

CIRCA

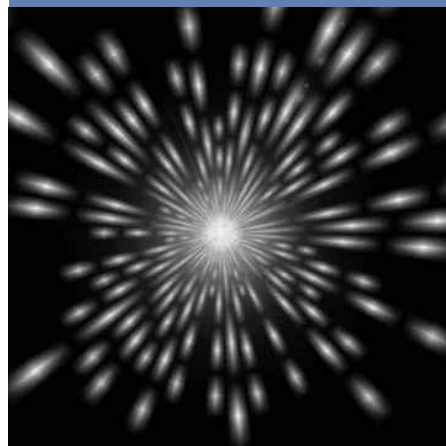
News *from* the University of Chicago Divinity School

WHY ON EARTH WOULD YOU WANT TO DO THAT? ALL OF US WHO STUDY RELIGION have repeatedly been asked this question, either by those who think that religion is not a suitable subject of study for reasonable people to devote themselves to, or those who consider that when it comes to lucrative employment, study of the humanities is a dead-end, and of religion within the humanities a kind of double dead-end.

Going to the Oxford Patristics conference this August, I had two non-stereotypical encounters that sharpened for me the task of the scholar of religion. The first was with a flight attendant on British Airways who, seeing me grading papers in flight said, “Madam, you are very busy at work; what is that you do?” When I gave the general answer that I was a professor, he responded, “of what?” “Ancient religion,” I replied in turn, “ancient Christianity.” All pretty predictable so far (this question comes up a lot at 37,000 feet). But his next line was not: “I sure would like to have you at my next dinner party!” I never did learn what he would like to discuss at that dinner party (“Is *The Da Vinci Code* accurate?” “Did Constantine invent the divinity of Christ?” “Are religions ‘true’?”), though it was important enough to him that, six and a half hours later, he repeated the aspirational invitation with a grin as I disembarked the aircraft. That encounter was, comparatively speaking, a breeze.

The second was a meeting with a Norwegian scholarly colleague in Oxford. Naturally we discussed the horrific events there of July 22. I mentioned that I had read Anders Breivik’s “2083 Manifesto,” and had written a piece for our electronic publication, *Sightings*, about the question of whether or not he can or should be called “Christian.” This colleague said firmly, “no, he’s not Christian, just crazy. And, no, I did not read his manifesto because that is what he wants.” I replied that I could very well understand both points, but I also said that someone with scholarly training has to read and analyze this document in terms of its use and dependence upon religious symbols, tradi-

Letter from the Dean



“The student of religion will speak to publics that range from scholarly peers ...to dinner parties, to an array of non-specialists interested in the role of religion in the broader world.”

tions and motivations in order to question statements repeated in the media, such as that “[Breivik’s] faith-infused views are likely peculiar to the suspected gunman and do not appear [to] reflect wider religious movements.” Some scholars of religion (in this case, Christianity) must analyze this material to aid our understanding of the mind and motivations of this killer as reflected in the sources of his carefully documented death manifesto.

The student of religion will speak to publics that range from scholarly peers in an academic conference to the ad hoc assemblage at dinner parties, to an array of non-specialists interested in the role of religion in the broader world. That is one reason on earth why one might want to do this, and indeed why one might think it vital that there are some people who can and will do this, and pursue it with the highest level of scholarly rigor, depth of knowledge and intellectual honesty.

Each year several thousand students in the United States decide to pursue graduate study in the academic study of religion – a minuscule portion of those who continue their education beyond the bachelor’s degree. They do so in a broad range of institutions, and for many reasons, and against the kinds of objections I mentioned above. One of the greatest challenges for the Divinity School today is to find sufficient resources for the very best of those students to do their work at Chicago. Our support for incoming Ph.D. students is at an all-time high, with a guarantee of five-year funding with full tuition, stipends of \$21,000 per year, and two summer stipends of \$3,000 each.

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Faculty News and Notes



To keep up-to-date with news at the Divinity School, bookmark our website at <http://divinity.uchicago.edu>—and now you can also find us on Facebook!

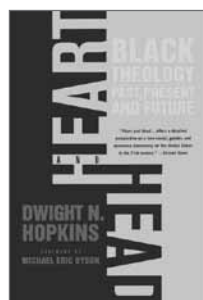
Hopkins Appointed Director of M.A. Studies

Dwight N. Hopkins, Professor of Theology, has agreed to serve as the Divinity School's first Director of M.A. Studies, effective July 1, 2011. This new position, designed by the faculty's Academic Policy Committee, chaired by Professor Jeffrey Stackert, is designed to ensure that students in our M.A. program can maximize their educational experience in this flexible two-year program in the academic study of religion.

In close coordination with individual faculty advisors, Prof. Hopkins will help M.A. students to identify the curricular resources they need to acquire skills and knowledge in their chosen area of study, and develop a cogent agenda for their research.

"Professor Hopkins is an ideal choice for this role," Dean Mitchell said. "The author of seven books and coeditor of some ten more on

the subjects of black religion and theology in America and throughout the globe, Professor Hopkins has served on this faculty for fifteen years. He understands very well the range of topics and perspectives in the academic study of religion that are represented at the Divinity School, and he has the energy and vision to help develop the M.A. cohort as an intellectual community of diverse interests. The rest of the faculty and I look forward to working closely with Professor Hopkins in this new role in the life of the School."



The Director of M.A. Studies "needs to have a sense of the breadth and nuance of the field of religious studies," noted Prof. Stackert. "Having a faculty member occupy this position is significant not only because it requires an intimate understanding of the academic qualities of

both our M.A. and Ph.D. programs but also demonstrates the depth of faculty engagement with our students."

Prof. Hopkins said about his appointment that "this is an energizing time in the academic life of the Divinity School. The M.A. degree program is vital for fostering the intellectual rigor and creative critical questioning emblematic of Divinity School culture. I'm excited to be the first Director of M.A. Studies and to enhance further curricular and advising needs of our M.A. students. In fact, I see my role as advocating for M.A. students and facilitating a cohort culture in this essential intellectual community in our larger critical conversations."

Prof. Hopkins will continue with his own research and teaching in addition to his work with the M.A. Program. In the Winter Quarter of 2011 he will offer "Theology and Cultural Studies" and in the Spring of 2012, "Theological Anthropology."

Prof. Hopkins joined the Divinity School faculty in 1996. A scholar of theology, he works in the areas of contemporary models



of theology, black theologies, liberation theologies, and East-West cross-cultural comparisons. He is interested in multidisciplinary approaches to the academic study of religious thought, especially cultural, political, economic, and interpretive methods. He received his M.Div., M.Phil., and Ph.D. degrees from Union Theological Seminary in New York and a second Ph.D. from the University of Cape Town, South Africa. □

Letter from the Dean, *continued*



This puts us now in the pack of other institutions offering doctoral programs in religion, but by no means at the front. However, the most difficult issue is master's level financial aid, at a time when most bachelor's graduates are either saddled with debt already, or deeply reluctant to begin accruing it. As I indicated when I wrote to our alumni via email in April, we have taken some significant steps to try to improve the financial picture for our master's level students in the past year: we decreased the tuition for the M.A. and A.M.R.S. degree programs from nearly \$40,000 per year to \$30,000, and we have secured one more M.Div. fellowship, for a total of five offers per year with full tuition scholarship and stipends.

Still we must do more.

