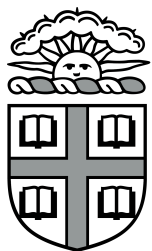


**DEPARTMENT OF
RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

Brown University

8th Departmental Newsletter, 2006-2009

Spring 2009



BROWN

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends,

Once again we are glad to bring to you a newsletter from Brown's Department of Religious Studies, updating you on the people, events, and life of our community.

A number of departures and arrivals have marked our department recently. Jock Reeder officially retired from Brown, but continues to teach ethics at Harvard Divinity School. We are glad that he keeps his office here and continues to be heard in ardent conversation with graduate students, colleagues, and visitors through our doors. Muhammad Qasim Zaman left for Princeton, where he is jointly appointed in Near Eastern Studies and Religion. Michah Gottlieb now teaches at New York University. We miss these friends and colleagues.

Still, we have rejoiced to welcome new colleagues! Thomas (Tal) Lewis joined us in the fall of 2007. A Stanford Ph.D., Tal had taught at Harvard and the University of Iowa, before joining our faculty. He brings expertise in religious ethics and philosophy of religion in the modern West (as well as warm memories of his undergraduate years in our department, not so long ago!). With him has come Nicola Denzey Lewis, to whom we are grateful for teaching in the areas of early Christianity and Roman religions, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. In the fall of 2008, Nancy Khalek arrived, a recent Princeton Ph.D. who had been teaching at Franklin and Marshall College. Nancy brings expertise in Islamic history, with particular interests in early Muslim-Christian relations, material culture, saints, relics, and the Islamization of the great cities of the eastern Mediterranean world (Damascus, Constantinople). Janine T. A. Sawada has also come to Brown in an exciting new joint position with East Asian Studies and Religious Studies, after some years at the University of Iowa. A specialist in the religious and intellectual history of early modern Japan, Janine fills a long-standing gap in our Asian curriculum. Together with Hal Roth, Donna Wulff, and a new senior colleague in Sanskrit in the Classics Dept., James Fitzgerald, she has crafted our new doctoral program in Asian Religious Traditions. This will allow sub-tracks in both South Asian and East Asian Religions, and brings to fruition our long-term commitment to include the entire spectrum of our faculty in our graduate programs.

Finally, Kathleen Pappas left our office staff in 2008 after sixteen years of devoted service. Tina Creamer has come on board with enthusiasm and much appreciated computer skills, after many years in Brown's admissions office. Our Office Manager Gail Tetreault continues to be the rock that anchors our entire community with gracious commitment and ever-generous warmth.

In the following pages, you will find updates and notes on faculty, visitors, our graduate students, distinguished undergraduates, and a sample listing of the events sponsored by the Department of Religious Studies over the past year (2008-09). Without question, this is a lively, BUSY, and flourishing community. Despite present economic constraints, Brown is upholding a courageous commitment to academic excellence for our students and faculty. We continue to benefit from classrooms filled with bold, talented, and energetic students; their vitality is matched by their hunger to learn and their determination to tackle anew the problems and challenges of our larger world. We are grateful for the opportunity to work in such a vibrant community.

We hope to see many of you at our Brown receptions at the annual American Academy of Religion and Society of Biblical Literature meetings. Whether or not that is possible, we always delight in news and visits from former students and colleagues. Please stay in touch! You will find updated information and news on our department website, at http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Religious_Studies/. Please help us by sending your own news for inclusion in the new form we hope this newsletter will soon take: as an electronic publication via our website. Please send your updates to Tina_Creamer@Brown.edu.

With all best wishes,

Susan Harvey

Willard Prescott and Annie McClelland Smith Professor and Chair, Department of Religious Studies

FACULTY NEWS

PROFESSORS EMERITI

WENDELL S. DIETRICH continues his interest in interpreting major systems of nineteenth and twentieth century Judaic and Christian thought. He participated in an international conference on Schleiermacher at the University of Chicago in October 2008.

He is at work on the entry, "The Ethical Thought of Hermann Cohen" for the *International Encyclopaedia of Ethics* (Wiley-Blackwell).

