A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

Midway through my term as chair of the sociology of religion section I am happy to say that the section is thriving. Though memberships fluctuate throughout the year, among the 52 ASA sections our section’s membership typically ranks about 15th to 20th largest. As of March 1st we had 527 section members and we will likely have more as people register for the annual meeting in Denver.

Our section has planned some interesting paper sessions for these meetings. This year we began a two-year agreement to jointly sponsor a religion, sex, and gender paper session with the section on sex and gender. Orit Avashi and Courtney Irby organized this session. Additionally, Phillip Schwadel, Jen’nan Read, Amy Adamczyk, and Richard Wood are each convening one of our section-sponsored paper sessions. From among the approximately 75 papers submitted to our section, these four conveners each selected four especially interesting and important papers for presentation in their session. Additionally, there will be ten roundtables and a total of 37 papers presented at our section’s roundtable session.

As the program organizer for all of our section’s sessions, I encouraged authors whose papers were not accepted in one of our regular paper sessions to submit their papers to the Association for the Sociology of Religion (ASR). ASR holds their annual meetings concurrently with ASA at a nearby hotel and most of the papers submitted to ASR make their way into regular paper sessions. Thus, about 25 additional papers that would have been sent to our roundtable session have instead been submitted to the ASR conference or to other conference venues. Although this might, in the short run, diminish our section’s ASA conference registrations and memberships, I believe it fosters mutual cooperation with ASR. More importantly, it gives more of our members an opportunity to present their work and hear about the work of others at regular paper sessions rather than at a roundtable with only a handful of people present. I encourage our section’s members to consider attending both the ASA and the ASR meetings.

Information is available at http://www.sociologyofreligion.com/. Thanks to everyone involved in helping to put this year’s program together.

Dan Olson
Nachman Ben–Yehuda with the Dept. of Sociology & Anthropology, Hebrew University was awarded the 2012 Hebrew University Rector's award for excellence in teaching and research.

Larry Nichols is currently serving as President of the North Central Sociological Association for 2011–12. The NCSA conference will be held in Pittsburgh in April.

Magda Teter recently won the Harry Frank Guggenheim grant for 2012, in support of her book project "The Pope's Dilemma: Blood Libel and the Boundaries of Papal Power."

UC Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center is very pleased to announce a recent $5.9 million grant from the John Templeton Foundation to undertake a three–year project: "Expanding the Science and Practice of Gratitude." In collaboration with Dr. Robert Emmons from UC Davis, we seek to expand the scientific understanding of gratitude, promote research–based practices in institutions like schools and hospitals, and engage the public in a wide–reaching cultural conversation about the role of gratitude in civil society. The first component of our project is a $3 million research initiative, focused on understanding the impact of gratitude on health and well–being, developmental science and social relationships.
The Science of Generosity initiative at the University of Notre Dame is currently conducting and supporting 14 international social science research projects on generosity. Some of our projects have begun to see interesting early results, and have received extensive coverage in the New York Times, The Washington Post, USA Today, The Economist, The Atlantic, and on NBC News. I'm looking now for opportunities to publicize these results, as well as general information about the initiative, in academic news venues such as newsletters.

For more about the initiative you can visit http://generosityresearch.nd.edu/


Potential source of data...

HUGE NEWSLETTER COLLECTION AVAILABLE
At age 90, I must dispose of a large collection of newsletters from a wide range of religious agencies, mostly since the 1970s that were accumulated as primary sources for potential social or historical research projects. (I also have extensive files on secular nonprofit agencies and sequences of several magazines.) If interested, contact me, David O. Moberg, at domoberg@sbcglobal.net or 414.357.6672

Rodney Stark's 32nd book was just published by HarperOne: "The Triumph of Christianity: How The Jesus Movement Became the World's Largest Religion."