We need the help of our alumni and friends, those who have already asked and answered the question of why they would want to engage in and support the academic study of religion, to help send outstanding students to Chicago, and to help contribute in any way you can to scholarships to help make this education accessible to them. We look forward to introducing you to these new and future students who are writing their own answer to the question of why one should "do that" — and why one should do that in Swift Hall. □

—Margaret M. Mitchell, *Dean and Professor of New Testament and Early Christian Literature*

Taves Named Alumna of the Year



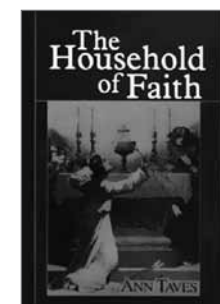
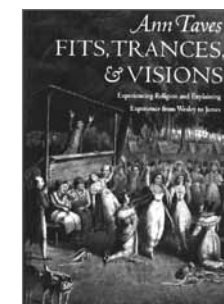
The Board of Trustees of the Baptist Theological Union has named Ann Taves, A.M. 1979, Ph.D. 1983 (History of Christianity) the Divinity School's Alumna of the Year for 2012. Taves is Professor of Religious Studies and holder of the Virgil Cordano OFM Chair in Catholic Studies at the University of California at Santa Barbara, a position she has held since 2005.

Previously she taught at Claremont School of Theology and Claremont Graduate School.

Her major publications include *Religious Experience Reconsidered: A Building Block Approach to the Study of Religion and Other Special Things* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009),

Alumna of the Year Address

Taves will deliver the 2012 Alumna of the Year address on Thursday, May 3, 2012, in Swift Lecture Hall. A reception will follow.



which received the 2010 Distinguished Book Award from the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion; *Fits, Trances and Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James* (Princeton: Princeton, 1999), which received the Outstanding Professional and Scholarly Book Award in Philosophy and Religion from the Association of American Publishers in 2000; and *The Household of Faith: Roman Catholic Devotions in Mid-Nineteenth Century America* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986)

Over the years, the focus of Taves's research has shifted from answering historical questions about religion to using historical materials to explore how people make sense of ambiguous events and experiences that inhabit the indeterminate space between imagination and reality.

Working comparatively, she addresses questions in the study of religion using the perspectives of the humanities and the social and natural sciences. Her current research project is entitled *Revelatory Events: Novel Experiences and the Emergence of New Religious Movements*.

In 2011, Taves was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She served as chair of the American Academy of Religion in 2010. In 2008-09 she was a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University.

Tracy Receives Honorary Doctorate

On Friday, April 8, 2011, David Tracy, the Andrew Greeley and Grace McNichols Greeley Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus of Catholic Studies, had conferred upon him the degree of Doctor, Honoris Causa, at Loyola University Chicago by The Rev. Michael J. Garanzini, S.J., President of LUC.

This was followed by a public lecture by Prof. Tracy, entitled "The Necessity and Character of Fundamental Theology," and an all-day conference on Saturday, April 9th; "The Public Character of Theology."

Former students and current Loyola professors Susan Ross (M.A. 1976, Ph.D. 1982; Chair and Professor of the Department of Theology at Loyola) and John McCarthy (Ph.D. 1986; Associate Professor at Loyola's Department of Theology) were the organizers of the event.

Some photos are available online at <http://divinity.uchicago.edu/news/tracy/index.shtml>.





Schweiker Receives Faculty Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching

William Schweiker, Director of the Martin Marty Center and Edward L. Ryerson Distinguished Service Professor of Theological Ethics in the Divinity School, received a Faculty Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching during the Divinity School's diploma ceremony, as part of the University of Chicago's 507th Convocation.

The ceremony took place on Saturday, June 11, 2011, in Bond Chapel.

An internationally recognized leader in the field of religious ethics, Schweiker has already trained an impressive cohort of

doctoral students who are currently shaping the field. He is a dedicated and inspiring teacher, always meticulously prepared, with a gift for situating significant moral questions and classic texts within the big

picture, never losing sight of the importance of these reflections for human life.

His passion for rigorous thought and argument, combined with warm hospitality and genuine interest in his students both in and out of the classroom, create an intellectual community within which his students flourish. Schweiker is a humane and generous advisor, encouraging students to pursue their own interests and to discover their individual voices. Balancing highly effective teaching, his own ambitious research program and constructive engagement in the lives and careers of his students, Schweiker is an academic role model par excellence.

The citation for the award reads—

Rigorous thinker, talented teacher, and humane advisor, William Schweiker's investment in the lives of his students goes far beyond the classroom. In his generous nurturing of their intellectual, professional, and personal flourishing, he models the ethical concern for human life that is the driving question of his academic work. □



Divinity Student Receives Wayne C. Booth Prize for Graduate Teaching

Sunit Singh, a Divinity School Ph.D. student, was a 2011 recipient of the Wayne C. Booth Graduate Student Prize for Excellence in Teaching. The prize was established in 1991 in honor of Wayne C. Booth, the George M. Pullman Distinguished Service Professor in English Language & Literature and the College.



Students and faculty members submit nominations, and the winners each receive a \$2,000 cash award. The awards parallel the Llewellyn John and Harriet Manchester Quantrell Awards for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, which recognize distinguished teachers on the faculty.

"There is always at least one gob-smacking moment in every class," says Singh, AB'01. The Ph.D. candidate in the Anthropology and Sociology of Religion has taught in the "Self, Culture, and Society" and "Colonizations" Core sequences.

"That is, I sure didn't ask, 'whether there is a philosophy of history implicit in Freud's Civilization and its Discontents that differs from that in Marx's Capital?' to take only one example from class, when I was 18 or 19," he says.

Students in "Self, Culture, and Society" are expected to tackle an ambitious syllabus that includes Durkheim, Freud, and Marx. With help from a colleague, Singh hit on a way of conveying the import of these works, by emphasizing their categorial frameworks.

"A friend, who is also an instructor in the "Self, Culture, and Society" sequence, once offered me the invaluable advice to teach by arguing for the 'plausibility' of each book on the syllabus," he says.

Singh, who is currently working on a dissertation about the radicalization of religious revivalism in colonial India in the early 20th century, says teaching didn't come easily at first. "Just as one needs to develop an ear to appreciate certain kinds of music, I feel I had to be trained to be attuned to the rhythms of a classroom," he recalls.

He found inspiration in two of the professors he had while in the College: Dipesh Chakrabarty, the Lawrence A. Kimpton Distinguished Service Professor in History, South Asian Languages & Civilizations, and the College; and Susanne Rudolph, the William Benton Distinguished Service Professor Emerita in Political Science and the College.

"A friend once offered me the invaluable advice to teach by arguing for the 'plausibility' of each book on the syllabus."

"I was particularly fortunate to find exemplary teachers in Susanne Rudolph and Dipesh Chakrabarty while I was still a young college student," he says. "And, in retrospect, it was their classes that introduced me to the field of South Asian studies, helped to shape my own views about pedagogy, and instilled in me the worth of a liberal education." □

He's been called the "Judy Blume of kiddie rock," but for Justin Roberts, AM'99, the path to prominence in children's music went straight through the University of Chicago Divinity School. Roberts enrolled at the Divinity School to pursue his academic passion for the philosophy of religion, after the amicable breakup of his indie rock band, Pimentos for Gus. But his studies and his music became entwined in ways he hadn't expected.

While taking a demanding course on Sanskrit, Roberts would write songs almost as a diversion. "When I [needed] a break, I would pull out my guitar," he says. But those Sanskrit study breaks produced what would become Roberts' best-known tune among kids, the lighthearted "Willy Was a Whale."

What began as a side interest quickly took on a life of its own. Roberts started performing at venues around campus, even performing at the Divinity School's Wednesday lunch series. Before long, his professors were bringing their children to his shows. Realizing he had found his niche, Roberts graduated from the Divinity School reborn as a children's musician on the rise.

From modest beginnings, Roberts has become a mainstay of the children's music scene over the last decade—a career in which his graduate training has played a part. He's written two albums of Bible songs, as well as seven successful children's albums and an album for adults. This year, he achieved a new milestone: his latest effort, "Jungle Gym," received a Grammy nomination for best musical album for children.

No one is more surprised by his success than Roberts. "It was when I was not trying at all that things started to happen," he says.

