2012-13 RELIGION AND PUBLIC LIFE FELLOWS


The Department of Religious Studies is pleased to announce that Rep. Kathy Ashe and Rev. Joanna Adams will be the Religion and Public Life Fellows for the 2012-13 academic year. Their focus will be “Religion and Civic Engagement.”

Rep. Ashe (Democrat) has been the representative for District 56 (the district in which GSU is located) since 1992. She has served on several legislative committees, including the Higher Education and Appropriations committees. She recently announced her retirement, so she will step down from the state legislature in January 2013. She is a long-time resident of Atlanta, and she did graduate work at Georgia State University. Rep. Ashe has served in leadership roles in numerous community organizations, including the Agnes Scott Board of Directors, the League of Women Voters, the Atlanta Community Food Bank, the United Way of Atlanta, the Atlanta Women’s Foundation, the Junior League of Atlanta and Vote Choice. She also serves on the Mayoral Service Board which coordinates volunteer efforts in the City of Atlanta and is an Elder at Central Presbyterian Church co-chairing the Living the Legacy campaign.

Rev. Joanna Adams is a founding member of The Higher Ground Group, a multi-faith group including Imam Plemon El-Amin, Rabbi Alvin Sugarman, and Rev. Joseph Roberts. Rev. Adams is a retired Presbyterian minister, who has served as pastor at Morningside and Trinity Presbyterian Churches in Atlanta. As part of the Higher Ground Group, she works with the other clergy from various religious traditions to explore how religious communities and individuals can be productively involved in addressing the social problems that challenge Atlanta. She serves on a number of Atlanta organization boards, and in 2007, she was named an Elder at Central Presbyterian Church.

New Faculty Members Join Department

The Department of Religious Studies welcomes two tenure-track faculty members this fall.

Dr. Monique Moultrie comes to us from Western Kentucky University. Dr. Moultrie earned her B.A. from Duke University, her M.Div. from Harvard University, and her Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University. Her research focuses on religion, race/ethnicity, and sexual ethics.

Our second hire is Dr. Nadia Latif, who has been hired as part of a Second Century Initiative focused on Transcultural Conflict and Violence. Dr. Latif earned her B.A. in political science from Amherst College and her M.A., M.Phil. and Ph.D. degrees in Cultural Anthropology from Columbia University. Her research focuses on religious nationalisms and conflict; media technologies; and human rights. For more information about Dr. Moultrie and Dr. Latif, visit their faculty pages at www.gsu.edu/religion. Welcome to both of our new faculty members!
Welcome from the Chair

As always, there are exciting things brewing in the Department. We started this fall with two new faculty members, Dr. Monique Moultrie and Dr. Nadia Latif. Keep an eye out for extended profiles of their research on our website (www.gsu.edu/religion). Also, this year we have two Religion and Public Life Fellows joining us. Rep. Kathy Ashe (District 56) and Rev. Joanna Adams (currently with the Higher Ground Group; former pastor at Morningside and Trinity Presbyterian Churches in Atlanta) will think with us about religion and civic engagement.

In addition, this semester we inaugurate our internship program. Several media, non-profit, and business organizations have worked with us to establish internship opportunities for our students as part of their undergraduate and graduate experience. We hope that these internships will offer our students work experience that prepares them for life after graduation. More importantly, we have designed the internships so that students are given an opportunity to think through what it means to bring the study of religion out of the classroom into a workplace environment. Our students explore the question, what are the ways in which religion plays a role in business? in non-profit service? in the media? in my own professional life? If you would like to offer an internship through your workplace, please contact me and we can talk about the possibilities.

And, as always, our faculty members continue to make stellar contributions through their research and instruction. Make sure to check out our faculty updates for the most current information about faculty activity.

Kathryn McClymond
Professor & Chair, Department of Religious Studies
In March 2012, the Department held the Annual Student Symposium. The student symposium not only allows the students a platform to present their work to peers and family, but it’s a wonderful opportunity for alumni and friends of the Department to reunite. It’s also a time to honor our graduating seniors.

Liz Lyon-Brown, BA ’12 presented her paper “Pop Culture and the Universalization of Religion Through Disney: An Emic Perspective.”

