Conference Planning Committee:

Chairs: Megan McBride, Daniel Picus, Kerry Sonia, Jonathan Sozek

Contributors: Anna Bialek, Niki Clements, Laura Dingeldein, Rebecca Falcasantos, Nicholas Friesner, Alexis Glenn, Caroline Kory, David Lê, Matthew Redovan, Adrien Stoloff, Andrew Tobolowsky, and Sarah Woodbury

Jessica Wong, Duke University
“Embodying Disordered Economy: A Study in Byzantine Theology”

Andrew Walker-Cornetta, New York University
“The Supernatural, Disability, and the Hermeneutics of Childbearing: Reading Martha Beck’s Expecting Adam”

Seth Ligo, Duke University
“Reconsidering the Kapalika: Multiple Interpretations and Diversity in Hinduism Made Accessible by the Intriguingly Grisly”

Prof. Susan Ashbrook Harvey, Brown University, moderator
David Lê, Brown University, respondent

5:15 PM Break
5:30 PM Concluding remarks
6:30 PM Dinner for participants

Thanks to:

American Academy of Religion, New England/Maritimes Region (NEMAAR); the Program in Judaic Studies; the Graduate Student Council; the Department of Religious Studies; the Department of Egyptology and Ancient Western Asian Studies; the Program in Early Cultures; the Department of English; the Department of History; the Department of Modern Culture and Media; the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World; the Department of American Studies; the Department of Philosophy; and the Department of Comparative Literature. Special thanks to Nicole Vadnais, Tina Creamer, and Rachel Himes.
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28

6:30 PM  Keynote Address
Delivered by John Lardas Modern, Franklin & Marshall College
“Live at Napa State Mental Hospital”

7:30 PM  Dinner for participants

SATURDAY, MARCH 1

8-9 AM  Continental breakfast

9 AM  Session I: Doing Things with Demons

Vishal Sharma, University of Toronto
“When a Bad Being Does Good Things: The Demon as the Unsung Hero of the Mahabharata”

George Archer, Georgetown University
“The Hellhound of the Qur’an: Investigations of a Dog at the Gate of the Underworld”

Sara Ronis, Yale University
“Dangerous Demons and Savvy Sages: The Non-Human Other and Rabbinic Identity in Late Antiquity”

Grace MacCormick, University of Toronto
“Mourning and the Malevolent: An Analysis of the Lament of Raksasa Women in Valmiki’s Ramayana”

Mian Muhammad Nauman Faizi, University of Virginia
“Domesticating the Jinn: Sayyid Ahmad Kan’s Exegesis of the Quran”

Prof. Nancy Khalek, Brown University, moderator
Anna Bialek, Brown University, respondent

10:45 AM  Break

11 AM  Session II: The Politics of Composite Creatures

Mark D. Ellison, Vanderbilt University
“The Sea Monster Kētos as Jonah’s ‘Great Fish’ in Early Christian Art”

Benjamin D. Cox, University of Texas at Austin
“Demonizing Dissent in Medieval Japan: Tengu and Religious Rhetoric in the Konjaku Monogatari”

Each session will consist of 3-5 papers, approximately 15 minutes in length. After the papers have been presented, a Brown University graduate student will deliver a 10-minute response to the session’s papers. We will conclude each session by opening up discussion to the public.

Brett Maiden, Emory University
“Counterintuitive Mischwesen: A Cognitive Approach to the Iconography of Hybrid Creatures in the Ancient Near East”

Prof. Nicola Denzey-Lewis, Brown University, moderator
Andrew Tobolowsky, Brown University, respondent

12:15 PM  Lunch

2 PM  Session III: The Unnatural in Narrative and Art

Michelle J. Falcetano, Villanova University
“Tolkien’s Fairy-Stories and Desmond’s Metaxu: On Secondary Belief and the Primary Ethos”

Andrew McKee, Florida State University
“And I knew there was a dead man in my room’: Haunting and Modernity in Industrial Pittsburgh”

Don Jolly, New York University
“The Disenchanted Gothic: Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein as Religious Declension Narrative”

Dana Logan, University of Indiana-Bloomington
“Monstrous Religious Authority in the films of Paul Thomas Anderson”

Prof. Stephen Bush, Brown University, moderator
Nicholas Friesner, Brown University, respondent

3:30 PM  Break

3:45 PM  Session IV: Bodies and Boundaries

Ángel J. Gallardo, Southern Methodist University
“Barbarians Upon the Horizon: Ethnoreligious Difference in the Colonial Imagination”