

## Young Scholars 2004-2005 Finish Program

Participants in the 2004-05 group of Young Scholars in American Religion met for their final seminar in Indianapolis October 13-16. Selected from scores of applicants, they represented a number of academic backgrounds and diverse teaching environments. With training ranging from history and sociology to religious studies and anthropology, and in teaching positions stretching from large state universities to private church-related liberal arts colleges, they represented well the variety of those studying religion in America today.

Meeting in Indianapolis in April and October of 2004 and 2005, they discussed ideas about teaching and methods of instruction for courses in American religious studies, as well as sharing their research to improve their work as scholars. The group was led by mentors Peter Williams of Miami University and Catherine Brekus of the University of Chicago.

“The quality of work was outstanding, and the discussions were stimulating, collegial, and productive,” said Jonathan Baer of Wabash College. “Over the two years we’ve met, our group has jelled in terrific ways, and this gathering showed some of the fruits of that experience.” Presenting articles and book chapters they’ve written during the tenure of the program, participants critiqued each other’s work and offered helpful suggestions for further development. “I haven’t received such valuable feedback in a long time on my research,” added John Schmalzbauer of Southwest Missouri State University.

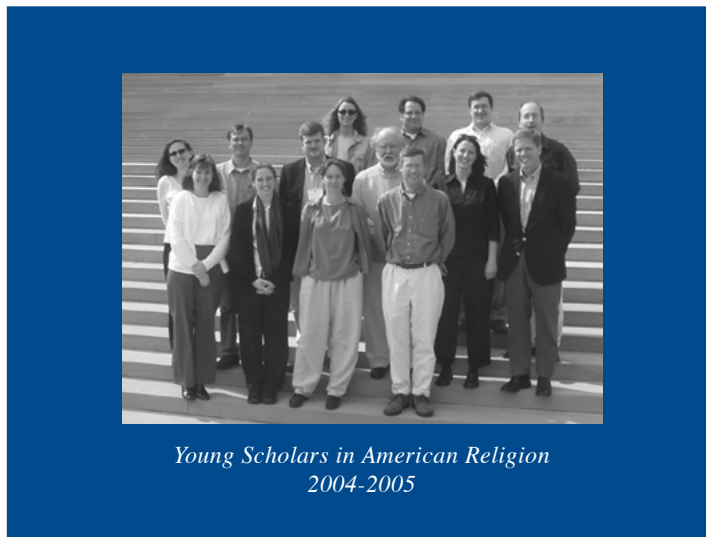
For those interested in the materials produced by the partici-

pants, a dozen new syllabi have been posted on the Center’s website. This brings the total number of syllabi for courses in American religious studies created by participants in the Young Scholars Program to eighty-one. Annually several thousand people from around the world access these syllabi, often when putting together their own courses. Meantime, the scholarship produced during the 2004-05 seminars will show up, just as it has for years, in books and articles over the next few years.

Funded by Lilly Endowment, the Young Scholars in American Religion Program will continue through the end of 2006. This iteration of the program enabled thirty-six early-career scholars to improve their teaching and research. The final group on this grant, led by mentors John Corrigan of Florida State University and Judith Weisenfeld of Vassar College, will complete the program next fall.

From the sound of things, the 2005-06 program participants are finding the same value in the program as their predecessors. “Once you leave grad school, it is difficult to find people who will commit to reading your work and providing suggestions for development,” said Sylvester Johnson of Florida A&M. “That is the kind of resource the Young Scholars group has become for me. The group has developed a network of trust and produced constructive critiques

of our emerging work. This more than anything else is the vital link that scholars, junior and senior, need in order to produce our best work.”



*Young Scholars in American Religion  
2004-2005*

## Center to Host Reception in Philadelphia

The Center will host a reception at the annual meetings of the AAR/SBL on Sunday, November 20, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Howe Room of the Loews Philadelphia. This year’s reception will highlight the work of the following centers and institutes engaged in the study of religion in America: The Francis and Ann Curran Center for American Catholic Studies (Fordham University); The Walter H. Capps Center for the Study of Religion, Ethics, and Public Life (UC Santa Barbara); the Institute for Black Religious Life (Interdenominational Theological Center); the Center for Religion and Media (New York University); and the Center for Science and Religion (Columbia University).

All those attending the meetings are invited to drop by the reception, visit with representatives from these organizations, and learn about their work. Please see pages 4-6 of this newsletter for further details about these centers and institutes.

## A Word from the Director

With the recently-completed seminars in Indianapolis, another dozen early-career professors completed the Young Scholars in American Religion Program. We will miss hosting these interesting and energetic individuals, as we have naturally grown fond of them over the past two years, just as we did those who went through the program before them.