Stephen J Fichter, Mary Gautier and Paul Perl "Same Call, Different Men: The Evolution of the Priesthood since Vatican II" I believe this link from Liturgical Press contains all the pertinent information you will need: https://www.litpress.org/Detail.aspx?ISBN=9780814634295
Living Faith: Everyday Religion and Mothers in Poverty, **Susan Crawford Sullivan**
University of Chicago Press, 2012

Scholars have made urban mothers living in poverty a focus of their research for decades, but until now little attention has been paid to an important force in these women's lives: religion. *Living Faith* is based on interviews with low-income mothers, most on or just off of welfare, most of whom are highly personally religious but not attending religious services (overwhelmed logistically due to living in shelters, or feeling stigmatized due to being poor or single mothers, among other reasons). The book examines the powerful role of religion in various aspects of their daily lives, including parenting, welfare, work, and making meaning out of difficult circumstances. It also includes interviews with urban pastors and explores experiences in congregations (positive and negative) for women who are involved or were previously involved in them. Click [here](#) for more details.

Sinners on Trial: Jews and Sacrilege after the Reformation, **Magda Teter**
Harvard University Press, 2011

This book considers a relation between religion, law, and crime. The book argues that the affirmation of Catholic dogmas in Poland after the Reformation happened not necessarily though religious education and propaganda but through the application of criminal law, and the courts' treatment of "the sacred" and, thus, also of "the sacrilege." Sacrilege, treated increasingly as crime not as sin, became a token of broader power struggles and contested social and economic relations, as it moved the sacred to the public arena of courts. Criminal law became a key tool in the manipulation of the meaning of the sacred and in the effort to legitimize Church authority. Click [here](#) for more details.
CALLS FOR PAPERS

Toronto Journal of Theology
Volume 28, Number 1 2012
Special Issue – Art and Theology
This special themed issue of Toronto Journal of Theology looks at the interaction and influences of art and theology across several areas of interest. This full color issue features the works of many prominent authors, including Robin Jensen, Richard Viladesau, Gerald Robinson and artist, Regina Coupar.

For submissions information, please contact
Professor Abrahim H. Khan
Email: tst.tjt@utoronto.ca
http://www.utpjournals.com/tjt
UTP Journals on Facebook
www.facebook.com/utpjournals Become a fan and receive free access to articles weekly through UTPJournals focus, advance notice of tables of contents of forthcoming issues, author and editor commentaries and insights, calls for papers, and advice on publishing in our journals.

International Workshop
Religion, Politics and Policy–making in Russia: Domestic and International Dimensions
Center for EU–Russia Studies (CEURUS), University of Tartu
Tartu, Estonia
June 6–7, 2012
Organizers: Prof Jerry G. Pankhurst (Wittenberg University, USA; visiting Fulbright scholar at the University of Tartu) and Alar Kilp (University of Tartu)

http://ceurus.ut.ee/conferences/international–workshop–call–for–papers/

The Center for EU–Russia Studies (CEURUS) at the University of Tartu invites your participation in a workshop on Religion, Politics and Policy–making in Russia: Domestic and International Dimensions. The workshop is meant to highlight new research on the questions of religion and politics in Russia, to foster collaborative relations for future projects, and to provide an opportunity for everyone to learn about high–quality research that is being carried out in this area of inquiry.
ASSOCIATION FOR THE SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION
2012 Annual Meeting
August 17–18 – Denver, Colorado

Religion and Social Change

Religion is both an agent and a product of social change. Closely linked to many historical and global transformations, religion has served as both an opiate and an amphetamine for change. Indeed, most religious traditions are predicated upon the idea that conversion transforms the individual and widespread acceptance of religious principles results in a utopian society. Some religions attempt to produce or prevent change by influencing the wider discourse surrounding key moral and political debates; others promote programs at the local level; still others, viewing society as beyond repair, attempt to produce their own utopian sub–societies. Yet, religion is also the product of social changes that mold beliefs and transform religious institutions. We want to explore this complex relationship between religion and social change. To what extent do the characteristics of religious groups and their members determine the manner in which they attempt to enact change? Do religious groups have special advantages or disadvantages in their ability to foster social change as compared to secular groups and institutions? How do larger social changes influence the religious beliefs and actions of individuals and institutions?

