

DEPARTMENT OF

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

FALL 2015

GEORGIA STATE
UNIVERSITY



FROM THE CHAIR

HAPPY 10TH ANNIVERSARY!



Ten years ago this fall, the Department of Religious Studies was officially launched, along with its own M.A. program. At that point we had 6 full-time faculty, and we inaugurated some now-familiar events, including our annual Religious Studies potluck and our Graduate Orientation. We offered one M.A. program (thesis track only), and we were just beginning to consider establishing study abroad options.

Of course, Religious Studies at Georgia State University goes further back than 2005. In 1985, the Department of Philosophy was authorized to conduct a hire for an

Kathryn McClymond

assistant professor to establish a program in religious studies. Tim Renick was hired to fill this position, and five years later religious studies was offered as a major within Philosophy. In 1996 Jon Herman joined the faculty, and over the years we've grown markedly.

This year we celebrate 10 official years (and many more "unofficial years") of offering provocative scholarship and stellar instruction about the ways religion plays a role in individuals' personal lives, community policies and practices, and global events, both now and in the past. Come celebrate with us!

Kathryn McClymond

Kathryn McClymond
Professor and Chair
kmcclymond@gsu.edu

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In Memoriam



Dr. Robert Arrington
1938 - 2015

Dr. Robert Arrington, former Chair of Philosophy and Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, passed away on June 20, 2015. He is survived by his wife, Margarita, two daughters, Karen Evans of Southern California, and Lisa Arrington, of Atlanta. He was the proud grandfather of Chelsea Palmer, Ashley Edwards, and Lee Evans.

EVENTS CALENDAR

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS -- SAVE THE DATE FOR FOUNDERS' DAY WITH TIM RENICK!

On October 2, the Department will kick off its 10th anniversary as an official stand-alone department at GSU. Come see old classmates, our current grad cohort, new faculty, and some old familiar faculty & staff faces! We're proud to feature Dr. Timothy Renick, Vice Provost and Vice President for Enrollment Management & Student Success at GSU, Professor of Religious Studies, and founding faculty member of our department. Tim will offer a lecture titled "Religion, Politics and Justice: 2005-2015, reflecting on the state of religious studies here at GSU and in our country.



Here's the schedule for the day:

- 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. Open House, 17th floor, 25 Park Place -- come see our new space and record your warmest memories of Religious Studies for our digital scrapbook.
- 4:00 - 4:30 p.m. Reception, Troy Moore Library (new location, 25 Park Place, room 2343)
- 4:30 p.m. Dr. Timothy Renick, "Religion, Politics and Justice: 2005-2015," Troy Moore Library

For up-to-the-minute information on all the 10th Anniversary events throughout 2015-16, keep checking www.gsu.edu/religion and like us on Facebook!

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

Labor Day

University Closed

SOCIAL MEDIA

Connect with us!



Religious Studies at Georgia State University



@GSUReligion



@GSUReligion



GSU Religious Studies

2015 SYMPOSIUM OF THE MODERN GREEK STUDIES ASSOCIATION

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15 - SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18

The Center for Hellenic Studies is very pleased that Georgia State University has been selected to host the 24th symposium of the Modern Greek Studies Association. The biennial conference, to be held on campus October 15-18, 2015, is the meeting of the largest professional organization for Hellenic Studies in the world. Some two hundred international scholars are expected to attend the conference, which typically features more than eighty presentations, a keynote address, music concerts, film screenings, and more. Some of the program highlights will be announced well in advance on the program's website, which can be accessed via www.mgsa.org.

The Symposium will be hosted by the MGSA's Local Arrangements Committee, headed by the Center for Hellenic Studies' own Dr. Louis A. Ruprecht, and consisting of members of the Center's Executive Committee, Global Studies Institute and the Center for Collaborative & International Arts (CENCIA).

