, University Professor at George Washington University; and lectures by prominent Jewish, Islamic, and Christian scholars.

The conference is free and open to the public, but pre-registration is strongly encouraged. For more information, go to the conference website at [http://sharpelectures.uchicago.edu](http://sharpelectures.uchicago.edu).
The Religion and Culture Web Forum

The Martin Marty Center has appointed Seth Perry the new Religion and Culture Web Forum editor. A second-year M.A. student in the Divinity School, Perry succeeds Shannon Mason, who resigned from the position upon her graduation from the M.A. program in June 2003. Perry brings considerable prior writing and editing experience to the job, having served, most recently, as a news clerk for The Chronicle of Higher Education in Washington D.C.

Over the summer, the Web Forum featured a commentary by Marshall Sahlin, the Charles F. Grey Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus of Anthropology and the Social Sciences in the University of Chicago, which appeared in Criterion 42:1 (winter 2003). The commentary, entitled “The Iconization of Elián Gonzalez: The Making of National History by Family Melodrama,” explores the wide range of religious, social, and political issues which arose around the boy known in Miami as a “miracle child” and in Havana as a “boy martyr.” Campbell McGrath of Florida International University and Stephan Palmié of the University of Chicago offered fascinating responses to Professor Sahlin’s remarks. The public is welcome to post its insights on this topic on the Forum’s website at http://marty-center.uchicago.edu/webforum.

In 2003–2004, the Forum hopes to continue offering its readership a rich variety of compelling studies at the crossroads of religion and culture. Please visit the Forum website to engage in the following discussions:

September
“Treating the First Amendment as a Theological Statement” by Thomas J. Curry, Bishop and Episcopal Vicar for the Santa Barbara Pastoral Region.

October
“Theological Humanism from a Christian Perspective” by William Schweiker, Professor of Theological Ethics in the Divinity School. This commentary is being offered in conjunction with the D. R. Sharpe Lectures, “Humility before God: Contemporary Faces of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Ethics,” to be held from October 21 to 23 in Swift Hall. See page 6 for more details.

November
“Violence and Visionary Religion in Flannery O’Connors” by Richard A. Rosengarten, Dean and Associate Professor of Religion and Literature in the Divinity School.

December
“Religion’s Just Another Modern Western Construction?” by Martin Riesebrodt, Professor of Sociology in the Divinity School.

January
“Black Theology: The Notion of Culture Revisited” by Dwight N. Hopkins, Associate Professor of Theology in the Divinity School.

Chicago Forum on Pedagogy and the Study of Religion

This will mark the third and final year of the Chicago Forum on Pedagogy and the Study of Religion, which will spend 2003–2004 considering the theme, “Religion and Religious Studies.” It is fair to assume that both teachers and students have some prior associations with the subject matter of religion. Forum participants will consider what teachers and students do with these once they enter the classroom.

On November 13, 2003, Paul J. Griffiths, Arthur J. Schmitt Professor of Catholic Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago, will give the Wabash Center Lecture, entitled “Make-Believe: Teaching Religion and Being Religious.” The lecture will take place at 4:00 p.m. in Swift Lecture Hall, followed by a reception in the Common Room. All are welcome to attend.

On February 20, 2004, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., the Forum will hold a one-day conference entitled “The Teacher and Religion.” This conference will examine both the legal and pedagogical relationship of the teacher to religion. It will invite stakeholders who hold a variety of stances and will ask how their positions play out in practice in their classrooms. This conference is also open to the public.

A central feature of the Chicago Forum on Pedagogy and the Study of Religion is the opportunity it provides for graduate students at the Divinity School to consider pedagogy as an important part of their lives as scholars. Each year it selects ten graduate students as Wabash Fellows. The fellows for 2003–2004 will include Jonathan Ebel (History of Christianity), Feder Jothem (Ethics), Cabell King (Theology), Kaiu Lin (Theology), Scott Richard (History of Religions), Benjamin Sax (History of Judaism), Lea Schweitz (Philosophy of Religion), Morsaun Shukla (Theology), David Simmons (Religion and Literature), and Alicia Turner (History of Religions). In addition to meetings throughout the year in conjunction with the Wabash Center Lecture and the conference, the fellows will meet several times in the spring quarter in a workshop entitled “Integrating Student Experience in the Classroom.” Since undergraduates also enter the classroom with a wide range of beliefs, ideas, and definitions of what religion is and what their own connections to it are, this workshop will explore the extent to which these positions represent problems or opportunities for the instructor.

