



Summer 2006

GORABS Newsletter

Volume 28 Number 1

NEWSLETTER
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Please send comments, questions, letters, and newsletter submissions to David J. Rutherford, Newsletter Editor, david.rutherford@geo.txstate.edu

CONTINUING DYNAMISM IN THE FIELD OF GEOGRAPHY OF RELIGIONS AND BELIEF SYSTEMS

This current issue of the GORABS Newsletter displays a portion of the work present in the field of geography of religions and belief systems and demonstrates the continuing and even increasing dynamism that this specialty of geography is witnessing. From research and publications, to teaching, conferences, presentations, awards, and more the scholarship in the geography of religions and belief systems continues to advance.

One important way that the GORABS specialty group encourages and advances this sub-discipline is through activities at the annual conference of the Association of American Geographers. The 2007 conference will be held April 17-21 in San Francisco, CA, USA. As a reminder, the deadline for submission of papers for this conference is October 26, 2006.

As described below, San Francisco is a terrific location for a conference and well worth the travel time from eastern portions of the US and from Europe while conveniently located for travel from the Pacific Rim. We look forward to seeing you all there!

**AAG CONFERENCE
 April 17–21 2007**

Come join the AAG in San Francisco, California, April 17-21, 2007. San Francisco is the home of the Golden Gate Bridge and Ghirardelli chocolate, where cable cars climb some of the hilliest streets in the country, and where Tony Bennet left his heart. We anticipate over 3,000 paper and poster presentations featuring the latest geographic research and scholarship, ranging across the full breadth of the discipline. The San Francisco region also offers opportunities for exceptional field trips on geographic topics from the physical to the human to the oenological.

Visit the AAG Conference Website at:
<http://www.aag.org/annualmeetings/SF2007/index.cfm>

**VISIT GORABS ON THE
 INTERNET**

Webpage:

<http://gorabs.org/>

Listserv:

To subscribe to the gorabs listserv simply send an email to listserv@listserv.wvu.edu with "subscribe gorabs firstname lastname" in the body of the message or send your request to Michael Ferber at mike.ferber@mail.wvu.edu



MEMBER NEWS

Recent Publications and Awards

From Darrel McDonaldEmail: dmcDonald@sfasu.edu

Tkacik, M., D. McDonald, J. Schellberg, B. Gartner, and C. Landers. 2005. Patterns and Trends of Suicide Bombings in Israel during the Second Intifada. *International Issues: Journal of Foreign Policy, International Relations, Diplomacy and Economics*. Vol. XIV. No. 3. Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association, N.O. pp. 21-42.

From Tristan SturmEmail: tristan.sturm@gmail.com

Sturm, T. 2006. Prophetic Eyes: The Theatricality of Mark Hitchcock's Premillennial Geopolitics. *Geopolitics* 11(2); pp.231-255. (Note: This is a special issue on religion and geopolitics and could be a valuable resource for geographers of religions and belief systems.)

Award: 2006 David E. Sopher New Scholar Award for the paper "Re-mapping the Apocalypse after the Cold War."

From David RutherfordEmail: david.rutherford@geo.txstate.edu

Rutherford, D.J. 2006. Fundamentalist belief systems and increasing cultural polarisation: The United States and the World. In, J. Lidstone, ed. *Cultural Issues of Our Time*, 131-144. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

From James ScottEmail: jscott@yorku.ca

Scott J.S. and G. Griffiths (eds). 2005. *Mixed Messages: Materiality, Textuality, Missions*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. (See <http://www.palgrave-usa.com/catalog/product.aspx?isbn=0312295766>)

Scott J.S., and A. Austin (eds.). 2005. *Canadian Missionaries, Indigenous Peoples: Representing Religion at Home and Abroad*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press,.

From Janel CurryEmail: jcurry@calvin.edu

Curry, J. M. and K. Groenendyk. 2006. Place and Nature Seen Through the Eyes of Faith: Understandings Among Male and Female Seminarians. *Worldviews: Environment, Culture, Religion* 10(3): forthcoming.

Groenendyk, K. and J.M. Curry. 2006. A Communal Perspective: Women, Faith, and Nature. *The Journal of Communication and Religion* 29(1):18-37.