A great deal of attention gets paid to these Young Scholars, but another group of remarkable people deserve our consideration and thanks. The success of each group of Young Scholars is predicated on the imagination and hard work of those who mentor them. While not so young as their counterparts, they are highly accomplished scholars capable of helping those new to the profession consider everything from their teaching and research to time management and finding a public voice.

Since its inception, the YSAR program has been fortunate to attract so many capable mentors. The first group (1991-3) was led by Catherine Albanese of UCSB and Bill Hutchison of Harvard. John Wilson of Princeton and Harry S. Stout of Yale mentored the second group (1994-6). The third cohort (1997-9) of Young Scholars was quite large and separated according to discipline or teaching environment. Deborah Dash Moore of Vassar (now of the University of Michigan) led those working in religious studies departments, while Jay Gleason of Notre Dame mentored those in history programs. Meantime, Wade Clark Roof of UCSB gathered those working in sociology of religion and Grant Wacker of Duke mentored those teaching in seminaries.

More recently, Ann Taves of Claremont (now UCSB) and Stephen Prothero of Boston University shepherded the 2003-04 Young Scholars, and Peter Williams of Miami University and Catherine Brekus of the University of Chicago Divinity School worked with the 2004-05 group. John Corrigan of Florida State and Judith Weisenfeld of Vassar are currently mentoring the 2005-06 Young Scholars.

In every case, these individuals have provided stellar advice and wonderful creativity. Without a doubt, the program is the success it is because of the mentors who have worked in it. Balancing the seriousness of the task with the playfulness of ingenuity that dominates the seminars, they have served the larger profession in ways that will be visible for a generation. All of us in the Center are most grateful for their efforts.

*Philip Goff*

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## Jean Bethke Elshtain Speaks at IUPUI in Center Lecture Series

Jean Bethke Elshtain gave the third lecture in an annual series hosted by the Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture on the role of the public intellectual in American Society, speaking at IUPUI on Friday, October 14, 2005. Elshtain is the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Professor of Social and Political Ethics in the Divinity School at the University of Chicago. A fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and chair of the Council on Civil Society, she will deliver the prestigious Gifford lectures in Scotland in 2006.

“From her initial work on women in social and political thought and her forceful essays in *Power Trips and Other Journeys: Essays in Feminism as Civic Discourse*, to her social critique of civil society in the U.S. in her book *Democracy on Trial*, to her intellectual biography of Jane Addams, and throughout her career in thoughtful presentations on just war theory, including her recent book *Just War Against Terror: the Burden of American Power in a Violent World*, Jean Bethke Elshtain has engaged a thinking audience about the most important issues of the day,” said Philip Goff, director of the Center. “To my mind, when one’s sharpest critics uniformly admit that you are asking the right questions and are making a lot of good points, then you’ve reached the loftiest goals of a public intellectual – that is, engaging the entire thinking public, whether they agree or not, and forcing us all to clarify the important issues of our day.”

Elshtain delivered a fresh and forceful critique of American society in which she argued that many have vaunted experts in narrow fields to be authoritative voices for the direction of the country. Arguing that this is most apparent in science and economics, she ques-

tioned whether and how public intellectuals can shape discussions of the ethics of politics and society, especially since the United States has so many “publics” at work today. The lecture was followed by a spirited question and answer period.

The following morning, Elshtain met with participants of the 2004-05 and 2005-06 Young Scholars in American Religion Program. The session covered a



*Jean Bethke Elshtain, with seminar leader Peter W. Williams (l) and center director Philip Goff, listens intently to a question from one of the Young Scholars program participants.*

range of topics regarding the involvement scholars in the marketplace of ideas, including the challenges and pitfalls of becoming a “public intellectual” in today’s world. Offering her own story as an example, Elshtain presented the many options available to scholars who want to enter the fray of ideas beyond their usual professional venues. Local media, national newspapers, denominational magazines, and para-church orga-

nization publications are often good places to start, she noted, because many national publications have their own stable of writers and thus are difficult to break into.

In all, the weekend provided several opportunities to learn from one of the leading public intellectuals in the United States. Even those who disagreed with some of Elshtain’s ideas about society or the war were deeply engaged with her thoughts on the role of the public intellectual. “I am left with much constructive momentum for pondering my own approach to more publicly engaging the implications of my scholarship,” said Sylvester Johnson of Florida A&M. “And I do look forward to future lectures that address similar topics of commensurate importance.”

The next lecture in the series will take place on October 13, 2006 in Indianapolis. The speaker has yet to be announced.