Connecting with a Younger Audience

Roberts doesn't fit the image of a lullaby-strumming kids musician. He writes compulsively catchy pop hooks that could have come straight off a Fountains of Wayne record, paired with witty wordplay that appeals to kids and grownups alike. He can make a pun about surrealist Salvador Dali, or rhyme "imaginary rhino" with "more than super fine-o"—and pull it off.

But Roberts is perhaps best known for his ability to write from the point of view of his young fans, to empathize with children without being condescending. When he sings about the thrill of snow days and the woe of a broken leg, it's clear why children connect to his music.

"I'm often trying to find the connection between the kid's experience and the human experience."



Roberts' knack for point of view was shaped in part by his time in graduate school, he says. During his Old Testament class, John Collins, then a professor at the Divinity School, "would take out a story, read through it, and then retell the story, really getting into the characters and what they might or might not have been thinking." Later, when Roberts was working on an album of Bible songs, "I was trying to think in that mode, trying to go behind some character who is maybe in the background and bring that perspective out."

Ultimately, "I do my best to not think about the fact that I'm writing for an audience of kids," Roberts says. "It's more, 'How do I write an interesting song about Halloween that isn't saying the same thing a million songs have said?' What about my experience of Halloween as a kid, or watching it as an adult, really rings true to me? If I choose a certain topic, I find a way to get into it that is meaningful to me as an adult."

In "Never Getting Lost," for example, a child gets lost in the mall; after being

reunited with his anxious mother, he realizes his mom was just as lost as he was. For Roberts, "there isn't much difference" between their experiences. "I'm often trying to find the connection between the kid's experience and the human experience," Roberts says.

'Having as Much Fun as the Audience'

The life of a touring children's musician has some unexpected perks. "There's that connection that happens at the concerts," he says.

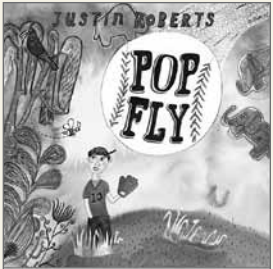
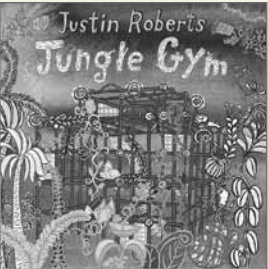
"There's also kids jumping up and dancing, and talking to us from the audience at inappropriate times, which often [causes] funny and unexpected things to happen."

His band, the Not Ready for Naptime Players, is made up of old friends that have been playing together for years. Like Roberts, few of them expected to make it big with the under-10 crowd. Nonetheless, "I think everyone truly enjoys this experience," he says. "There's something to that combination of young kids and adults enjoying a concert together which is really addicting."

Perhaps the most zealous convert was trumpeter Dave Winer. The first time he played with Roberts, he described it as "the most fun I've ever had" and vowed to build giant shoes to wear onstage. (He did.)

They've built strong bonds over the years. "Often, we're having as much fun as the audience is," Roberts says.

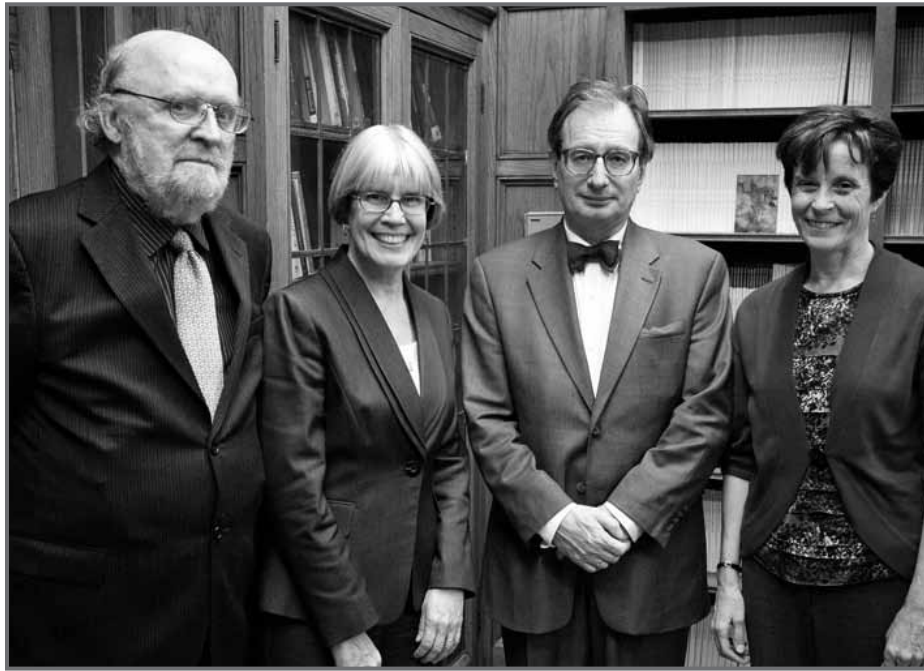
Indeed, when he learned of his Grammy nomination, Roberts' first call was to his longtime bandmate Liam Davis. "It was kind of bizarre to



think back to 1997, when we were in this little studio in Wicker Park. He was playing this little rhythm on his knee, and I was playing a song about counting ... and now we were going to get to go to the Grammys together."

And that's more than super fine-o. □

— Susie Allen, AB'09, News Office



Pictured from left: Prof. Emeritus David Tracy, Dean Margaret M. Mitchell, Prof. Jean-Luc Marion, and Ms. Eileen Durkin, the niece of Andrew and Grace McNichols Greeley.

Photographer: Darren Leow

Jewish Quarterly Review and *Shofar*, among other places. She is currently working on a manuscript entitled “Sowers and Sages: The Renaissance of Judaism in Postwar Paris.” Professor Hammerschlag will be teaching in the College core during Autumn and Winter quarters. In the Spring she will teach a course for the College’s Religious Studies Program entitled “Ethics after the Shoah,” examining post-World War II works by authors who consider the impact of the Shoah on notions of the other, election, representation, forgiveness, and universalism. Also in the Spring, she will teach a Religion and Literature course for the Divinity School entitled “Metaphors of Self-Defense and Self-Defeat in Modern Literature and Philosophy.”

For more information on our faculty, please visit <http://divinity.uchicago.edu/faculty/>.



Staff Members Recognized

Several Divinity School staff members were recognized at the annual Alice W. Chandler Staff Service Recognition Ceremony, held on June 14, 2011.

Staff members who choose to remain in the University’s employ for many years embody a rich tradition that is part of the fabric of the University community. The 2011 Ceremony celebrated staff members who reached service milestones of ten to forty (and beyond) in 2010.

The Divinity School’s Joann Dowells, Sandra Peppers, and Linda Lyles were all recognized for service of thirty years.

Dean Margaret M. Mitchell noted that “the Divinity School has always been known for its expert, generous and friendly staff, who set the tone and make the place run. It was a tremendous pleasure to see the thirty years of University service by Sandra Peppers, Joann Dowells and Linda Lyles acknowledged at the ceremony on June 14. When one adds thirty-two years from Nathelda McGee, you see over one hundred and twenty years of commitment and kindness lived out at the Divinity School and University. How lucky we are!”

Pictured here, left to right, are Nathelda McGee (Faculty Secretary), Joann Dowells (Assistant to the Dean), Sandra Peppers (Associate Dean for Administration), and Linda Lyles (Assistant to the Director of Development).

Marion Named Greeley Professor of Catholic Studies

Jean-Luc Marion, Professor of the Philosophy of Religion and of Theology, is now the Andrew Thomas Greeley and Grace McNichols Greeley Professor of Catholic Studies. He is a member of the Académie française (elected 2008) and of the Accademia dei Lincei, Rome (2010). Marion studies both the history of modern philosophy and contemporary phenomenology. Awarded with the 1992 Grand Prix du Philosophie de l’Académie Française, and the 2008 Karl-Jaspers Preis, Professor Marion has also worked in the areas of Greek and Latin patristics; the history of medieval and modern philosophy; aesthetics; and constructive theology.