From Simon Potter:Email: yabanquin@aol.com

Potter, S. 2006. Osho in America: A Moment of No-Mind Visiting an Unliberated Land. *Gengobunka Ronshuu* [A collection of essays on languages and cultures published by the Graduate School of Languages and Cultures, Nagoya University] 28(1); 1-14. (forthcoming)

From Mike Ferbermike.ferber@mail.wvu.edu

The March 2006 issue of the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* (Vol. 96, No. 1) included a special forum on geography and religion, representing a milestone for GORABS. Articles in the section discussing theorizing religion include:

James Proctor, "Introduction: Theorizing and Studying Religion," pp. 165-168.

Adrian Ivakhiv, "Toward a Geography of 'Religion': Mapping the Distribution of an Unstable Signifier," pp. 169-175.

Michael Ferber, "Critical Realism and Religion: Objectivity and the Insider/Outsider Problem" pp. 176-181.

Julian Holloway, "Enchanted Spaces: The Séance, Affect, and Geographies of Religion," pp. 182-187.

James Proctor, "Religion as Trust in Authority: Theocracy and Ecology in the United States," pp. 188-196.

Anne Buttimer, "Afterword: Reflections on Geography, Religion, and Belief Systems," pp. 197-202.

These articles are presently available for free as a sample *Annals* issue at:

<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/toc/anna/96/1>

MEMBER NEWS**Announcements and Items of Interest*****From Darrel McDonald***Email: dmcdonald@sfasu.edu

I will be submitting a paper at the 2007 AAG conference on a spatial analysis of East Texas County cemeteries, so if you hear of a session it might fit into let me know.

From Tristan SturmEmail: tristan.sturm@gmail.com

Simon Dalby and I will be organizing a session at the 2007 AAG conference on "Religion and Environmental Security". It will hopefully explore both how religions see the environment (as part of it or as an externality) and how religions might serve to exacerbate environmental problems or serve to reduce environmental damage.

From Surinder M BhardwajEmail: sbhardwa@kent.edu

Perhaps many colleagues already know, but I thought I should inform that an interesting conference, "Worlds Religions after September 11," is taking place in Montreal from 11 through 15 September. The venue is Palais des Congres de Montreal. Link: info@WorldsReligionsAfter911.com

From Simon PotterEmail: yabanquin@aol.com

I taught a course on "religions in the world" for the department of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington (Bothell campus) in 2005 and am incorporating material related to religion etc. in my courses on "cultural geography" at Nagoya University (recently "Eastern," which included Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism; in the autumn "Western," which will incorporate Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). I'm putting together a course for next spring on "Yoga" (spiritual, that is, not the gym-rat stuff).

From Laurence SimonEmail: simon@brandeis.edu

Should this be of interest to anyone, I am researching this summer and fall the role of religious language and imagery in teaching of adult literacy in the Delta counties of Mississippi. Functional illiteracy is an economic and political trap for the poor and attempts to teach literacy along traditional methods have achieved only modest success. Religion plays an important role in shaping and perpetuating identity and sense of place in rural Mississippi and yet the power of sacred texts in the minds of the people has not been used to break people free of their fear confronting illiteracy and the fatalism that it reinforces. For more information, please contact me.

Important Election Year!

This year some very important GORABS positions are up for election, including Secretary / Treasurer (who will eventually become chair), two regular board members, and the graduate student board member. Please consider nominating a candidate (or even self-nominating) by emailing the GORABS outgoing Previous Chair (and default chair of the nominating committee) Michael Ferber at mike.ferber@mail.wvu.edu.

Chair – Ed Davis 2007 to 2009 (was David Rutherford)
 Sec. / Treas. - _____ 2007 to 2009 (was Ed Davis)
 Previous Chair – David Rutherford 2007 to 2009 (was Michael Ferber)
 Board member – Tristan Sturm (2006 to 2008)
 Board member – Darrel McDonald (2006 to 2008)
 Board member – _____ 2007 to 2009 (was Shankari Patel)
 Board member – _____ 2007 to 2009 (was Cathy Carter)
 Grad. Student Board member - _____ 2007 to 2009 (was Lisa Jordan)

Conference Announcement

Emerging Geographies of Belief

Organised by the Historical and Cultural Geography Research Group
Department of Geography, University of Exeter

The central location for the conference will be the Xfi Centre, Rennes Drive, Exeter EX4 4RJ.
This is a FREE event – Refreshments, lunch and evening buffet are all included.