Christine Chapman, Administrative Director

Christine D. Chapman, Michael I.N. Dash, Marsha Snulligan Haney, Stephen C. Rasor, Edward L. Smith, Research Directors

Cecelia Dixon, Administrative Assistant

The Institute for Black Religious Life (IBRL) at the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) works in partnership with other organizations to conduct research and share information on the role of religion in the nation's African American community. IBRL draws on the unique institutional strengths of ITC to deliver a comprehensive range of research, publication, and outreach services for religious, academic, and public sector organizations. On behalf of its partners, IBRL taps the intellectual assets of ITC—a unique school with an internationally recognized faculty and six affiliated graduate seminaries representing six denominations. IBRL welcomes opportunities to collaborate with organizations that share our interest in research with practical application and in disseminating information on African American communities of faith. Established in 1999, IBRL has made vital contributions to research and scholarship, which include:

- African American Congregational Life Survey: MVP Project, a national survey of the Black faith community in conjunction with U.S. Congregations. MVP will present a portrait of Black congregational life in four dimensions: spirituality and faith, community involvement, types of congregational programs and activities, and worshipers' visions for the congregation's future.
- Project 2000 surveyed the African American religious experience from the perspective of pastoral leadership. Project 2000 was part of Faith Communities Today that surveyed 41 denominations and faith groups through the faith community's leader.
- Public Ministry Case Studies examine relationships between faith-based organizations and public and private sector organizations.
- Rural Communities Project designed a training program to enhance leadership and citizen participation within rural communities. A resource guide was also developed for use by project partners and their management teams.

IBRL creates, collaborates and consults with partner organizations to:

- Plan, develop, and/or execute research initiatives
- Compile, publish, and/or disseminate research results
- Conduct, assess and/or facilitate evaluation processes for research and community development



James T. Fisher and Mark Massa, S.J., Co-Directors

Maria Terzulli, Administrative Assistant

Peter Andrews, Project Manager

Founded in 2000 as an inter-disciplinary center on the Rose Hill (Bronx) campus, the Curran Center ("CCACS") supports four ongoing initiatives. First, CCACS is an honors concentration in Fordham College. This six-course concentration offers scholarship money for student concentrators, and expects six hours of community service from all of its students, and a close working relationship with the University's Office of Prestigious Fellowships. The concentration consists of a two-semester (pro-seminar and seminar) course required of all concentrators, ending in a research paper. These two seminars are co-convened by Professors Massa and Fisher.

Second, the Curran Center supports five-six public lectures annually on both the Bronx and Lincoln Center campuses. These lectures are free and open to the public. Past lectures have included "'On the Waterfront': An Evening with Budd Schulberg," "What Are Catholics To Do in the 2004 Presidential Election," "Religion As Portrayed in WPA Photography," "Into One Parish Life: National Parishes and Catholic Racial Politics at Mid-Century," and "Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them." We have also hosted four day-long national conferences: "Anti-Catholicism: The Last Acceptable Prejudice?," "Urbanism and American Religion," "New Directions in American Catholic Studies," and "One Church, Many Cultures: The Legacy of Joseph P. Fitzpatrick, S.J."

Third, the Center sponsors interdisciplinary faculty seminars within the University. Past seminars have included "Religion and Violence," "Catholic Identity and Liberal Arts Education," "Religion and the Body," and "The Challenge of Catholic Social Service." These seminars are open to interested faculty, and meet six-seven times annually for a two-hour discussion.

Fourth, the Center has initiated a national three-year study, "Passing on the Faith, Passing on the Church: U.S. Catholicism in a New Century." Divided into three working groups ("Generational Issues," "Leadership Issues," and "Catholic Studies"), the study involves 100 Catholic bishops, professors, youth ministers, and canon lawyers who meet annually to develop working papers on various issues of U.S. Catholic identity. These papers will be presented in a series of public conferences beginning in the spring of 2007.



## Walter H. Capps Center for the Study of Ethics, Religion, and Public Life

Wade Clark Roof, Director  
Leonard Wallock, Associate Director

The purpose of the Walter H. Capps Center for the Study of Ethics, Religion, and Public Life is to honor and further the legacy of Walter Capps. After teaching 32 years in the Department of Religious Studies, he was elected to the United States Congress where he served from January, 1997 until October of that year when he died suddenly. Throughout his career, he sought to bring academia and the community together around issues of broad public concern where moral, ethical, and religious values were involved. The Center was organized in January, 2002.

More specifically, the Capps Center sponsors conferences and lectures within the Central Coast community of California; sends interns to Washington and Sacramento to learn about the political process; supports a Distinguished Visiting Professor one quarter each year; and funds dissertation research for graduate students working in the area of religion and public life.