On Tuesday, November 3, 2011, he gave a lecture in Swift Hall entitled “The Question of the Unconditioned—God” to inaugurate this new chair.

Visiting Faculty Join Autumn Quarter

Over the course of the 2011-12 academic year the Divinity School will be welcoming six Visiting Faculty Members, two of whom join us in the Autumn quarter. **Maribel Fierro**, Visiting Professor of Islamic Studies, is Research Professor at the Institute of Languages and Cultures of the Mediterranean and the Middle East in the Center for Humanities and Social Sciences (CCHS) at the Spanish National Research Council (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas – CSIC). Also arriving in Autumn quarter and remaining for the year to teach in both the College and the Divinity School is **Sarah Hammerschlag** from Williams College.

Professor Fierro’s research interests include the History of al-Andalus, Muslim religion (ritual, intellectual trends, heterodoxy), Islamic law, violence and religion, and the history of emotions in the Islamic world. She

is currently working on a project financed by the European Research Council and entitled “Knowledge, heresy and political culture in the Islamic West (eighth-fifteenth centuries).” She has published numerous books and

articles, including most recently *Abdarramán III y el califato omeya de Córdoba* (2011) and *‘Abd al-Rahman III: The First Cordoban Caliph* (2005). She is a member of the editorial boards of the journals *Al-Qantara* (CSIC), *Islamic Law and Society*

(Brill, Leiden), *Studia Islamica* (Princeton University/ Paris, CNRS), and *Al-Masaq* (Society for the Medieval Mediterranean). She is the sectional editor (Religious Sciences) of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 3rd edition. During Autumn Quarter she taught a course entitled “Religious Deviation in Pre-Modern Islamic Societies,” exploring issues of how heresy is constructed, and specifically how correct belief and practice was determined in pre-modern Islamic societies through the examination of specific cases.

Professor Hammerschlag is a scholar of modern Jewish thought and continental philosophy. Her research thus far has focused on the position of Judaism in the post-World War II French intellectual scene, a field that puts her at the crossroads of numerous disciplines and scholarly approaches including philosophy, literary studies, and intellectual history. She is the author of *The Figural Jew: Politics and Identity in Postwar French Thought* (University of Chicago Press, 2010). She has written essays on Jacques Derrida, Emmanuel Levinas and Maurice Blanchot which have appeared in *Critical Inquiry*,



Cacioppo Named 2011 Nuveen Lecturer

John T. Cacioppo, the Tiffany & Margaret Blake Distinguished Service Professor, Department of Psychology and Director, Center for Cognitive and Social Neuroscience at the University of Chicago, has been named the 2011 Nuveen Lecturer. His Nuveen Lecture, delivered on November 8, 2011, was entitled: “Invisible Forces Revealed Through Studies of Social Isolation.”

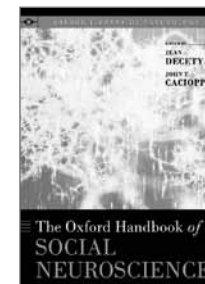
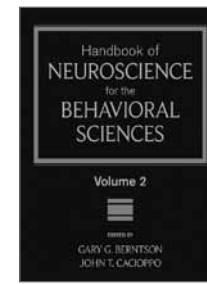
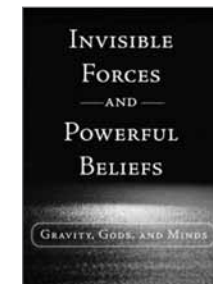
Cacioppo’s research focuses on the neural, hormonal, cellular, and genetic consequences of the superorganismal structures that define humans as a social species. He and his colleagues have used social isolation, real and perceived, as a lens to reveal the behavioral, neural, hormonal, cellular, and genetic effects of social connection. Evidence from human and nonhuman animal studies indicates that isolation heightens sensitivity to social threats (predator evasion) and motivates

activation; and decreased inflammatory control, immunity, sleep salubrity, and expression of genes regulating glucocorticoid responses. Together, these effects contribute to higher rates of morbidity and mortality.

Cacioppo is currently the President of the Society for Social Neuroscience, the Chair of Section J (Psychology) of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), a member of the Council of the Center for Scientific Review (CSR) of the National Institutes of

Health; the Board on Behavioral, Cognitive, and Sensory Sciences of the National Research Council; the Board of the Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences Foundation;

and the MacArthur Foundation Aging Society Network. His most recent books are (with L. Freberg) *Discovering Psychology: The Science of the Mind* (2012); (with J. Decety) *The Oxford Handbook of Social Neuroscience* (2011); (as Director of the Chicago Social



the renewal of social connections. The effects of perceived isolation in humans share much in common with the effects of experimental manipulations of isolation in nonhuman social species, including increased tonic sympathetic tonus and HPA



Brain Network) *Invisible Forces and Powerful Beliefs: Gravity, Gods, and Minds* (2011); (with G. G. Berntson) *Handbook of Neuroscience for the Behavioral Sciences* (2009); and (with B. Patrick) *Loneliness: Human Nature and the Need for Social Connection* (2008).

Please see <http://divinity.uchicago.edu/alumni/nuveen.shtml> for more information on the Nuveen Lecture series.

Divinity Scholars Elected to American Academy of Arts and Sciences



The American Academy of Arts and Sciences announced its 2011 class of fellows on Tuesday, April 19, 2011. Nine University of Chicago faculty

members and one Argonne National Laboratory scientist were elected to the Academy and are among 212 new fellows. The newly elected members include two scholars from the Divinity School, Franklin I. Gamwell and Margaret M. Mitchell, and associated faculty member Philip V. Bohlman, the Mary Werkman Distinguished Service Professor in Music, the Humanities and the College.

Franklin I. Gamwell studies the intersection of philosophy, Christian theology and political theory, with a particular interest in 20th-century thinkers Reinhold Niebuhr, Paul Tillich and Alfred North Whitehead. Gamwell served as Dean of the Divinity School from 1980 to 1990. His most recent book, *Existence and the Good: Meta-*

physical Necessity in Morals and Politics, is forthcoming in June from State University of New York Press. He recently retired from full-time teaching.

Dean **Margaret M. Mitchell**, Shailer Mathews Professor of New Testament and Early Christian Literature, studies early Christian writing up to the 4th century, the Pauline letters, and the politics and poetics of biblical interpretation. In 2010, she received a Guggenheim Fellowship to complete a translation of Greek sermons

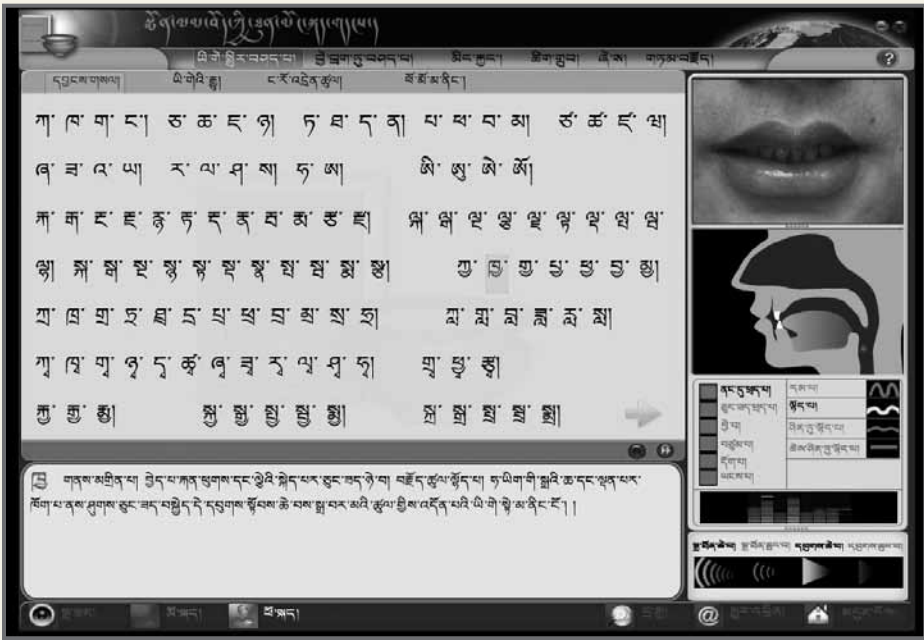
written by John Chrysostom, an influential early Christian thinker. Mitchell is the author of four books, including *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation* and *The Heavenly Trumpet: John Chrysostom and the Act of Pauline Interpretation*, and coeditor



of *The Cambridge History of Christianity, Volume 1: Origins to Constantine*.