Most of the conference presentations will be housed at the Loudermilk Conference Center, 40 Courtland Street, NE, Atlanta, GA 30303. The keynote lecture will be held at the Speakers Auditorium. Additional events will be free and open to the public.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21-
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24**

**AMERICAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION (AAR)
ANNUAL MEETING**

Atlanta, GA

For more information, visit www.aarweb.org/annualmeeting

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23-
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28**

THANKSGIVING BREAK

No classes



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16
FALL 2015 COMMENCEMENT

The Georgia Dome
For more information, visit
<http://commencement.gsu.edu>

AUGUST 2015

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Weekly
**PIZZA
TUESDAY**
12:30PM

Join us for pizza in the Religious
Studies lounge on:

September 15
September 22
September 29
October 6
October 13
October 20
October 27
November 3
November 10
November 17

DEPARTMENT NEWS

2015-16 Religion & Public Life Fellow: Justin Howell, International Rescue Committee



Justin Howell (BA '97, MEd, '03), of the International Rescue Committee (IRC) Atlanta offices, will serve as the Department of Religious Studies 2015-16 Religion and Public Life Fellow. Justin is currently the Director of Development for the IRC, and he served as the IRC Education and Learning Manager for two years before assuming the development position. In 2013, Justin was recognized with the IRC "Employee of the Year" award. Justin

earned his BA in philosophy and sociology and his MEd with a focus on science education and pedagogy. In addition to his education at Georgia State University, Justin earned a Certificate in Grant Writing from Emory University (2014). Before joining the IRC, Justin was an educator. He helped establish two non-traditional public schools in the Philadelphia area, and he served as an ESOL/science teacher at the DeKalb International Student Center. In that position he worked with refugee and immigrant communities. He is currently a school board member for the International Community School in Decatur, Georgia.

The IRC is an international organization with several offices in the United States. It supports refugees who have been invited by the U.S. government to seek safety in the United States, offering practical, educational, and economic assistance as these refugees transition to independence

and self-sufficiency. For more about the IRC, go to www.rescue.org.

Justin's appointment as the Religion and Public Life Fellow highlights the Department's recognition that many Religious Studies graduates plan to work in non-profit organizations after graduation, serving at local, national, or international community levels. For more about the Religious Studies MA with a concentration in Nonprofit Management, go to <http://religiousstudies.gsu.edu/concentration-nonprofit-management/> or contact Dr. Molly Bassett (mbassett@gsu.edu).

Upcoming events with Justin:

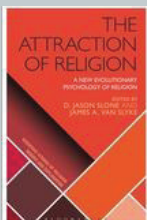
Sept. 29, 1 p.m.: Tuesday Pizza
"Lunch'n'Learn," 25 Park Place, Suite 1700 (Religious Studies department lounge) – all welcome!

March 1, 2015 Tuesday: Religion & Public Life Fellow annual public event – details to be announced later. Save the date!

FACULTY UPDATES

DAVID BELL

Dr. Bell has a chapter titled "Fathering, Rituals, and Mating: Exploring Paternal Stability and Sexual Strategies in Early Religious Practices" in *The Attraction of Religion: A new evolutionary psychology of religion*, edited by D. Jason Slone and James A. Van Slyke and published by Bloomsbury.



BRETT ESAKI

After enjoying his summer vacation in the Bahamas, Dr. Esaki has been hard at work completing his first book entitled, *Enfolding Science*. He also co-wrote a sociological article on young Asian American "religious nones" and had it published the same summer. Dr. Esaki will continue to research hip hop flow and spirituality helping Asian Americans in tenure battles. He is also completing his work on the Sustainability Literacy Test.

KATHRYN McClymond

Dr. McClymond spent the summer leading a reading group on "moral injury" among military veterans for GSU and Atlanta community members. She also conducted research at the Atlanta History Center for her new book project, *Rituals of Healing: Veterans' Homecoming Rituals and Practices*. In addition, Dr. McClymond joined the editorial board of the journal *Religion*.

LOUIS RUPRECHT

Dr. Ruprecht returned to the Vatican Library and Secret Archives in June and July, in order to complete his latest book which will be published by the State University of New York Press. He spent a week for archival research also in the cities of Wurzburg, Munich, Athens and Corfu. On July 21, he delivered lecture entitled "The Strange Career of the Aegina Marbles" at the site of the Temple of Aphaia on the Greek island of Aegina, in support of the American School of Classical Studies's summer program in Greek Archaeology. He

also served as a seminar leader at the Collegium Phaenomenologicum in Città di Castello, Italy, where the topic of discussion was Jacques Derrida's 1999-2000 lecture course on the Death Penalty, published by the University of Chicago Press in 2014.