Martin Marty Center Fellows

This year’s Martin Marty Center Fellows comprise a vigorously interdisciplinary group of Dissertation Fellows, who are writing on religion in the Divinity School or other departments of the University of Chicago, and Senior Research Fellows, who are in residence at the Marty Center while on sabbatical leave from their own universities. The group will meet regularly throughout the year in the Marty Center Seminar, the goal of which is to generate careful and insightful scholarship that deploys conceptual tools and interpretive methods to advance thought within a discipline in the study of religion, and to provoke new work at the intersection of disciplines. In 2003–2004, the Seminar will be divided into two groups: one led by Professors William Schweiker and Catherine Beekun, the other by Professors W. Clark Gilpin and Christian Wedemeyer.

Senior Research Fellows

Mary M. Keys
Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame

Michael Lieb
Professor of English and Research Professor of Humanities in the Department of English at the University of Illinois at Chicago

Dissertation Fellows

Laurie A. Brink, O.P., Biblical Studies
David Zachariah Flanagin, History of Christianity
Sarah Hammerschlag, Philosophy of Religion
Ellen Haskell, History of Judaism
Patrick A. Hatcher, History of Religions
Kevin Jung, Ethics
Sharon Lea Mattila, Biblical Studies
Melanie O’Hara, Ethics
Karen Park-Koenig, History of Christianity
William Eric Vanderh, History of Religions
William D. Wood, Theology
William Wright, Theology
News from the Alumni Council

One of the central images in the sacred cartography of Mircea Eliade is the axx mandi—a concept that I associate in particular ways with Swift Hall. For each time that I return to the heart of the Quadrangle, enter Swift's lobby, and turn toward the elevator, I sense somehow that I am surely at the center, if not of the universe, at least of the University. This was my experience again in early May as I boarded the elevator with several other alumni to rise to the ethereal space of the Lecture Hall. There we joined students, faculty, and other alumni for the annual lecture by the Alumni of the Year. This year, William LaFleur (Ph.D. ’73) engaged us with his presentation, “Buddhism, Ethics, and Heuristic Fear.”

In conjunction with the featured lecture and celebration of alumni accomplishments, the Alumni Council held its annual spring meeting. As usual, members of the Council discussed ways to rekindle alumni appreciation of the Divinity School and to promote its programs. Three topics dominated our attention: the Divinity School’s challenge and progress in the capital campaign, the vision of the ministry program, and the prospects for a Divinity School reunion in 2004. Within the billion-dollar fundraising initiative of the University, the Divinity School has projected an ambitious capital campaign goal of $16 million dollars. This amount far exceeds the totals of previous Divinity School fundraising efforts, yet its targets for support of students, faculty, programs, and facilities are clearly needed. The promising news about the progress on the Divinity School’s campaign is that half of the funds have been raised.

While Council members discussed the competing appeals of scholarly, social, environmental, and political advocacy organizations, we learned that alumni at times assume that the Divinity School, because of its prominence and prestige, does not need financial support like that solicited by undergraduate institutions struggling for recognition and survival. Yet, when we reaffirm the significance of the School in shaping our professional characters and careers, we can be motivated to give more generously to support the current students, whose academic and ministerial identities are being crafted at Swift Hall.

To address the ways in which the Divinity School stimulates ministerial education, Dean Rosengarten introduced Cynthia Lindner (D.Min. ’99), the new Director of Ministry Studies. Speaking to both the challenges and opportunities for the Divinity School’s ministerial students, her report about students’ engagements and accomplishments reinforced and energized the Alumni Council’s enthusiasm.

Enrollment
This fall, the Divinity School enrolled 73 entering degree candidates (3 A.M.R.S., 44 M.A., 13 M.Div., 13 Ph.D.), bringing the Divinity School’s total enrollment to 332 students for the 2003–2004 academic year.

Graduation and Placement
During 2002–2003, 62 students graduated from the Divinity School in one of the University’s quarterly convocations: 28 M.A., 14 M.Div., 20 Ph.D. (See list of graduates below.)

For the 2003–2004 academic year, 11 students and graduates have accepted tenure-track appointments, 6 have accepted term appointments, 2 have secured postdoctoral fellowships, and 2 have secured non-academic appointments.

Dean of Students’ Report

Conversations

AUTUMN 2002

M.A.
Maura Campaneli
Michelle G. Dassingr
Robert C. Fisher
John F. Free
Ronald A. Stover

Ph.D.
Craig A. Forney
History of Christianity
Loren D. Lybarger
Psychology and Sociology of Religion
Lisa Boccia Salter
Ethics
Kerry M. Tupper
Theology

Some of our Ph.D. Graduates are available for appointment. Their resumes can be accessed online at http://divinity.uchicago.edu/resumebook/resumebook_2003_04/index.html.