Since its founding in 1780, the Academy has elected leading “thinkers and doers” from each generation, including George Washington and Benjamin Franklin in the 18th century, Daniel Webster and Ralph Waldo Emerson in the 19th, and Albert Einstein and Winston Churchill in the 20th. The current membership includes more than 250 Nobel laureates and more than sixty Pulitzer Prize winners.

An Interview with Wedemeyer and Ngodup



Christian Wedemeyer is Associate Professor of the History of Religions; Karma Ngodup is Lecturer in South Asian Languages and Civilizations, with a cross-appointment in the Divinity School.

Before joining the University of Chicago in October of 2010, Ngodup started and taught at the Tibetan program at the University of Chicago, Berkeley; previously he was Director of the Tibetan Education Development and Resource Center in Dharamsala, India, where he was involved in the publication of Tibetan text books and supplementary reading materials

In this interview Ngodup and Wedemeyer discuss Tibetan studies at the University of Chicago.

CIRCA: “What has been the historic relationship in academia between Tibetan Studies and Buddhist Studies? How has Western academic interest in Tibetan religions helped engender the production of new work in Tibetan Area Studies or vice versa? How does the U of C’s multidisciplinary approach to both fields encourage this kind of cross-fertilization?”

CW: Studies of Tibetan language and civilization were for many years treated as a kind of minor adjunct to either Buddhist Studies or Indology. Students of the latter fields were trained to employ Tibetan translations of Indian Buddhist literature in their researches, yet the complexities of Tibetan history and the remarkably developed literary culture of Tibet were not in general considered important topics in their own right. The formation of the International Association for Tibetan Studies in the late 1970s did a lot to change that. Since that time, the tri-annual conferences of the IATS have been the premier venue for scholarship on Tibet, bringing together work not just on Buddhism, religion, and history, but geography, linguistics, art, music, belles letters, law,

medicine, politics, and sociology. Here in the Divinity School, we are blessed to have as our colleague a real luminary in Tibetan Studies in the person of Matthew Kapstein, a founding member of the IATS, whose recent work *The Tibetans* (Blackwell, 2006) brings together a wide array of disciplinary approaches in a very accessible and lucid synthesis. The intellectual climate of UC is in general congenial to this kind of synthetic work; and, in addition to the stalwart support of the Divinity School, Tibetan Studies have been nurtured especially by the Committee on Southern Asian Studies, an interdisciplinary group bringing together faculty from Divinity, SALC, Anthropology, Music, History, Economics, and several other departments.

KN: I think Tibetan and Buddhist Studies in the Western academy has been closely intertwined from the beginning. This follows from the way Buddhism penetrates all aspects of Tibetan culture and history and is inextricably bound up with them. The resulting cross-fertilization works both ways. There are studies primarily dedicated to Tibetan Buddhism that also contribute to our knowledge of other aspects of Tibetan history and culture, and there are inversely studies that are not dedicated to Tibetan Buddhism, but yet indirectly shed light on it. The very creation of the Tibetan literary language was shaped by the encounter with Buddhism and therefore, apart from linguistic components, the meaning and the structure of the language carry certain Buddhist connotations.

Dzongsar Khyentse Rimpoche, referring to the Buddha’s challenge to test the soundness of his teachings with experience and logic, once said that

“if the real ‘cutting, smashing or grinding’ is being done as per Buddha’s core methodology in Buddhism, it is actually happening in the American universities.” Therefore, the academic tradition of the modern universities has helped produce high quality research: work which otherwise was never done in the traditional Tibetan monastic education. Many great professors in the field further have added to the higher standard of research in Tibetan Buddhist Studies.

CIRCA: “How have Tibetan digitization projects and new electronic resources benefited scholars and helped increase interest in Tibetan language and literature (perhaps in particular with respect to religious literature)? What has been the UC’s involvement in innovating or maintaining these electronic resources?”

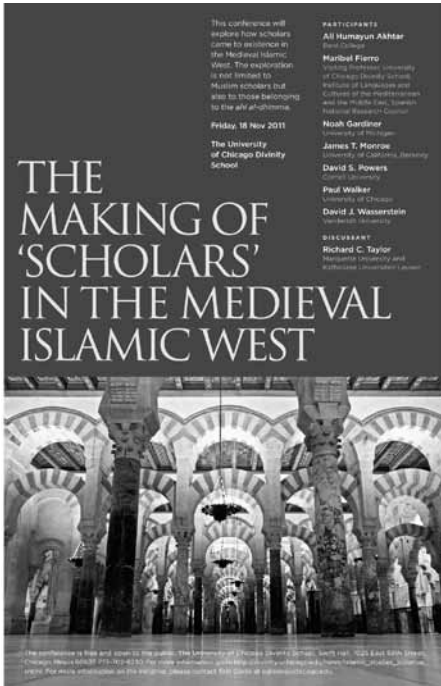
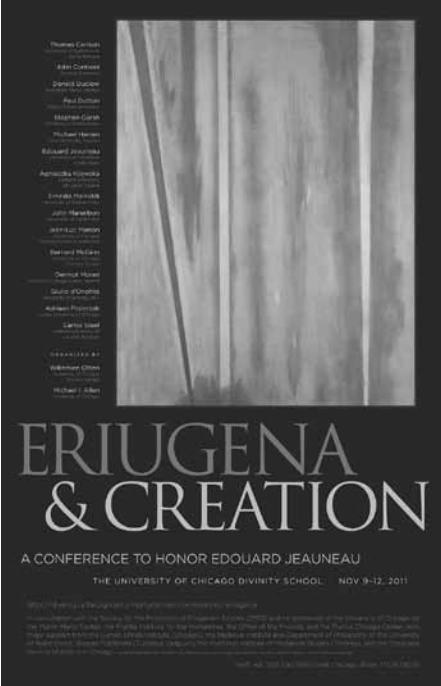
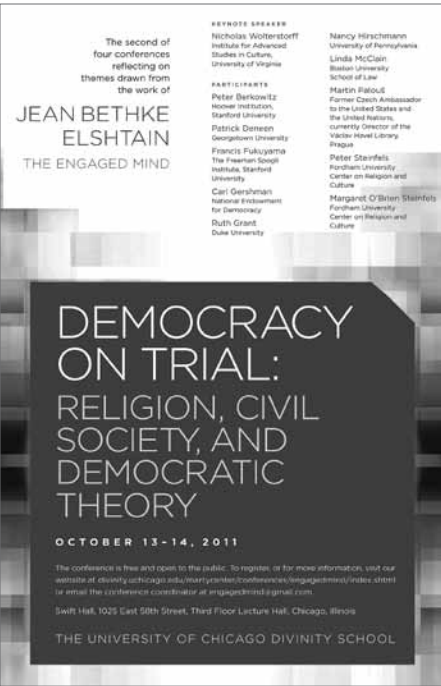
CW: As one of the major centers of Tibetan research receiving materials through the Library of Congress PL48o program, the University of Chicago has long boasted a rich collection of printed works in the Tibetan language. In recent years, a remarkable collection of scanned e-texts has become available through the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center, the fruits of many years of dedicated labor by the late E. Gene Smith, a tireless and visionary scholar and bibliographer. The University Libraries has been a generous and active supporter of these efforts. Since spring 2010, through the generosity of the Library Society, Chicago has been an institutional subscriber to TBRC’s *Core Text Collection of Electronic Tibetan Texts*. This acquisition was a great boon to Tibetan and Buddhist studies at the University, allowing our students and other researchers unfettered access to an invaluable corpus of literature in Tibetan.