Dr. Herman had the pleasure of presenting four of our undergraduates an honor cord for their academic excellence.
Sherri Hill was awarded the “Certificate of Excellence for Outstanding Performance and Lasting contribution to students at Georgia State” by the Christian Faculty Forum, CRU, The Impact Movement, Intervarsity, and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Sherri was nominated as favorite/influential professor by one of her students after her first semester of teaching.

Sarah Levine was awarded Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award for 2012.

Cathye Schmidt was named Outstanding Graduate Student, 2012. The faculty gives this award to an exceptional student who has graduated or will graduate in the academic year.

John Sullivan successfully defended his thesis Contemplating Conivencia: Cosmopolitanism, Exclusivism and Religious Identity in Iberia. He is now a PhD student in the Department of History at GSU.

Left: Graduate student Bishal Karna presented his paper at the Annual Student Symposium, March 2012. Right: Dr. Isaac Weiner facilitating the Annual Student Symposium.
Abbas Barzegar: Congressional Quarterly Global Researcher invited Dr. Barzegar, Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies, to comment on the prospects of Sunni-Shite reconciliation in the Middle East. Based on extensive historical research on the subject, Dr. Barzegar noted that the current state of affairs only promises a worsening of sectarian relations in the short term. Congressional Quarterly provides in-depth reporting on domestic and international affairs to a policy oriented audience in Washington D.C. and elsewhere. The current issue, which includes Dr. Barzegar’s commentary, can be found at http://library.cqpress.com/globalresearcher/.

Molly Bassett: Dr. Bassett received a Summer Fellowship from the Wabash Center that funded the start of a new project on Aztec religion and natural history. “Meeting the Gods: Apotheoses and Exchanges of the Early Encounter” will be published in Material Religion this December, and “Coloring the Sacred in the New World,” co-authored with Jeanette Favrot Peterson (History of Art and Architecture, UC, Santa Barbara) will appear in a forthcoming volume on the material culture of color in the modern world.

Jonathan Herman: Dr. Herman’s article “The Spiritual Illusion: Constructive Steps Toward Rectification and Resdescription” has been accepted for publication by Method and Theory in the Study of Religion, the journal of the North American Association for the Study of Religion (NAASR). Also, Dr. Herman’s article “Civil Discourse or Simple Discord? Competing Vis ons for Religion in the Public Schools” will appear in Civility and Education in a World of Religious Diversity: Challenges of Robust Pluralism, a volume in the Routledge Religion and Education series. Wiley Publishing is due to publish Dr. Herman’s Taoism for Dummies next Fall.

Nadia Latif: Dr. Latif published an article examining gender and structural violence in a Palestinian refugee camp in a special issue of Feminist Review on gender and conflict (July 2012). She was invited to give a talk on her research to a graduate seminar on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at Boston College (April 2012). She spoke at a public salon at the New Museum in New York regarding a proposal to initiate a Birthright Palestine movement. The salon was organized by artist Dana Yahalomi in conjunction with the New Museum’s second triennial (April 2012).

Kathryn McClymond: This past spring Dr. McClymond was invited to present a lecture as part of the Key Concepts of the Humanities and Social Sciences Lecture Series at the Institute of Advanced Study in the Humanities and the Social Sciences at the Universität Bern in Bern, Switzerland. She spoke on “Ritual and Violence.” Kathryn also appeared on Atlanta Interfaith Broadcasting’s “Religion Roundtable” in May. More recently, she was invited to serve on the Excellence in the Study of Religion Book Award Juries (Textual Studies), and in September she submitted the manuscript for her forthcoming book Ritual Gone Wrong: What We Learn from Ritual Disruption, to Oxford University Press (it will be published in 2013). This fall she will be a panelist at a different sessions of the November 2012 AAR, one session commenting on René Girard’s approach to the study of sacrifice, and an AAR Leadership Workshop sponsored by the AAR Academic Relations Committee discussing ways that religious studies departments can respond constructively to budgetary pressures and increasingly utilitarian approaches to higher education.

Monique Moultrie: In Spring 2012, Dr. Moultrie presented several papers and led two workshops. She was also honored by Duke University’s Trinity College of Arts and Sciences as the Religious Studies alum who had made a significant impact on her major while at Duke and who best displayed success while pursuing her intellectual passions. During the summer, Dr. Moultrie focused on a book proposal based on an oral history project that she has been researching for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Religious Archives Network. The proposed book will look at the varied oral histories of several black LGBT religious leaders with the intent of highlighting religious communities as a potential site for resistance movements. This fall, Dr. Moultrie will be presenting at AAR in for the Graduate Student Council on the Human Side of the Job Search offering strategies from her experience as a visiting professor pursuing tenure-track positions.