KRISTY SLOMINSKI

Dr. Slominski completed her PhD from University of California, Santa Barbara in March 2015. Since then, she has been preparing the manuscript for her first book, tentatively titled *Teaching Moral Sex: A Liberal Religious History of Sex Education*. It covers religious involvement in the American movement for sex education in the late 19th century to the present. This summer, Dr. Slominski completed her article "James Cardinal Gibbons as a Symbol for Early Sex Education." It will be published in an upcoming issue of the *US Catholic Historian* in a special edition on American Catholicism and sexuality.

SUMMER 2015 STUDY ABROAD: TURKEY

Overseen by faculty mentors Dr. Abbas Barzegar and Dr. Rashid Naim, a group of thirteen graduate and undergraduate students participated in a Maymester Study Abroad in Turkey. Situated at the literal and figurative crossroads of Asia, Europe and the Middle East, Turkey has emerged as one of the world's most important geo-political actors. Its role has become even more important in light of the Syrian crisis. During the three-week trip, with stops in Istanbul, Ankara, Urfa, Konya, and Gaziantep, students focused on the intersection of Turkish geopolitics, Muslim civil society and the Syrian refugee crisis. Student groups then delved deeper into the topics of Syrian local leadership, Turkish policy, DIY development, education and women's issues.



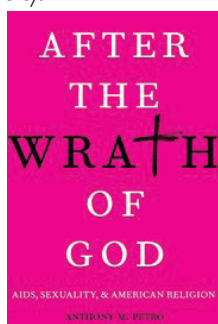
Photos courtesy of Ameer Muhammad, MA Candidate

In modeling the course as a traveling think tank, student "journalists" participated in a learning exchange through meetings with secular and Muslim NGOs, think tanks, universities, and cultural sites. These visits informed students' production of organization profiles, expert podcasts, photo essays, and articles published by muftah.org. The extensive content produced during the trip is available at www.studyabroadthinktank.com, the course website created by Clare Van Holm, an MA Candidate in the Department of Religious Studies. Additionally, Ameer Muhammad, also an MA candidate in Religious Studies, is producing a feature length documentary about the project.

-Clare Van Holm, MA Candidate

ANTHONY PETRO (BA '03)

Dr. Petro has published his first book, *After the Wrath of God: AIDS, Sexuality, & American Religion*, with Oxford University Press. After completing his BA, Anthony earned his MA in the Social Sciences at the University of Chicago and his PhD at Princeton University with a Graduate Certificate in Women and Gender Studies. Dr. Petro is now a faculty member in the Department of Religion at Boston University.



SHERRI HILL (MA '10)

Sherri is currently teaching model UN Debate and Speech at the Amicitia American School Fes in New Fes, Morocco.

KENNY SMITH (MA '10)

Former undergraduate student, PTL, and Visiting Instructor in Religious Studies, Kenny Smith has accepted a position as Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy & Religious Studies at Louisiana State University. Kenny is completing his PhD in Religious Studies at Emory University.

DAMIEN WILLIAMS (MA '10)

Damien is a part-time instructor in the Department of History and Philosophy at Kennesaw State University. For the past five years, he has co-organized "Comics and Popular Arts Conference," a conference with academics and writers, artists, producers, and other professional creators in pop culture. He wrote the chapter "Go Upgrade Yourself," appearing in *Futurama and Philosophy*. More recently, Damien has been writing at AFutureWorthThinkingAbout.com

ATTENTION ALUMNI

Tell us your story! What have you done since graduating with your Religious Studies degree? Email kkooy@gsu.edu with stories and photos for our Facebook and Twitter accounts.

GIVING

TO RELIGIOUS STUDIES



FINANCIAL GIFTS:

- Increase our undergraduate scholarship award amount
- Enhance public programming
- Make unique educational experiences possible, such as student research opportunities, the Religion and Public Life Fellow Program, etc.
- Support faculty research and public presentations of their scholarship



For more information and ways to give,
please visit our website and click on

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