Regarding the many other innovations in electronic tools for Tibetan studies, word processing, etc., I’ll defer to Karma, whose work in this area is truly remarkable. In his first year at Chicago, he has brought Tibetan pedagogy here fully into the twenty-first century. We are extremely lucky to have a teacher of his skills, energy, and dedication.

KN: Tibetan digitization and new electronic resources have completely revolutionized the pace of studying Tibetan and Buddhism. Online dictionary and translation tools have further helped students and scholars to work independently. They no longer need to journey to remote libraries in Tibet or India; instead one can have thousands of texts at



Divinity School Events



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



Our weekly email listserve, *At the Divinity School*, is also a great way to stay up-to-date with our events. The email goes out one week in advance of events, and includes relevant listings from other campus divisions. Visit <https://lists.uchicago.edu/web/info/atds> to sign up.

If you have questions about any of these options, please contact Terren Ilana Wein, Director of Communications, at terren@uchicago.edu or 773-702-8230. We are happy to walk you through the process!

Conferences

The Divinity School hosted three conferences in the Autumn Quarter. “Democracy on Trial: Religion, Civil Society, and Democratic Theory,” was the second of four conferences in the series “The Engaged Mind,” underwritten by the MacDonald Agape Foundation and reflecting on themes drawn from the work of Jean Bethke Elshtain. “Eriugena and Creation,” held in honor of Edouard Jeuneau, also served as the Eleventh International Conference of the Society for the Promotion of Eriugenian Studies (SPES). And “The Making of ‘Scholars’ in the Medieval Islamic West” was the first conference

WEDNESDAYS



Bond Chapel Worship

Eight Wednesdays per Quarter
11:30 a.m. -- 12 noon

Wednesday Community Luncheons

Eight Wednesdays per Quarter
12 noon — 1:15 p.m.

Join us in Swift Common Room for a delicious meal, a speaker, and conversation. The last luncheon of the quarter is always our musical offering. Please visit <http://divinity.uchicago.edu/news/wednesdays.shtml> to see upcoming date and speaker information.

from the Mellon Islamic Studies Initiative—a cross-divisional collaboration, intended to create a sustained campus conversation about the future of Islamic studies and funded by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Audio and some photography from these conferences will be available on our website.

Lectures and other events

Throughout the academic year the Divinity School hosts or cosponsors a wide variety of lectures, symposia, graduate workshops, and more. All these events, including the annual John Nuveen Lecture (see more on page 5) and the annual Alumnus of the Year Lecture (see more on page 3), are announced on our website.

Of special note this winter: “The Matter of Israelite Religion,” a four-part lecture series cosponsored by the Chicago Center for Jewish Studies, highlighting recent material finds relevant to, and theoretical advances in, the study of ancient Israelite religion.



Ministry Program Update

A Focus on Vocational Integration

For some time now, this space in *Circa* has highlighted some innovative aspect of our Master of Divinity program. Most recently, we reported on our international ministry study grant program, our development of teaching teams including pastors and Ph.D. students in our Arts of Ministry classrooms, and our new collaborative course populated by faculty and students from the medical school and the Divinity school.

On occasion, as well, we have offered anecdotal responses to that perennial question, “what does one do with an M.Div. degree?”, profiling recent alumni who engage public religious leadership in a surprising variety of venues. It has perhaps become a truism to observe that the Divinity School’s ministry program is thoroughly multidisciplinary, forming leaders who are able to fashion new models of ministry for our rapidly changing cultural context. However, this emphasis on our emerging practices might obscure a more subtle but possibly more radical trend for our program: what one does with an M.Div. degree from the University of Chicago Divinity School these days quite often involves the ancient rite of ordination.

While debate about the declining influence of the church in contemporary life continues to dominate conversations across our society, it is significant to note that during the last twelve months, no fewer than ten recent Div School graduates have been ordained to the ministries of their respective faith traditions. They are male and female; gay and straight; Episcopalian, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Disciples of Christ, American Baptists and members of the United Church of Christ. And, to the bemusement and delight of the congregations and agencies they serve, they are young. This recent bumper crop of ordinands seems to support a claim that the scholars of Swift Hall have been making for some time: religion—including lively religious communities and competent, creative religious leaders—is indeed alive and well in our culture. Still, what is it that moves these contemporary minds—a philosopher, a political scientist, and a stand-up comedian among them—to commit themselves to the pursuit and practice of pastoral wisdom in our time? What does ordination to the ministry mean, in 2011?

“The new pastors are realistic—and yet undaunted—by the complexity of making meaning and leading change in a complicated world.”

We asked some of our newly ordained M.Div. alumni to share their reflections on ordination with the readers of *Circa*. Most of these new pastors reported important relationships with communities of faith at significant times in their lives. Harris remembers the church community that became home for him and his mother following the family’s divorce: “...my mom and I were invited to build the kingdom of God—to play our part, to offer our set of gifts, no matter how small or insignificant they might have seemed to us;” and Anderson recalls that growing up evangelical, she “struggled to find a place in the church; I thought there was no place for me; I fell into the wide-open doors of Hope Church in Boston (planted by two Div School alums) and discovered that while I’d been struggling after God, God had been seeking me out.” Every one of these alums wrote about their education for ordination as a continuing collaboration between these communities and their formal education, and at their ordinations themselves, felt empowered to offer connection and meaning to others. Braun observed, “My theology of ordination isn’t particularly high ... but something happened that day, and in the days leading up to it. I received so much... there were just so many people who took the time to be there. And then they all laid their hands on me. My heart felt almost forced to grow, stretched to receive so much goodness, like the way Kathryn Tanner talks about being stretched to keep receiving the abundant gifts that God has to give us in Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity ... I truly felt clothed in kindness and compassion, prepared to pass those gifts on to other people in blessing.”

The new pastors are realistic—and yet undaunted—by the complexity of making meaning and leading change in a complicated world. In fact, it seems to be this complexity, this multiplicity of roles, rules, and meanings, that intrigues and energizes them, as they define and redefine ministry in rapidly changing contexts. Cooperrider describes this motivation and the larger task this way: “The path of ordination was, for me, in part a way to respond to what seems to be a widespread generational desire to be of service to the world—to be a part of a movement for positive change, to help alleviate suffering, to be, not a consumer of culture only, but a creator of culture and a compassionate advocate for

the flourishing of life on earth. . . . In addition to the sacramental meanings and the meanings associated with ordination specific to the local church setting, ordination for me also means accepting the charge to be an advocate for wisdom in an information age; it means resisting the reduction of life through celebrating life’s mystery and multidimensionality; it means loving and caring for souls as they make their passage through this life; it means accepting a vocation similar to that of the artist, one where questions of creation, creativity, inspiration, truth, goodness, and beauty are of primary concern.”

Complete remarks and photographs will be available on the Divinity School’s website. □

— Cynthia Gano Lindner,
Director of Ministry Studies

Newly ordained M.Divs interviewed for this article

Edmund Harris, 2009, was ordained at St. James Cathedral in Chicago in June 2010; he serves as the assistant to the rector at Church of the Epiphany in Providence, Rhode Island.

Daniel Cooperrider, 2010, (also a 2007 graduate of the College) was ordained in Chagrin Falls, Ohio, in May; he is currently a Pastoral Resident at the Wellesley Congregational Church in Wellesley, Massachusetts.

Lindsey Braun, 2009, who served as a Pastoral Resident at Hyde Park Union Church for two years, was ordained in May in LeSueur, Minnesota and has recently been called as pastor of the Immanuel United Church Of Christ in Latimer, Iowa.