Tim Renick: Dr. Renick is the recipient of several recent grants on which he serves as the principal investigator. These include a $4.95 million grant from the Goizueta Foundation to establish a “Latino Leadership Pipeline” at Georgia State to help Latino students graduate and then successfully enter graduate school and the job market, a $1.15 million grant from the Coca-Cola Foundation to work on retention measures for first generation college students, and a $100,000 grant from the Lumina Foundation to improve the success rates of transfer students. The national survey instrument that he helped to develop with a grant from the Teagle Foundation will soon be employed by American Academy of Religion to conduct the first-ever national survey of former religious studies majors. He will team-teach “War, Religion, and Politics” as an Honors seminar with the Dean of Arts and Sciences, Dr. William Long, this fall.

Louis Ruprecht: Dr. Ruprecht had quite a busy summer. He was a Research Fellow at the Vatican Library and the Vatican Library’s Secret Archives this summer (May-July). He was also invited to give a one-week seminar (July 18-23) in the Department of History at Portland State University in Oregon (HIST 399, A History of the Olympic Games), in anticipation of London 2012. Ruprecht was asked to give two public lectures at the university, with good attendance from the local public (about 100 at each). They were: “London 2012: The French Revival of the Olympic Games and the British Display of the Elgin Marbles—Are Greek Temples Religion or Loot?” and “God’s Palace of Art: How the Vatican Invented Art, and Reinvented Religion Along the Way”. Dr. Ruprecht’s new book, Policing the State: Democratic Responses to Police Power Gone Awry, in Memory of Kathryn Johnston (1914-2006) will be published by Wipf and Stock this fall. Other recent articles include “The Rules Come Later: The Priority of Practices in Grass Roots Democracy,” a review of Jeffrey Stout’s Blessed Are the Organzied (Princeton University Press 2010), Soundings 95.1 (2012); 98-129 and “What Child Is This? Christian Love and Christian Losses in the 1960s,” a review of Stanley Hauerwas’s Hannah’s Child: A Theologian’s Memoir (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2010), Soundings 94.3/4 (2011) 279-323.

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SAVE THE DATES!

**Pizza Fridays at 12 noon!**
- October 26
- November 30

**October 11**
**Fall Picnic**
Lake Claire Park
4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

**October 17**
**Religious Studies at GSU Annual Arts Fair**
11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
From Hurt Park and the Art and Humanities building and extending to Poplar and Forsyth Streetsand the Rialto indown-town Atlanta

**November 1**
**Middle East Panel Discussion**
Date and Location TBA

**November 17-20**
**AAR Annual Meeting**
The American Academy of Religion will hold its 2012 annual meeting in Chicago, Illinois at the McCormick Place Convention Center.
Registration closes on November 15.
For more info, visit www.aarweb.org.

Faculty Projects

**Dr. Ruprecht to Direct the Hellenic Studies Institute**

The Department is pleased to announce that Dr. Ruprecht has been appointed the Director of the Hellenic Studies Institute. In taking on this position, he assumes the Andrew C. and Eula C. Carlos Family Chair in Contemporary Greek Studies. In the upcoming months Dr. Ruprecht will lead the re-launch of the Hellenic Studies Institute with several events, including a series of four lectures at different venues; events with the Greek Consulate of Atlanta; a spring concert series; a new certificate program in Modern Greek (as well as Classical) Studies; and possibly a Maymester Study Abroad program in Greece. For more information, see www.cas.gsu.edu/hellenic_center.

**Dr. Barzegar to organize “The Middle East and the 2012 Elections: America’s Future in a Dynamic Region”**

With the current instability in the Middle East and the coming elections, Dr. Abbas Barzegar has been involved in a number educational projects intended to better inform the public about the dynamics of religion, identity, and politics in the Middle East. To that end, he contributed to *Congressional Quarterly International* on the topic of Islamic sectarianism over the summer. In September he was the featured guest on an Atlanta Interfaith Broadcasters and Islamic Speaker’s Bureau special content on the same topic. Also, in coordination with the Middle East Institute and the Transcultural Violence Initiative he is preparing the event, “The Middle East and the 2012 Elections: America’s Future in a Dynamic Region.” Date and location TBA.