BARNEY TWISS has published a co-edited volume on Politics and Religion in France and the United States (Rowman & Littlefield, 2007) and an additional eight articles on topics such as: theology, toleration, and human rights declarations; towards an absolute prohibition of torture; Confucian ethics and human rights; and religious intolerance in contemporary China. Additionally, he has given lectures or talks on global ethics (in Geneva and Nairobi) and on Confucianism and human rights (in Hong Kong). At the undergraduate level, he regularly teaches an honors seminar on human rights and crimes against humanity, and over the past two years he has offered graduate seminars on topics such as: explaining moral evil; comparative religious ethics; and torture: history, ethics, and public policy. Last year he held a visiting appointment at Hong Kong Baptist University (April-May) and taught summer courses in both London (international human rights law) and Eastern Europe (the Nazi era and its aftermath). He is currently working on a variety of projects, which include: globalization, religion, and global ethics; the moral pathology revealed in perpetrator testimony; religion and human rights; and human rights as a comparative moral and legal tradition. On the personal side, he now has five grandchildren (Henry, 10; Annie, 8; Katie, 4; Wesley, 4; and Lindsay, 17 months).

2008-9 FACULTY

MARK CLADIS is the proud father of Sabine Genevieve Cladis, born on August 27, 2006. That's the main news. Additionally, he is enjoying a sabbatical and working on his next book project, *Religion Gone Wild: Ecology, Democracy, and Religion in the 21st Century*.

In the last two years, he has published the following: a new edition of *Public Vision, Private Lives: Rousseau, Religion, and Twenty-First Century Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006; paperback edition) with "A New Essay by the Author," a substantial 25,000 word argument claiming that thinking about the nature of the public and private life in modernity is closely related to thinking about the nature of religion in modernity; "Painting Landscapes of Religion in America: Four Models of Religion in Democracy," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 76:4 (2008): 874-904; "Stone-Throwers with Excellent Aim: Waking-up to an Environmental Democratic Vision," *Journal of Religion and Literature*: 40.1 (2008): 81-107; "Religion in the Public Sphere: Nothing Special About Religion," *The Immanent Frame: Secularism, Religion, and the Public Sphere* (website sponsored by The Social Science Research Council); "The Discovery and Recovery of Time in History and Religion," in *History and Theory* (forthcoming: 2009); "Minds on Fire: The University Teacher-Scholar," *Brown University Bulletin*: (2007): 2-4; "Solidarity, Religion, and the Global Environment," *Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems* (EOLSS) (UNESCO publication), forthcoming; "Modernity in Religion," *History and Theory* 45: (2006): 93-104; "In Search of Religious Studies," *Ziggurat* 1 (2006): 5-13; "Suffering to Become Human: A Durkheimian Perspective," in *Suffering and Evil*, edited by W.S.F. Pickering and Massimo Rosati (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2008), pp. 81-100; "Religion and Democracy in

Modernity,” in *Leviathan and the Sacred*, edited by Lorenzo Santoro (NY: Edwin Mellen Press, forthcoming). Cladis has also nearly completed his book MS, *In Search of a Course: Reflections on Pedagogy, Religious Thought, and Environmental Imagination*. In the last two years, he has delivered twelve lectures in a variety of settings (including, for example, the Rhode Island State Prison, McGill, and Wesleyan).

NICOLA DENZEY is pleased to let everyone know that she has changed her name to Nicola Denzey Lewis! She has completed a number of projects in the past year, including four articles over the summer: “Facing the Beast: Justin Martyr, Seneca, and the Emotional Life of the Martyr,” in Ismo Dunderberg and Tuomas Rasimus, eds., *Stoicism and Early Christianity* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2009); “Living Images of the Divine: Female Theurgists in Late Antiquity,” in Kimberly Stratton and Dayna Kalleres, eds., *Daughters of Hecate: Women and Magic in the Ancient World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); “Fate and the Wandering Stars: Determinism in the Gospel of Judas and Jewish Apocalyptic Literature,” in April DeConick, ed., *The Judas Codex: Proceedings of the International Congress on Codex Tchacos held at Rice University, Houston, Texas, March 13-16, 2008* (Leiden: Brill, 2009); and “Apolutrosis as Ritual and Sacrament: Determining a Ritual Context for Death in Second-century Valentinianism,” for the *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 17/4 (2009). Nicola is busy teaching a graduate seminar on Roman Religions here at Brown, as well as teaching two courses at Harvard. In February, she gave a guest lecture at UT Austin in the Department of Art History, entitled “Hercules, Histrionics, and a Dead Husband: Reading Cubiculum N in Rome’s Via Latina Catacombs.”

Nicola will be a Visiting Scholar in residence at the American Academy in Rome this June and July. There, she will be attending the first symposium

of the Society of Ancient Mediterranean Religions, chairing the Nag Hammadi and Gnosticism sessions at the International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, and leading scholars through catacomb tours for the Colloquium on Material Culture and Religion organized by Christine Thomas (UCSB) and Steve Friesen (UT Austin).