Rebecca Anderson, 2010, was ordained in May at Holy Covenant United Methodist Church in Chicago, where she serves as Minister of Faith and Formation.

Liv Gibbons, 2011, was ordained in July in Eugene, Oregon, and serves as Pastoral Resident at Central Christian Church in Lexington, Kentucky. **Tristan Orozco**, 2010, was ordained in Chicago in April and is Associate Minister at Plymouth United Church of Christ in Des Moines, Iowa.

Dan Kuckuck, 2010, was ordained in Fredricksburg, Virginia this August, and has recently begun as Pastor in Residence at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Davenport, Iowa.



Marty Center News and Events

Marty Center Junior Fellows



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*



Martin Marty Center Junior Fellows 2011–2012

The Marty Center, continuing its emphasis on global interactions and aspects of religion, will have sixteen dissertation (junior) fellows in the upcoming academic year.

This year’s Marty Center dissertation seminar is being offered in two sections, one led by Michael Sells, John Henry Barrows Professor of Islamic History and Literature, the other led by James T. Robinson, Associate Professor of the History of Judaism.

The 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.

Dissertation Fellows, 2011–2012

Rachel Adelstein (Ethnomusicology)
“Braided Voices: Women Cantors in Non-Orthodox Judaism”

Shatha Almutawa (History of Judaism)
“The Use of Narrative in *Ras’al Ikhwan Al-Safa*: Imagination at the Intersections of Religion, Philosophy and Science”

Samuel Brody (History of Judaism)
“This Pathless Hour: Messianism, Anarchism, Zionism, and Martin Buber’s Theopolitics Reconsidered”

Emanuelle Burton (Religion and Literature)
“Fantasy and Responsibility: the formation of the ethical actor in the *Chronicles of Narnia*”

Kristel Clayville (Religious Ethics and Bible)
“Responsible Hermeneutics: Interpretation of Religious Texts in the Environmental Ethics of Hans Jonas and Holmes Rolston III”

Jessica DeCou (Theology)
“Parables of Freedom: Toward a Barthian Pneumatology of Culture for Engaging Popular Culture in the 21st Century”

Rick Elgendy (Theology)
“Power, Complicity, and Resistance: Rereading “The Powers” with Karl Barth and Michel Foucault”

Vincent Enever (Theology)
“Suffering and Truth in Sixteenth-Century Religious Controversy”



Karl Lampley (Theology)
“A Theological Account of Nat Turner: Christianity, Violence, and Theology”

Alan Levinovitz (Religion and Literature)
“The Concept of Toy — at Play with the *Zhuangzi*”



Read our Fellows’ answers to the questions —

“What do you hope to accomplish this year as a Martin Marty Junior Fellow?” and “How does the MMC look as a place to do your work?” — by visiting http://divinity.uchicago.edu/martycenter/fellowships/2011_2012_profiles.shtml

Katherine Milco (Classics)
“Perpetua’s Two Audiences: the *Passio* as a Sacred Performance”

Lilah Shapiro (Comparative Human Development)
“Driven to Orthodoxy: Jewish Identity, the Achievement Narrative, and Family Dynamics in American-Jewish Culture as Motivations for Teshuvah”

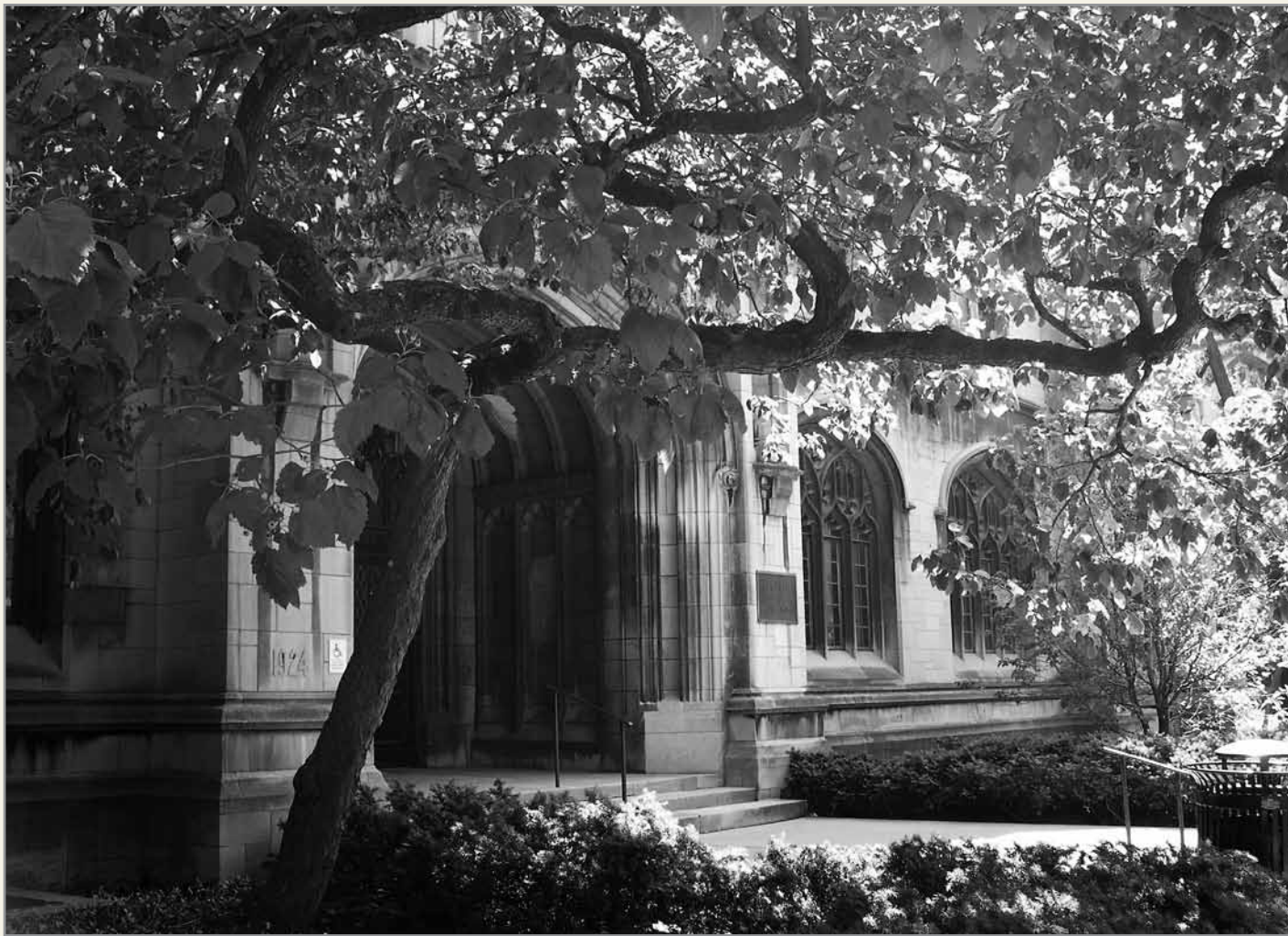


Mun’im Sirry (Islamic Studies)
“Reformist Muslim Approaches to the Polemics of the Qur’an against Other Religions”

Michael Sohn (Religious Ethics)
“The Good of Recognition: Phenomenology, Ethics, and Religion in the Thought of Levinas and Ricoeur”

Myung-Sahm Suh (Anthropology and Sociology of Religion)
“Generational Dynamics and the Crystalization of the Christian Right in Korea”

Suzanne Wint (Ethnomusicology)
“The Western Classical Music Scene in Kampala, Uganda: A Music of the Other?”



The Dean, the faculty, and the students of the Divinity School extend their sincere thanks to all who support the work of the School. The following alumni, friends, and organizations generously contributed cash gifts during the 2010–2011 fiscal year (July 1, 2010–June 30, 2011).