During Summer 2002-2004, the Capps Center co-hosted the UCSB-Fulbright American Studies Institute on "Religion in the United States: Pluralism and Public Presence." Eighteen scholars from eighteen foreign countries attended the six-week program each summer, which included two weeks of travel to Los Angeles, Indianapolis, Atlanta, and Washington, D.C.



## Center for the Study of Science and Religion at Columbia University

Robert Pollack, Director  
Paige Lyne, Manager  
Katie Gerbner, Undergraduate Research Assistant

"The most practical and important thing about a man [sic] is still his view of the universe . . . The question is not whether the theory of the cosmos affects matters, but whether, in the long run, anything else does." William James, epigraph to "Pragmatism"

William James's view is central to the developing agenda of the CSSR: if the great intellectual endeavor that is the academic enterprise of Columbia University is to affect matters—not just understand them, quantify them, and publish discoveries about them, but also change them for the better—then the "views of the universe" of our faculty and our students are as important as their publications and discoveries.

From its inception in 1999, the CSSR has been laying the intellectual, structural, and fiscal foundations for this agenda, while at the same time expanding its purview at the university and beyond with a highly successful series of public events and curricular enhancements. That foundational work turns out to have been propitious, as the CSSR has just been brought into the new Earth Institute of Columbia University, a major initiative on global sustainable development headed by Economics Professor Jeffrey Sachs. At the same time, our move this September to renovated space in the neighboring quadrangle of Union Theological Seminary will bring the CSSR into daily contact with the Seminary's students and faculty, as well as with the faculty of the Columbia and Barnard Departments of Religion.

As the CSSR thus becomes more deeply immersed in both religion and science, we look to friends and colleagues at other Centers for advice and support.



Co-directors: Faye Ginsburg, David B. Kriser Professor of Anthropology; Director, Center for Media Culture and History  
 Angela Zito, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Religion; Director, Religious Studies Program  
 Program Associate: Barbara Abrash

The Center for Religion and Media, founded in 2003, seeks to develop interdisciplinary, cross-cultural knowledge of how religious ideas and practices are shaped and speak through a variety of media. Funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts, CRM is a collaborative project of the Religious Studies Program and the Center for Media, Culture and History, providing a space for scholarly endeavor, a stage for public educational events, and an electronic interface with media specialists and the public through its innovative web magazine, *The Revealer: A Daily Review of Religion and the Press* ([www.therevealer.org](http://www.therevealer.org)). In March 2005, The Trusts renewed CRM's funding for two more years.

The Center investigates how people use media in their religious lives, how "the media" treat religion, and how media forms themselves can function as religion. Last year's theme, *Religious Experience: Memory, Media, Marketing*, focused our thinking across boundaries of disciplines, religious traditions, and media forms, and gave us chances to encounter new scholarly work. At the heart of the community of scholars that filled the Center with so much energy and enthusiasm were its three working groups. These groups met on their own, while gathering several times each semester for a "Bridging Seminar" where they could discuss the work of our distinguished lecturers, invited guests, and one another. Interdisciplinary and synergistic by design, the working groups produced books, articles, edited volumes, journal issues, internet sites, and curricula. In addition to extensive public programming, the Center also sponsors a senior research scholar and two post-doctoral fellows yearly.

2005-2006 Theme: Religion, Media, and Body Politics

Control of the body has always been a central concern of religious life. As possibilities emerge in medicine, sexuality, and biotechnology that have never before been imagined, the status of religious regulation in these novel circumstances has been challenged, and has become central to many key debates in contemporary politics and culture in many parts of the world. Media are deeply implicated in how these debates are structured from what new medical technologies reveal about fetuses, DNA, HIV status, sexuality etc. to the ways they are imaged and discussed in both secular and religious arenas.

Working Groups

Bodies, Belief, and Bioethics, Co-conveners: Rayna Rapp and Faye Ginsburg, Anthropology

This group will address how the mediation of the body, particularly with new pandemics, biotechnologies, genetic knowledge, and the potential for the creation of unprecedented life forms, has become increasingly unstable.

Sex, Secularism, and Other Religious Matters: Ann Pellegrini, Religious Studies and Performance Studies

This seminar will consider the place of religion in contemporary U.S. public life, especially in public debates about sex and sexuality, issues which so often seem to stand in as barometers of "moral values." What role do the media play in shaping and narrowing public discourse about religion, sex, and secularism?