WINTER 2003

M.A.
Susan Barker Yele

M.Div.
John William Vest

Ph.D.
Michael Gordon Epperson
Philosophy of Religion
Deborah Flemister Mullen
History of Christianity
Clare Komoroske
Rothschild
Biblical Studies
Rebecca Schorsch
History of Judaism

SPRING 2003

A.M.R.S.
Anthony H. DeJanette
Seunghee Yie

M.A.
Robert P. Baird
Kristel E. Clayville
Brian H. Collins
Andrew M. DeJohn
Courtney E. Firthsimmons
Benjamin R. Helphand
Jeffrey I. Israel

M.Div.
David C. Albertson
Brandon D. Cline
Patricia A. Duncan
Martin J. Essig
Jon W. Foreman
Raymond K. Greenfield
Sarah C. Jay
Jennifer H. Kottler
Amy E. Lignitz
Teresa H. Owens
Kerry E. Waller
Lydia N. Wittram

Ph.D.
Francisco J. Benzioni
Ethics
Jonathan Moore
History of Christianity

SUMMER 2003

M.Div.
Randi Sider-Rose

Ph.D.
Matthew G. Condon
Religion and Literature
John Francis Dowling
Theology
Jonathan Charles Gold
Philosophy of Religion
Deborah Ann Green
History of Judaism
Mieke Rae Holkeboer
Theology
Gregory Bruce Johnson
Religion and Literature
Laura Suzanne Lieber
History of Judaism
Yuki Miyamoto
Ethics
Kevin J. Wanner
History of Religions
Richard Scott Weiss
History of Religions
The Council’s meeting concluded with expressions of appreciation to its retiring members: Linda-Marie Deloff, Bud Beckman, Emilie Townes, and Jim Wind. And I am pleased to announce that Jaime Polson (who received a dual M.A./M.Div. with the School of Social Service Administration in 2002), Larry Sullivan (M.A. ’79, Ph.D. ’81), Doug Jacobsen (M.A. ’77, Ph.D. ’83), and Carol Anderson (M.A. ’82, Ph.D. ’94) are beginning new terms on the Council. As we seek to recognize and celebrate the remarkable accomplishments of alumni, we all have an opportunity to nominate alumni and Divinity School faculty for various University awards. If you know of alumni or faculty who deserve recognition for service to a profession, a community, the University, or to society, please nominate them for one of the U of C Alumni Awards by October 15, 2003. For more information, please check the website: http://www.alumni.uchicago.edu/awards.html. Nominations are now being solicited for the following categories: the Alumni Medal, the Alumni Service Medal, the Alumni Service Citation, the Young Alumni Service Citation, the Public Service Citation, the Professional Achievement Citation, and the Norman Maclean Faculty Award (for U of C faculty).

Sincerely,
Joe Price, President
At the midpoint of the University's capital campaign, the Chicago Initiative, the Divinity School has raised about $8 million, representing half of its campaign goal. We—the Divinity School community—now face the challenge of raising another $8 million.

As you may recall, our capital campaign goals are simple:

- Increase student financial assistance
- Increase faculty support
- Build research and programs
- Bring Swift Hall into the twenty-first century
- Increase participation in annual giving

On a bright note, our annual fund—the Fund for the Divinity School—did enjoy increased participation this year; more alumni and friends made a gift in support of the School during fiscal year 2003 than in the previous year. Why is this important?

The School received over $1 million in gifts for “restricted” funds, including a payment of $50,000 of a two-year pledge of $100,000 to the Nathan and Charlotte Scott Dissertation Fund from Robert L. and Sheila R. Berner, a $50,000 payment on their $500,000 ten-year pledge to the Martin Marty Center at the Divinity School from Norman and Lynn Lear, over $43,000 divided between the Fund for the Divinity School and the Martin Marty Center Fund from Marjorie Lindsey and John Shedd Reed, and over $31,000 toward a four-year $100,000 pledge to the Rolland Walter Schoelbro Fellowship Fund from Robert G. and Mary Wegner Schoelbro.

We also received nearly $870,000 in bequests, including $690,000 from the estate of alumnus James F. McNeary for the James Fulton Scholarship Fund, $118,000 from the estate of Helen Kotas Hirsch for the Rolland Walter Schoelbro Fellowship Fund, and $50,000 from the estate of Roberta M. Farmer for the School’s general fund.