Religion and Public Life, continued from Page 1

Georgia Woman of the Year and featured in Atlanta Magazine as one of the top 45 “most loved Atlantans.” Rev. Adams is particularly active with local non-profit organizations that combat homelessness.

Rev. Adams and Rep. Ashe have already made several commitments to the Department 2012-13 calendar. They hosted a public informal Brown Bag lunch on, Oct. 4 to talk about their own perspectives on religion and civic engagement. In addition, Rev. Adams has arranged to have the Higher Ground Group hold a moderated, public conversation on Religion and Civic Engagement, hosted in the Rialto Lobby in February. Rep. Ashe will offer a public lecture next spring. More information will be forthcoming, so keep your calendars open for these exciting events!

For further information about the Religion and Public Life Fellow program and to keep current on the 2012-13 events, please to go www.gsu.edu/religion and click on “Religion and Public Life Fellow.”

Faculty Updates, continued from Page 5

**Isaac Weiner:** Dr. Weiner spent the summer completing the manuscript for his book, *Religion Out Loud*, which will be published by NYU Press. In May, he presented his research at a conference on Understanding Religious Pluralism at Georgetown University. This November, he will present a paper at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion.

Leslie Andrews (BA ‘12) is working in Organizational Effectiveness at Chick-fil-A, Inc. assisting with the development of Diversity Programs and change initiatives. Part of Leslie’s job also includes researching and writing case studies about relevant topics that support its vision for continuous growth and service to others. “[All that RELS and PHIL paper writing served me well, after all!”] Leslie is also learning French at Emory in preparation for a service opportunity with Peace Corps. The nomination will take her to West Africa in 2013. There, she will be teaching English and assisting with local business development. As if that wasn’t enough to keep her busy, Leslie also volunteers every other week at International Community School (ICS), tutoring and spending time with some of the Refugee kids as they transition into American culture and its educational system. Check it out --> http://www.facebook.com/l/wAQGdRkq2A-QEdTIQ8eP90C57jHz1q8IJKXNCnxagIdrINAVncseorgia.org/

Jeanelle (née Carda) Eros (BA ’06, MA ’08) and Ryan Patrick Eros (BA ’10) welcomed their daughter, Theodora Kseniya Eros, on July 3, 2012 weighing 8 lbs. 3 oz. Congratulations to the Eros family.

Alex Johnson (BA ’12) works as a data entry clerk for a company that creates and markets professional development seminars for lawyers. At night, Alex wears a Batman costume and makes short films about religion. Currently, Alex is making a short about a guy who summons the devil. He is also writing a feature length screenplay for a stream of consciousness style “documentary” on the evangelical view of marriage. Alex is co-writing an absurdist screenplay about creationism. Besides featuring in short films, Alex has produced other people’s films. This summer, he co-produced a feature length film, a short and a web series.

Josh Lupo (MA ‘10) has recently had his paper “On Affectivity: Beyond Intentionality in Emmanuel Levinas and Michel Henry” accepted for presentation at the American Academy of Religion annual meeting in November. He will be presenting in a session of the Theology and Continental Philosophy Group.

Kimberly Lyle (BA’06) has been accepted to the master’s degree program in sociology at McMaster University in Ontario, Canada, beginning this Fall. She was also granted a Teaching Assistantship and small scholarship to fund her studies.

Sherry Morton (MA ’10) is the Director of Community Development at Hess Academy in Decatur, GA. Hess Academy is a private, progressive school for children K-8.
Giving to Religious Studies

Thank you for your commitment to furthering the study of religion in a public university.

Our faculty are receiving national recognition for the quality of their research and the excellence of their teaching. And our students are taking a place on the national stage - presenting papers at the national religious studies conference, receiving prestigious scholarships, and finding new ways to connect their learning with the world around them. Private donors sustain the Department’s mission of teaching, research, and service. We rely on the generous support of our many friends and alumni to pursue this important work.

The funds that result from such gifts allow the Department to provide its students with scholarships and even work experience through research projects. Our faculty’s teaching and research also benefit and they assist us to provide public programs that are open to the public, such as the Religion and Public Life Fellows program.

For more information and ways to make a gift, please visit www.gsu.edu/religion and click on the “Alumni and Friends” tab.