## 2005 Centers and Institutes Project Booklet now available

- a directory of over thirty centers and institutes engaged in the study of religion in America
- recently updated
- for a free copy, please contact the Center ([raac@iupui.edu](mailto:raac@iupui.edu))

R&amp;AC

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The Winter 2006 issue of *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* presents studies and reflections on trends in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries in order to illuminate larger patterns, contexts, and implications of religion in American life, doing so by exploring such topics as the electronic media and the study of American religion, ethnic identity and religion, reception of Goodspeed's *American Translation* of the Bible, and the construction of religious identity through biography.

In the annual Forum, John Corrigan, David Morgan, Mark Silk, and Rhys H. Williams take on the issue of "The Electronic Media and the Study of American Religion." During the past two decades, the burgeoning of electronic and digital technology has made an impact--some might say of revolutionary dimensions--in the way in which we communicate with one another, retrieve and information, teach our students, interact with our peers, and even, perhaps, in basic ways in which we experience and interpret "reality." In short, electronic media have the potential to transform our communities of learning in significant ways. The contributors reflect on the ways in which these technological developments have affected the ways in which they approach the tasks of information gathering, interpretation, and communication. Beyond the task of information gathering, the possibilities of electronic media point to possible transformations in the ways in which knowledge is communally generated and shared. Have new communities of learning been engendered by these media? Have relationships between faculty and students and among researchers been transformed? Do we, individually and collectively, still think about our subject matter in the same way, or have we taken a leap a la Marshall McLuhan--who argued famously that "the medium is the message"--into another dimension of conceptualization? These are the questions that we hope will promote further discussion on these matters.

Michael P. Carroll explains "How the Irish Became Protestant in America." It often comes as a surprise to learn that most contemporary Americans who think of themselves as "Irish" are, in fact, Protestant, not Catholic. While commentators generally agree that these Protestant Irish-Americans are descended mainly from the Irish who settled in the U.S. prior to the Famine, the story of how they *became* the Protestants they are is more complicated than it, at first, appears. Once a couple of historical biases are corrected, it becomes possible to develop an argument that simultaneously does two things: it provides a new perspective on the contribution made by the Irish (generally) to the rise of the Methodists and Baptists in the early nineteenth century, and it helps one understand why so many American Protestants continue to retain an Irish identity despite the fact that their link to Ireland is now almost two centuries in the past.

"Monkeying with the Bible": Edgar J. Goodspeed's *American Translation*, by R. Bryan Bademan, argues that devotion to the Bible remains an underappreciated aspect of American religious life partly because it fails to generate controversy. This article opens a window onto America's relationship with the Bible by exploring a controversial moment in the history of the Bible in America: the public reception of Edgar J. Goodspeed's *American Translation* (1923). Initially at least, most Americans rejected Goodspeed's attempt to cast the language of the Bible in contemporary "American" English. Accusations of the professor's irreligion, bad taste, vulgarity, and crass modernity emerged from nearly every quarter of the Protestant establishment, testifying to a widespread but unexplored attachment to the notion of a traditional Bible in the early twentieth century. By examining this barrage of reaction, this essay argues that Protestants, along with some others in 1920s America, believed that traditional biblical language was among the forces that helped stabilize the development of American civilization.

Finally, Kathryn E. Lofton, in "The Preacher Paradigm: Promotional Biographies and the Modern-Made Evangelist, 1886-1931," demonstrates that Christian publishing houses in the United States offered an unprecedented biographical profile of the contemporary American evangelist as an unambiguously modern figure. Sold at tabernacle tents, Christian book-

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RELIGION AND AMERICAN CULTURE  
A Journal of Interpretation

## Recent Articles

**Amanda Porterfield,  
Review Essay: "American  
Religious Biography"**

**Kristin Kobes Du Mez,  
"The Beauty of the Lilies:  
Femininity, Innocence, and the  
Sweet Gospel of Uldine Utley"**

**Cathy Gutierrez,  
"Sex in the City of God: Free Love  
and the American Millennium"**

**Douglas Winiarski,  
"Native American Popular  
Religion in New England's Old  
Colony, 1670-1770"**

shops, and church fund raisers, the texts produced by these houses simultaneously document concerns with the modern landscape while regaling readers with the styles and stories of headlining American Protestants. Although it is not difficult to discern distinguishing marks and regional inflections within the anecdotal particularities of these men, Lofton shows that the overarching structure and themes of their chronologies are consistent. This essay highlights the persistent paradigm represented in the promotional products of these turn-of-the-century preachers. Whereas previous historians have described these men as antiquated proponents of an "old time" religion, Lofton argues that their narratives reveal a strikingly modern man, poised in an engaged and contradictory conflict with his contemporary moment.

This issue of the journal will be available in February 2006.