Ongoing and upcoming projects include finishing her book manuscript entitled *Under a Pitiless Sky: Constructing Cosmology in the Ancient Mediterranean*, for which graduate student Robyn Walsh is research assistant. It will be published with Brill in their Religions of the Graeco-Roman World series. She is beginning preliminary research for a new book project on Roman curiosity objects and is in negotiations about becoming an Associate Editor of the planned *Cambridge Dictionary of Ancient Mediterranean Religion*, along with Eric Orlin (University of Puget Sound) and Michael Satlow.

SUSAN HARVEY has completed a number of major long-term projects, and also started some new ones. Amidst a steady stream of scholarly articles, she published *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination* (University of California Press 2006), and *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* (Oxford University Press, 2008), which she co-edited with David G. Hunter. She was honored to receive fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, and Brown’s Cogut Center for the Humanities for three semesters of research leave in 2007 and 2008, to work on her next book project, tentatively titled *Teaching Women: Women’s Choirs and Biblical Women in Syriac Tradition*. This will focus on the unusual prominence of ancient and medieval Syriac women’s choirs, and the portrayal of biblical women in Syriac hymns (many of which the women’s choirs would have sung). The project took her to con-

ferences, consultations, and monasteries in the Netherlands, Sweden, Spain, Rome and Istanbul, in addition to much travel within the United States. In the fall of 2006, she participated as a lecturer in a two-week, intensive onsite doctoral seminar in Syria and eastern Turkey, for a collaboration of Scandinavian universities. This has led to further opportunities with the Nordic Patristic Network, especially through Lund University in Sweden. In another new venture, she is working with several other scholars from the United States and Israel on a new project in comparative late antique religious poetry (Greek, Syriac, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Latin). This group will be hosting a three-day workshop for scholars from Israel, Europe, and North America at Ohio State University in Oct. 2009; we hope for a major international conference at Brown in 2011. In 2008, she was awarded the Willard Prescott and Annie McClelland Smith Chair in Religious Studies, and on Dec. 15, 2008 she ascended the throne as department chair for RS!

NANCY KHALEK joined the department this year. She is working on a book about narrative and identity in early Islamic Damascus, and is also beginning a new project on the veneration of the Companions of Muhammad in Early Islam. This fall she taught an Introduction to Islam, and she is currently teaching two seminars, one on Martyrdom and Jihad, and another on Jewish, Christian and Muslim pilgrimage in the lands of Medieval Islam. As of Jan. 2009, she is Director of Undergraduate Studies in the department, advising RS concentrators.

ROSS KRAEMER has been Director of Graduate Studies in the department since the summer of 2006, as well as continuing her position as advisor for the Early Christianity doctoral program. She was recently elected by the University faculty to a three-year term on the University Resources Committee, which proposes the University's budget to the President each year.

She's developed several new courses at Brown in the last few years, including a First-Year Seminar on "Jewish Messiahs from Jesus of Nazareth to the Lubavitcher Rebbe" (spring 2009), and an undergraduate course, "Reel Religion: Representations of Religion in Contemporary Film," for fall 2009.

Her recent scholarly publications include articles in the *Journal of Biblical Literature* and the *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, and contributions to several anthologies, including the *Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, edited by Susan Harvey and David Hunter. Her newest book, *Rethinking Gender, History and Women's Religions in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* should be published by Oxford University Press in late 2009 or early 2010.

Her next research project is a study of the historical fate of late antique Jewish communities in the Greco-Roman diaspora. In spring 2007, she travelled to the Mediterranean island of Menorca with a Brown Ancient Studies and Judaic Studies concentrator, Kate Goldberg '08, to research the possible locations of the late Menorcan synagogue, which appears to have been destroyed by Christians and rebuilt as a church in the early 5th century. During 2007-2008, with the aid of the Wendy Strothman Faculty Research Award, she was an adjunct Fellow at the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, where she attended a weekly research seminar on "Jews and Other Imperial Cultures in Late Antiquity", and conducted some preliminary research in the Center's extensive Judaic Studies library. Her graduate seminar in Fall, 2008, focused on aspects of this project, and she plans to devote her sabbatical in spring, 2010 to continuing this research.