We are deeply grateful for the generosity of our alumni and friends and the continued philanthropy of The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, Inc., and the Chapin-May Foundation of Illinois. Many thanks for your support of the School.

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The Harper Society

The Harper Society, established several years ago by the University, recognizes the generosity of donors whose annual gifts are equal to or above $25,000. The Divinity School community is deeply grateful for the philanthropy of its Harper Society members, whose gifts provide much-needed support.
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$500–$999
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...life-income charitable remainder trusts that support the donor until the trust terminates, at which time the remainder is transferred to the Divinity School; and retirement plans that name the Divinity School as the primary beneficiary of a 401(k), pension, or other retirement plan, while leaving other assets to the donor's family...
The University of Chicago Divinity School

Letter from the Dean, continued from page 1

Wedemeyer is a scholar of Buddhism who works primarily in Tantric materials but takes as his province the genesis and early development of Buddhism in what is now known as South Asia. In addition to devoting considerable philological expertise to the translation and production of scholarly editions, he is a historian of scholarship on Buddhism and of the development of modern theories of religion.

Another way we promote the School’s mission is, of course, through students. I make bold to claim that ours is the strongest cohort in the country, and this is more than mere decanal bragging. Our students claimed two Javits Fellowships and two Newcombe Dissertation Fellowships for the coming year, figures that would delight many research universities and theological seminaries. Ministry graduates are robustly represented in new placements to congregational ministry but also in agencies of social service and ecclesial government across the nation. Every commencement serves to remind those of us who hang our working hats in Swift Hall that Chicago’s mission is expressed not simply through what happens in these halls, but integrally through the work of our alums. It is through their efforts, as much as any, that Chicago can bid fair to perpetuate traditions of excellence that shape how religion is understood in an ever more complex world.

RICHARD A. ROSENGARTEN
Dean

Interview with Robinson, continued from page 4

the careful study of individual texts and personalities, always connecting with larger issues of concern, I hope that this literature will help me to create a model for studying medieval subjects not only in Judaism and Jewish philosophy, but in philosophy and culture more generally. I think Gershom Scholem, perhaps more than anyone, showed how the careful study of one particular cultural phenomenon, even one that is considered a marginal aspect of a marginal religion, can create a new way of looking at all religious phenomena. I think this is something to which we should all aspire.

CIRCA: What courses do you plan to offer in the Divinity School this year?

JTR: This fall, I will teach a history of Jewish philosophy in the Middle Ages, which will examine the most important Jewish thinkers and problems from the ninth to the fifteenth century. In the winter quarter, I plan to offer a text seminar on Maimonides’ Guide of the Perplexed, and in the spring, another text seminar on medieval commentaries on Ecclesiastes, which will require the reading of printed Hebrew texts as well as manuscripts. During the spring quarter, I will also teach, with Hans-Josef Klauck, “Introduction to Historical Studies in Religion.” Topics on which I might offer courses in the future include the following: Aspects of Genre and Literary versities as a total yield in such competitions. Perhaps more reliable as an index of fealty to, and extension of, our mission, Chicago doctoral graduates accept appointments to faculties that reflect the full spectrum of the study of religion in American higher education: liberal arts colleges, state universities, research

I am most excited about working with fellow scholars and students who, based on my experience thus far, have shown greater interest in various fields of research and more perspicuity in question-asking than I have yet encountered anywhere.

Style in Medieval Jewish Philosophy; The Medieval Sermon; The Jewish Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages; Medieval

Commentaries on Genesis, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Daniel; Eschatology in Medieval Jewish Thought; Averroes and Gersonides on Intellect and Immortality; Medieval Theories of Translation; Ethical Writings of Maimonides; Jewish Sufism and Neoplatonism.

CIRCA: What are you most excited about in coming to the Divinity School?

JTR: In the course of this interview I hope I have sufficiently emphasized the importance of two central tenets in my work: historical context and interdisciplinary study. I can think of no better place to develop these than the Divinity School, where the different religions are studied in such close proximity, and where innovative research is encouraged so openly. But more important than the institution itself are the individuals that constitute it, and what I am most excited about is working with fellow scholars and students who, based on my experience thus far, have shown greater interest in various fields of research and more perspicuity in question-asking than I have yet encountered anywhere. What I am really looking forward to, therefore, as I eagerly await the beginning of the school year, is the promise of stimulating conversation with my colleagues and challenging interchange with my students.

News from the Divinity School