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Philip Lewin and
Binnie O. Kanne
Hubert G. Locke
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Leland H. Mahood
Steven M. Malone
Franklin M. Mangrum
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Marilyn J. Martin
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Philip Lewin and
Binnie O. Kanne

In honor of
Peter and Susan Marty
Joan W. Ward

* = deceased

Dean of Students Report



This fall, the Divinity School enrolled 82 entering degree candidates (4 A.M.R.S., 37 M.A., 20 M.Div., and 21 Ph.D.).



Student Fellowships, Grants, and Awards

The John Gray Rhind Award
Annette Leanne Thornburg

The William Rainey Harper Fellowship
Mun'im Ahmad Sirry

Mellon Humanities Dissertation Fellowship
Benjamin Jacob Schonthal

Provost's Dissertation-Year Fellowship
John William Cheairs Howell

The Fund for Theological Education's Doctoral Fellowship
Julius Crump

Louisville Institute Dissertation Fellowship:
Jessica Nicole DeCou

Francois Furet Travel Grants:
David Andrew Newheiser

Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships

Summer:
Miriam Louise Bilsker
Ashly Frances Cargle
Jessica L. DeGrado
Jeffrey Ian Fowler
Jordan Eugene Skornick

Academic Year:
Claire Florene Droste
Sara Ann Gillespie
Nabanjan Maitra

College Graduates in Religious Studies 2010–2011

Three students completed fourth-year papers in Religious Studies this year, led by the B.A. paper preceptor, Joseph Ballan.

They and their topics are (advisors' names in brackets):

Maura Jayne de Battista, "Peacebuilding through Pluralistic Religious Education: A Look at the Holy Land." (Robinson)

Robert Tinkle, "Extravagant Vice, Extravagant Voice in Thomas Shadwell's *The Libertine*." (Gilpin)

Kelly Wolenberg, "Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim Physicians' Beliefs and Practices Concerning Artificial Nutrition and Hydration." (Curlin)



Convocations

Summer 2010

M.A.
Saud Sulaiman Al-Zaid
Joshua Adam Elek
Brynnah Leah Levine
Akila Srinivasan
Robert van Kaam

M.Div.
Kenneth Lyle Jake
Bitner
Julian Michael
DeShazier
David ChiWon Kwon
Michael Reed
Swartzentruber

Ph.D.
Brian Hagen Collins
Debra Joy Erickson
Sarah Emily Imhoff
Normal Scott Johnson
Pamela Denise
James Jones
Noah Daniel Salomon
Kristen Joy Tobey

Autumn 2010

M.A.
Julius Crump
Mark Alan Franzen
Kelli Ann Gardner
Brenna Marie Ivey

M.Div.
Heather MacKenzie
Tristan Christopher
Orozco

Ph.D.
Robert Phillip Baird
Megan Elizabeth
Doherty
Rory Mosi Johnson
Karin Lillianna Meyers
David L. Simmons
Sandra Jeanne
Sullivan-Dunbar
Edward Charles Upton

Winter 2011

M.A.
Seong-Hun Choi
Carl Edward Hansel
Scott Vincent Sees
Rose Alice Harrell
Tisdall

M.Div.
Jackyung Kim

Spring 2011

M.A.
Michael Benjamin
Amoruso
Natalie Louise
Anderson-Patch
Zoe Maria Anthony
Martin Christopher
Arno

Rita Sophia Biagioli
Diana L. Brown
Jake Austin Cowan
Kyle Douglas Davidson
Jessica L. DeGrado
Matthew Francis
Dittman

Suleyman Dost
Georgia A. Dye
John David Ehleiter
Robert Clair Gallup
Daniel Patrick
Gibboney
William Ezekiel
Goggin
Robert Fargo
Greenlee III
Timothy Larner
Gutmann

Julia Marie Hogren
Dalmar Abdulmejid
Hussein
Jennifer Therese
Jaszewski
Kevin Michael Jones
Stanton Fuller Kidd
Jennifer Renee
Winter Lenart

Patrick James Lummen
Kelly Margaret
Madigan

Matthew Joseph
McRae
Jennifer Lynn Nafziger
Rachel Ashley Pal
Joseph Rudolf Petek
Jorge Sanchez
Vijay Pravin Shah
Judith S. Sherwin
Christopher Patrick
Soltys

Matthew Noah Susnow
Jonathan Simone
Toccoli
David Kerman Tomlinson
Matthew David Wilson
Aaron Ricker Wooden

M.Div.
Alison Tyner Davis
Anna Liv Gibbons
James Nicholas Hoke
Michael Thomas
Le Chevallier
David Howard
Messner
Zaiga Valda Robins
Justin Robert Skolnick
Andria Nicole Skornik
Annette Leanne
Thornburg

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Laura Suzanne
Desmond
Mathew Cooper
Harris
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Interview, *continued from page 8*

your finger tips in your room. The Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center in New York (tbrc.org) and the Asian Classics Input Project (asianclassics.org) stand out in terms of electronic resources, both digitized and manually input. In this sense, the late Gene Smith deserves to be called the true master (*rinpoche*) spending almost the whole of his life in the preservation of Tibetan Buddhist texts, making them accessible to universities and elsewhere. Because of his initiative, almost any Tibetan Buddhist text can be found in digitized form. Christian and I are currently working on creating a Tibetan Studies website for the university that will incorporate these various tools, with special focus on systematic and clear resources for Tibetan language and Buddhist studies.

Microsoft's Tibetan Unicode initiative (*Microsoft Himalaya*), followed by Apple's recent True Wylie Unicode, changed the face of Tibetan-language computing, allowing one to browse through any operating system.

Any Apple devices (iPhone, iPad, etc.) can now use Tibetan: one can literally browse Google or YouTube, participate in discussions, work, and communicate — all in the Tibetan script. This allows access to previously unimaginable resources for Tibetan studies. The Center for the Study of Languages is already supporting teaching of languages through iPad2 with Buddhist Studies text materials in iCasebook, video and audio clips of all the dialogue from the textbooks, and self-recording facilities.

Monlam Universal Pronunciation software is another big step in creating phonetic flash animation for learning accurate pronunciation; and Monlam Tibetan (*bodyig 3*) has fourteen different Tibetan fonts. I seek to use every available technology to help students learn Tibetan and for their academic research on Tibetan Buddhist Studies.

CIRCA: “What have you found to be the primary reasons students wish to learn Tibetan? How do you hope to broaden the appeal of Tibetan language acquisition?”

KN: Most of the students come from Divinity or SALC, where Tibetan language serves primarily as a tool to understand and conduct research on topics related to Buddhism and Buddhist culture. There are also several students from Anthropology interested in the unique and rich Tibetan cultural heritage. Students also come from linguistics, interested in the unique characteristics of Tibetan language pedagogy in terms of phonology, philology, and grammatical structure. Students from art history

find Tibetan thangka painting, mural painting, and their significance very interesting. I have students from political science interested in the historical and current political dilemmas of Tibetan nationality. Tibetan medicine has also garnered attention from students in understanding concepts of human physical and cognitive behavior. Sometimes students come from Tibetan Buddhist centers; and others from sheer curiosity to explore the “forbidden land” and its people.

Before coming to Chicago, I developed a Tibetan language program at University of California-Berkeley from scratch; and today students can go to the Berkeley language center, record, write, and so on. Things have changed rapidly in the last year with the adoption of Tibetan Unicode by both Microsoft and Apple. Now students can work on their own computers, write Tibetan, do recording, and access almost any Tibetan Buddhist text on earth. They can even engage in online discussions with native speakers; they can pose questions of interest and the responses may come from any part of the world, including Tibet. You can text in Tibetan, maintain Tibetan Facebook pages, tweet and so on. My focus is to make these resources available to students through Chalk and the Center for the Study of Languages here on campus. Today there are so many Tibetan resources that the challenge is to choose the right one, based on quality, for the ever increasing needs of the academic enterprise. □