On a more personal note, her daughter, Jordan Kraemer, is in her third year of the doctoral program in anthropology at UC Irvine, thus inadver-

tently allowing Ross to vicariously fulfill her long-standing claim that in her next life, she's going to be an anthropologist. Her husband, Michael, regularly voices his desire to become a retired labor lawyer, but continues to go to work anyway.

THOMAS A. LEWIS joined the department in the fall of 2007, profoundly pleased to be returning to the department that introduced him to the field as an undergraduate. His current book project, *Religion, Modernity, and Politics in Hegel*, considers Hegel's philosophy of religion in relation to contemporary questions in the study of religion, particularly the relationship between religion and politics. In addition to working on the book, he has also recently completed a number of shorter pieces. "Religion and Demythologization in Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit" appeared in *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit: A Critical Guide*, ed. Dean Moyar and Michael Quante (Cambridge, 2008); "Speaking of Habits: The Role of Language in Moving from Habit to Freedom" in *Owl of Minerva*; and "Beyond the Totalitarian: Ethics and the Philosophy of Religion in Recent Hegel Scholarship" is in *Religion Compass*. He has also published on broader methodological issues in religious studies, particularly "The Inevitability of Normativity in the Study of Religion: Theology in Religious Studies," in *Theology and Religious Studies in Higher Education: Global Perspectives*, ed. Darlene L. Bird and Simon G. Smith (London, 2009). He has given several papers at recent conferences, including the Symposium on the Future of the Philosophy of Religion at Boston University, as well as an invited lecture at Stanford University. The papers have brought together his interests in Hegel and in the history of the study of religion through a focus on the conceptualization of religion in the modern West. He has greatly enjoyed teaching the undergraduate seminar on methods in religious studies as well as several other courses in religious ethics and philosophy of religion. The

intellectual curiosity of Brown students continues to impress him. In addition to serving as Senior Advisor last spring, he has been Director of Undergraduate Studies from his arrival until going on leave for spring 2009.

SAUL M. OLYAN published during the past year an authored book (*Disability in the Hebrew Bible: Interpreting Mental and Physical Differences*, Cambridge University Press), a co-edited book (*Household and Family Religion in Antiquity*, Blackwell, with John Bodel), and a number of articles, including "Mary Douglas's Holiness/Wholeness Paradigm: Its Potential for Insight and its Limitations," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 8 (2008) article 10:1-9 and "The Status of Covenant During the Exile," in *Berührungspunkte: Studien zur Sozial-und Religionsgeschichte Israels und seiner Umwelt*, ed. Ingo Kottsieper et al., 333-44. Forthcoming articles include "Unnoticed Resonances of Tomb Opening and Transportation of the Remains of the Dead in Ezek 37:12-14," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 2010, and "The Ascription of Physical Disability as a Stigmatizing Strategy in Biblical Iconic Polemics," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 2009. He plans to write his next book, *Death and Afterlife in the Biblical Tradition*, during his next leave. Invited lectures and seminars during 2008 and early 2009 include the following: "Disability in the Prophetic Utopian Vision," Boston College, April 2008 and Collège de France, Paris, February 2009; "The Ascription of Physical Disability as a Stigmatizing Strategy in Biblical Iconic Polemics" and "Unnoticed Resonances of Tomb Opening in Ezek 37:12-14," seminars for faculty and graduate students from Université de Lausanne and Université de Genève (Switzerland), May 2008; "The Ascription of Physical Disability as a Stigmatizing Strategy in Biblical Iconic Polemics" seminar for faculty and graduate students, Universität Zürich (Switzerland), May 2008. At Brown, Olyan taught a survey entitled "The Hebrew Bible and the History of

Ancient Israel,” and the following seminars: “Disability in Antiquity,” “Problems in Israelite History,” and “Exegesis at Qumran.” He served on the university’s Academic Priorities Committee during Spring 08 and as acting chair of Religious Studies during Fall 08.

HAROLD D. ROTH has continued his research and lecturing in the fields of Daoist Studies and Contemplative Studies. In 2007-09 he gave over a dozen major public lectures in both areas, including two named lectures, “To Treat Yourself as Other: Self-Alterity in Early Daoist Psychology” at Pacific Lutheran University and “Against Cognitive Imperialism” at the UC Berkeley’s Graduate Theological Union, and also the Keynote Address at the 2009 Meeting of the Asia Network, entitled “Asian Contemplative Traditions and Western Science: Challenging the Boundaries of the NOMA.” He has published six scholarly articles and book chapters in both these areas during this time including a print version of his Berkeley lecture in *Religion East and West* and two major chapters in Liu Xiaogan’s *Companion to Daoist Philosophy*. He continues to direct Brown’s Contemplative Studies Initiative, and has developed and now co-directs the Medical School’s Scholarly Concentration in Contemplative Studies. After 14 years, the team of scholars that he led has completed its translation of the last great untranslated work of classical Chinese philosophy, the Han dynasty encyclopedic compendium, *Huainanzi*. It will be published by Columbia University Press later this year. The Chinese translation of his second book, *Original Tao*, has just been published.