Papers and discussion sessions on all themes within the sociology of religion are welcome, but especially those related to the meeting theme, including, but not limited to, the following:

- religion and politics
- religion and gender
- religion and racial harmony
- religion and science
- religion and volunteering
- religion and morality issues
- religion and extremist behavior
- utopian and millenarian movements in religion
- religious charitable organizations
- religious conversion, religious experiences and personal transformation
- theoretical perspectives regarding religion and engagement with society

Paper Proposals and Abstracts are due by 30 April 2012

Email your proposal to ASR2012@augustana.edu as a Word attachment. Place the title of your proposal first, then names, affiliations, and email addresses of all authors, then your abstract/proposal, all on one sheet of paper. (2) Limit paper abstracts to a maximum of 100 words. (3) 2012 membership in ASR is required for program consideration.
The Sociology of Islam and Muslim Societies, a scholarly network that has more than a thousand participants, (http://pdx.edu/sociologyofislam/about) aims to launch a new journal, Sociology of Islam. The journal will be published by Brill (http://www.brill.nl/), having its inaugural issue in this Fall. As the Book Review Editors for Sociology of Islam, we would like to build a reviewer database. If you are interested in reviewing for the journal, please send us your name, contact information, general area expertise, and regional expertise. Book reviews for Sociology of Islam are usually 900–1100 words and we ask review writers to produce their reviews within about two months of receiving the book.

**We also appreciate if you want your book to be reviewed in Sociology of Islam. To be considered, books should be sent to the address below.

Mustafa Gurbuz, Book Review Editor, Sociology of Islam
Department of Sociology
University of Connecticut
344 Mansfield Rd. Storrs, CT
06269–2068

Amish America: Plain Technology in a Cyber World
Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies
Elizabethtown College (PA)
June 5–8, 2013

This international conference will highlight the challenges of new technology (internet, telecommunications, production, manufacturing, household, consumption, medicine and leisure) for Amish communities in North America. Conference planners also welcome proposals from scholars and practitioners on other aspects of Amish life as well as ones related to non-Amish traditional groups of Anabaptist origin. Proposals for presentations as well as poster sessions are acceptable.

Specifications: A clear statement of topic, methods, and significance (350 words or less) and a one–two page resume of the presenter.

Submission: by email attachment to Donald Kraybill, kraybilda@etown.edu
Deadline: October 1, 2012
Decisions: December 1, 2012
Screening Committee: D. Kraybill, Karen Johnson-Weiner, Steven M. Nolt
Questions: Donald Kraybill, kraybilda@etown.edu
Global Perspectives on Religion and AIDS

The “Global Perspectives on Religion and HIV/AIDS Seminar” is a new program area of the American Academy of Religion (AAR). It will bring together an interdisciplinary group of scholars to develop an analysis of the various roles religion has played historically and continues to occupy in shaping the global AIDS pandemic. In addition to building theoretical and conceptual tools for understanding religion and AIDS, we aim to create an anthology appropriate for a wide academic audience interested in the religious and moral dimensions of the AIDS epidemic, including their effects on the lived experience of disease and the formation of religious and public health efforts to fight HIV/AIDS and prevent infection. Much of the work of our multi-year seminar focuses on creating an internally cohesive project that incorporates our diverse methodological and regional perspectives but shares a set of common themes and questions concerning the convergence of religion and HIV/AIDS over the past three decades. We seek to advance existing research and to foster new studies of this important, emerging field and welcome proposals from a range of disciplinary and/or regional perspectives. Please note, you do not have to be a current member of the AAR to propose a project for this seminar. Scholars interested in joining this conversation are encouraged to contact the chairs, Lynne Gerber, l.gerber@berkeley.edu, or Anthony Petro, anthony.petro@nyu.edu, for more information and/or details about submitting a proposal.
Stephen Merino recently completed "Social Resources and Influence in Religious Networks: Consequences for Social Support, Volunteering, and Intergroup Contact." He draws on data from the Portraits of American Life Study (PALS) to explore the role of religion in Americans' core social networks. The defense was on February 29. Stephen recently joined the faculty of The University of Texas–Pan American.

Todd N Fuist is currently completing "Ordinary Radicals: Faith, Culture, and the Struggle for Justice in Urban Religious Communities," at Loyola University Chicago. This dissertation examines five urban, religious communities from a variety of faith traditions and polity structures as they engage with their social worlds and re-imagine their own communities. These religious organizations each seek to make a constructive impact on the world. In being called to action, the strategies and pathways faith groups can use to confront social problems are not always clear. This dissertation explores how religious organizations both construct these pathways and also are changed through their social work.