MICHAEL SATLOW was promoted to Professor of Religious Studies and Judaic Studies. He spent last spring as a faculty fellow at the Cogut Humanities Center, where he completed “Fruit and the Fruit of Fruit: Charity and Piety in Late Antique Palestine,” which will appear in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*. Several of his essays appeared

last year, including “Philo on Human Perfection” and “Theophrastus’s Jewish Philosophers.” He was a Guggenheim Fellow in 2008-9, during which time he completed “Tradition: The Power of Constraint,” to appear in *The Cambridge Companion of Religious Studies*, edited by Robert Orsi. He is currently working on two book projects: a study of Jewish piety in late antiquity and an investigation of the motif of Jews as philosophers in antiquity. He continues to develop an internet corpus of Inscriptions from Israel/Palestine (<http://www.stg.brown.edu/projects/Inscriptions>) and is creating a podcast series entitled “From Israelite to Jew” (<http://msatlow.blogspot.com>). He is preparing two new seminars for 2009-10, “Faith and Violence” and “The Gift in Antiquity,” the latter to culminate in an international conference in spring, 2010.

JANINE SAWADA, a scholar of early modern Japanese religion, joined the Departments of Religious Studies and East Asian Studies at Brown in 2008 after teaching at the University of Iowa for many years. Last fall she taught a new RS undergraduate seminar called “Classics of East Asian Buddhism”, and this spring she is introducing Brown undergraduates to the study of Japanese religions in a survey course called “Japanese Religious Traditions”. Professor Sawada is currently researching the history of popular religious movements in Japan, including groups devoted to the worship of Mount Fuji during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In April 2008 she gave a talk at Amherst College called “Magic Mountain: The Power of Fuji Images in Early Modern Japanese Religion,” and in September she presented a research paper at the European Association for Japanese Studies International Conference in Lecce, Italy on another aspect of Mt. Fuji devotionalism, titled “Jikigyō Miroku’s Last Performance: Ritual Suicide on Mt. Fuji.” In October Professor Sawada attended the Seventh Annual “Japan at Chicago” Conference, held at the

University of Chicago, where she presented a paper on Buddhist influences in popular Japan religion called "The Buddhist Fringe and the Approach to the Modern." In the meantime she is putting the finishing touches on a series of translations and introductory essays that will appear in the forthcoming *Sourcebook of Japanese Philosophy* (University of Hawai'i Press), a project organized by the Nanzan University Research Institute of Religion and Culture. In the Department of Religious Studies, Professor Sawada serves as advisor to senior students and co-chairs a committee to develop a graduate area in Asian religious studies.

BRIAN SORRELLS is visiting faculty for spring of 2009 and is teaching a course on Sexual Ethics and a seminar on Religious Ethics and Human Rights. He is completing his Ph.D. in Religious Ethics at Yale (Department of Religious Studies), where his dissertation is entitled "Toward a Unified Theory of Human Rights: A Framework for Developing Cross-Cultural Consensus." He is also currently working on three writing projects: 1) an article accepted for publication in the *Journal of Religious Ethics* that examines and defends Karl Rahner's inclusivist account of the relation between neighbor love and love for God; 2) a co-edited volume on the ethics of stem cell research to be published late this spring or this summer; and 3) a wide-ranging, co-edited collection of original essays entitled *Love and Christian Ethics: Engagements with Tradition, Theory, and Society*.

STANLEY K. STOWERS has had a number of articles recently appear in print, including "The Ontology of Religion," in *Introducing Religion: Essays in Honor of Jonathan Z. Smith*; "What is Pauline Participation in Christ," in *New Views of Jewish and Christian Self-Definition: Essays in Honor of E. P. Sanders*; "Theorizing Religion of the Household and Family in Greece, Rome and West Asia," in *Household and Family Religion in*

Mediterranean and West Asian Perspectives. In February '08, he presented a keynote paper, "The Secrets of the Gods and the End of Interpretation," at a splendid international conference, "Secrecy and Social Practice from Antiquity to the Present," that was organized by Brown University graduate students. This last November he gave a paper entitled "The Religion of Plant and Animal Offerings Versus the Religion of Meanings, Essences and Textual Practices," at the conference, "What the Gods Demand: Blood Sacrifice in Mediterranean Antiquity," at Boston University. A paper first read at Brown's Seminar for the Culture and Religion of the Ancient Mediterranean, "Jesus as Teacher and Stoic Ethics in the Gospel of Matthew," is forthcoming in *Stoicism in Early Christianity*. Another forthcoming article is "Paul as Hero of Subjectivity," in *Paul and the Philosophers*. He is currently writing two papers, "The Three Discourses of Sin in the Letters of Paul" and "Cognitive Science and Types of Ancient Mediterranean Religion."

DONNA WULFF has recently returned from a conference at Princeton, "Approaching God: A Symposium on Hindu Devotion," in which eleven historians of religion and anthropologists participated. Her paper, "Shaming Krishna in Song: Love in First Inversion," explored a painful episode in the love of Radha and Krishna as depicted in the song lyrics of medieval Bengal. An earlier article, "How Can a Wife Screech and Wail? Respectability and Bengali Women Singers' Lives," was published last year in *Speaking Truth to Power: Religion, Caste and the Subaltern Question in India*. She is currently analyzing the effects of patriarchy on the careers of twentieth-century women singers in Bengal. Her continuing interest in musical aspects of Hindu devotion is reflected in a recently completed article, "The Debate over Improvisation's Legitimacy in Bengali Devotional Performance," currently in press.

After many years' work toward establishing a South Asian Studies Program at Brown, she has been especially gratified to see this effort contribute to the impetus behind four recent appointments in South Asia. These include two assistant professors, Vazira Zamindar in History and Mallica Kumbera-Landrus in the History of Art and Architecture, and two Full Professors, James Fitzgerald in Classics and Ashutosh Varshney in Political Science. Professor Fitzgerald, a prominent Sanskritist whose research is on Hindu epics, is affiliated with the Religious Studies Department. It is his arrival last summer, together with that of Janine Sawada, a scholar of Japanese religions, that has made possible the development of a new doctoral program in Asian Religious Thought, which was approved by the Graduate Council this April.

Professor Wulff continues to sing with the Providence Singers. In addition to performing twice with the Rhode Island Philharmonic this season, the choir has made its second professional recording. Next year the group will again sing with the Dave Brubeck Quartet, this time to celebrate the jazz legend's 90th birthday.

For those of you who remember Professor Wulff's daughter, Megan, here is a brief update. After graduating from Brown, she has spent the last three years doing clinical research in the Boston University Alzheimer's Disease Center and completing a Master's Degree in Public Health. She is currently coordinating B.U.'s new Center for the Study of Traumatic Encephalopathy, which is looking at the long-term effects of repetitive concussion. In the fall she will be applying to law schools. Depending on the one she chooses, visits could be few and far between!

VISITING PROFESSORS

2006-07

Carol Delaney, Emerita, Stanford University

David Frankfurter, University of New Hampshire

Ali Gheissari, University of San Diego

Matthew Neujahr, Yale University

2007-08

Nicola Denzey, Harvard University

Caleb Elfenbein, UC Santa Barbara

Amy Langenberg, Columbia University

Ian Straughn, Mellon Post Doctoral Fellow (with the
Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology
and the Ancient World)

2008-09

Audrius Beinorius, Lithuania (Fulbright Fellow)

Nicola Denzey, Harvard University

Stuart Miller, University of Connecticut

Brian Sorrells, Yale University

Ian Straughn, Mellon Post Doctoral Fellow (with the
Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology
and the Ancient World)

VISITING SCHOLARS

Ophir Manor-Mintz, Israel

Michel Mohr, Japan

Henry Rosemont, Emeritus,
St. Mary's College of Maryland

Nicola Denzey, Harvard University

Amy Langenberg, Columbia University

Henry Rosemont, Emeritus,
St. Mary's College of Maryland

Carol Delaney, Emerita, Stanford University

Nicola Denzey, Harvard University

Henry Rosemont, Emeritus,
St. Mary's College of Maryland

RECENT DEPARTMENTAL EVENTS

Sept. 18, 2008

Lecture by James Fitzgerald (Brown University, Classics)

“Of Stewards, Mongeese, Storks, and Dogs: The Multiform Construction of the Dharma-King in the Mahabharata”

Oct. 6, 2008

Colloquium with Galit Hasan-Rokem (Hebrew University, Jerusalem)

“On the Wandering Jew”

Mar. 2, 2009

Lecture by Audrius Beinorius (Vilnius University, Lithuania)

“Astral Semantics: On the Relation Between Astrology And Medicine In Indian Religious Culture”

Mar. 12, 2009

Lecture by Richard H. Davis (Bard College)

“Afterlives of the Bhagavad Gita: Oppenheimer, Isherwood, and the Mahabharata War”

Mar. 30, 2009

K. Brooke Anderson Memorial Lecture

Saba Mahmood (University of California – Berkeley)

“Moral Injury and Secular Law: Thinking Through the Danish Cartoon Controversy”

Apr. 6, 2009

Lecture by Benjamin Barney (Diné College, Arizona)

“Navajo Identity in a Changing World”

Apr. 28, 2009

Colloquium with Ian Straughn (Brown University)

“Islam Takes Place: Towards An Exegesis Of Landscape”

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES AND HONORS

COMMENCEMENT

May 28, 2006

14 Baccalaureate degrees granted in Religious Studies

Senior Theses Receiving Honors in Religious Studies and the Bishop McVickar Prize for Excellence in Religious Studies

Elihai Braun, “Room for Pluralism in Defining Death: Conscientious Objection to Death Criteria in Japan and the US” - 2nd place

Rebecca Cremona, “Speech and Silence in the Ascetic Writings of the Cappadocians” - 1st place

Candas Pinar, “A Muslim Response to Education and Identity in Secular Turkey: the Gülen Educational Philosophy and Reform Movement” - 2nd place

Nathan Schneider, “The Cosmogonic Theatre: Public Performance in the Evolution Controversies” - 1st place

COMMENCEMENT

May 27, 2007

21 Baccalaureate degrees granted in Religious Studies

Senior Theses Receiving Honors in Religious Studies

Grace Cunningham, “A Life of Agony and Bliss: Reading the Rhetoric of Pain in the Autobiography of Teresa of Avila”

Geoffrey Gusoff, “The Virtue of Solidarity: Sharing a Life with the Poor in the Works of Gustavo Gutiérrez and Dorothy Day”

Diana Jean Moke, “Religious Revivalism and the Evolution of Complementary and Alternative Medicine”

Matthew Redovan, “Secular Romance and Solidarity: Richard Rorty's Philosophy of Religion as the Hand-maiden of Social Change”

Kerry Sonia, “No Such Thing as a Free Lunch: Duties and Gift-Exchange in the Mortuary Feasts of Ancient China and West Asia”

Andrew Tobolowsky, “The Samuel Cycle: A Literary Excavation”

Senior Theses Receiving the Bishop McVickar Prize for Excellence in Religious Studies

Noah Gardiner, “Imagination, Optics, and Meditations: John Dee and the Art of Skrying” - 1st place

Kerry Sonia, “No Such Thing as a Free Lunch: Duties and Gift-Exchange in the Mortuary Feasts of Ancient China and West Asia” - 2nd place

Jeffrey Ariel Yoskowitz, “Creating a Kosher America: The Orthodox Union's Program to Reclaim Kashrut, 1945-65” - 2nd place

COMMENCEMENT

May 25, 2008

24 Baccalaureate degrees granted in Religious Studies

Senior Theses Receiving Honors in Religious Studies

Kathleen Bunnage, “The Myth of Quetzalcoatl: A Study in the Metamorphosis of Narrative”

Kira Ganga Kieffer, “Shotgun Weddings and Sawed-off Shotguns: A Comparison of Sermon Content in Two New England Evangelical Churches”

Senior Theses Receiving the Bishop McVickar Prize for Excellence in Religious Studies

Kathleen Bunnage, “The Myth of Quetzalcoatl: A Study in the Metamorphosis of Narrative” – 1st place

Kira Ganga Kieffer, “Shotgun Weddings and Sawed-off Shotguns: A Comparison of Sermon Content in Two New England Evangelical Churches” - 2nd place

Yael Richardson, “Legal Shame: Shame as a Legal Concept of Damage in Roman and Rabbinic Law” - 3rd place

COMMENCEMENT

May 24, 2009

19 Baccalaureate degrees granted in Religious Studies

Senior Theses Receiving Honors in Religious Studies

Jonathan Aronchick, “Rethinking Jewish Christianity: Ethnicity in the Pseudo-Clementine Literature”

Colin Lentz, “Pluralism and Expression: An Examination of Jeffrey Stout's *Democracy and Tradition*”

Matthew Varley, “Suffering and Salvation: Catholic Ethos and Evangelical Worldview in Mel Gibson's 'The Passion of the Christ'”

Senior Theses Receiving the Bishop McVickar Prize for Excellence in Religious Studies

Colin Lentz, “Pluralism and Expression: An Examination of Jeffrey Stout's *Democracy and Tradition*” – 1st place

Matthew Varley, “Suffering and Salvation: Catholic Ethos and Evangelical Worldview in Mel Gibson's 'The Passion of the Christ'” - 1st place

Courtney Byrne-Mitchell, “Moshiach Now! Moshaiach Now! Moshiach Now?” – 2nd place

Anjana Joshi, “Exploring the Place of Islam in the Post-Ottoman Balkans” - 3rd place

GRADUATE DEGREES

COMMENCEMENT

May 28, 2006

Master of Arts Degrees

Jeanne-Nicole Marie Saint-Laurent

Doctoral Degrees

Andrew Jonathan Hunter, “‘Attending to Hope’: History, Ethics, and Religion in Jacques Derrida's Thought”

Nathaniel Levtow, “Images of Others: Icon and Iconic Politics in Ancient Israel”

Karen Stern, “Inscribing Devotion and Death in Context: Deciphering Jewish Culture of Roman North Africa (2nd–6th centuries C.E.)”

COMMENCEMENT

May 27, 2007

Master of Arts Degrees

Debra Fay Scoggins

Jennifer Elizabeth Singletary

Joshua Kyle Vaillancourt

Doctoral Degrees

Nathaniel Patrick Desrosiers, “Establishment of Proper Mental Disposition and Practice: The

Origin, Meaning, and Social Purpose of the Prohibition of Oaths in Matthew”

Curtis Michael Hutt, “The Ethics of the Representation of the Religious Past”

Jianshe Kong, “On the Penal Substitution Model of the Atonement”

Judson Bryce Murray, “The Consummate Dao: The Way (*Dao*) and Human Affairs (*Shi*) in the *Huainanzhi*”

COMMENCEMENT

May 25, 2008

Doctoral Degrees

Terrence L. Johnson, “Tragic Soul-Life: W.E.B. DuBois and the Redemption of American Democracy”

Steven J. Larson, “What Temples Stood For: Constantine, Eusebius, and Roman Imperial Practice”

Jordan D. Rosenblum, “‘They Sit Apart At Meals’: Early Rabbinic Commensality Regulations and Identity Construction”

COMMENCEMENT

May 24, 2009

Master of Arts Degrees

Jennifer Eyl

Goran Tkalec

Doctoral Degrees

Jeanne-Nicole Saint-Laurent, “Apostolic Memories: Religious Differentiation and the Construction of Orthodoxy in Syriac Missionary Literature”

Daniel Ullucci, “The End of Animal Sacrifice”

NEWS FROM RECENT GRADUATE STUDENTS

2006 PhDs

Andrew Hunter is currently an independent scholar living in Ithaca, NY.

Jianshe Kong has been a visiting faculty member at Florida State University, Emerson College in Boston and elsewhere; he is presently in China.

Nathaniel Levtow is Assistant Professor of Liberal Studies at the University of Montana - Missoula.

Karen Stern is Assistant Professor of History at Brooklyn College-CUNY.

2007 PhDs

Nathaniel DesRosiers is Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, University of Missouri at Columbia.

Curtis Hutt has been teaching at the University of the Holy Land (Israel) and closer to home, at Salve Regina University in Newport.

Judson Murray is Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Wright State University (Ohio).

2008 PhDs

Terrence Johnson is Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Haverford College.

Steven Larson has been teaching in the Department of Religious Studies at Stonehill College, and will teach at Ohio Wesleyan next year.

Jordan Rosenblum is Assistant Professor of Hebrew and Semitic Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and a Starr Fellow at the Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard University, spring 2009.

2009 PhDs

Daniel Ullucci has been teaching at the College of the Holy Cross, and will teach next year at Bowdoin College.

Jeanne-Nicole Saint-Laurent is a Junior Fellow, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC and will begin an appointment as Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at St. Michael's College in Vermont in fall 2009.

Department of Religious Studies
Box 1927
Brown University
Providence, RI 02912



**TO
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,**

We continue to enjoy hearing from you. Please contact us with news/ideas you would like to share with the RS family (the email address to use is: Tina_Creamer@brown.edu). Also, please continue to check the department website!