This interdisciplinary conference brings together new research that explores questions of knowledge, belief, ethos and religion. Focusing on theoretically informed cultural and historical analyses of religion, society and space, the conference acts as a forum for the presentation of new or revised theoretical approaches and methodologies.

Recent research into religious faith and practice has focused on the complex interactions of the political and poetic dimensions of sacredness in contemporary societies. Taking this research agenda forward, this conference explores how religious and secular beliefs inform and construct social identities, public knowledge and modes of governance. In particular, there is an urgent need for a critical understanding of how terms such as 'religion', 'faith', 'fundamentalism' and 'secularism', for example, inform public debates and foster constructive engagements with faith groups.

Although this conference is free, places are strictly limited and will be shared out on a first come, first served basis. Therefore, we need you to register your commitment to attend with us: Contact: Dr. Jude Hill, Jude.Hill@exeter.ac.uk

Usual conference facilities, tea/coffee, lunches and buffet evening meal/wine reception on the 14th will be provided FREE OF CHARGE, but you will need to sort out your own travel costs and accommodation.

Contacts:

For all registration enquiries *Dr. Jude Hill* Jude.Hill@exeter.ac.uk

Speakers with enquiries should contact Dr Adrian Bailey A.R.Bailey@exeter.ac.uk

Group members:

<i>Dr. Adrian Bailey</i>	A.R.Bailey@exeter.ac.uk
<i>Dr. Catherine Brace</i>	C.Brace@exeter.ac.uk
<i>Dr. Sean Carter</i>	S.Carter@exeter.ac.uk
<i>Dr. David Harvey</i>	D.C.Harvey@exeter.ac.uk
<i>Dr. Jude Hill</i>	Jude.Hill@exeter.ac.uk
<i>Professor Roger Kain</i>	R.J.P.Kain@exeter.ac.uk
<i>Dr. Pau Obrador-Pons</i>	Pau.Obrador@exeter.ac.uk
<i>Dr. Richard Oliver</i>	R.R.Oliver@exeter.ac.uk
<i>Dr. Nicola Thomas</i>	Nicola.J.Thomas@exeter.ac.uk

More on the Historical and Cultural Geography Research Group can be found at:
<http://www.sogaer.ex.ac.uk/geography/research/historical/index.shtml>

(Program on next page)

Thursday 14th September

Welcome (Steve Smith and David Harvey) **Opening Address** (Paul Cloke)

Journeys, Encounters and Transcendence? David Crouch (University of Derby)

Between the Situational and the Substantive: Deconstructive theology and the geographies of religion. Julian Holloway (Manchester Metropolitan University)

Historical Geographies of Religion: positions, predilections and passing comment on transient lives? Adrian Bailey, Catherine Brace and David Harvey (University of Exeter)

Locating Religion and Secularity in a High School: a spatial analysis of school identity and citizenship education. Kim Knott (University of Leeds)

Muslim State Funded Schools: Contested spaces of faith and citizenship. Claire Dwyer (University College London)

Scribes Trained for the Kingdom of Heaven: Reflections on reading 'The Bible for Politics' in 'community', 'secondary' and 'higher' education contexts in Scotland. Louise Lawrence (University of Exeter)

Stone Mapping grief and belief in body and landscape: an emotional geography. Avril Maddrell (Oxford Brookes University)

Fictitious Place as Sacred Space: the case of Lake Wobegon, Minnesota Elizabeth Leppman (Eastern Kentucky University)

God, Pilgrimage and Acknowledgement of Place Mark Wynn (University of Exeter)

Keynote Address - Lily Kong (National University of Singapore)

**Friday 15th September:
Stream A**

"A Distinctive Ethos"? Organisational Identity and Practice in Christian Community Work. Andrew Orton (Durham University)

Tensions in the Business of Care: faith-based welfare provision in neoliberal times. David Conradson (University of Southampton)

'Yearning for Communion': Exploring the relationship between community and spirituality. Cheryl Hunt (University of Exeter)

Scale Dynamics of Mormon Geopolitics Ethan Yorgason (Brigham Young University)

Mother Churches? Thinking the Maternal Body in Theology Rachel Muers (University of Exeter)

Experts in Humanity' and the Other Sex: The Catholic Church, living faith and gendering space in rural Peru. Elizabeth Olson (Lancaster University)

Christian Reconstructionism: Identity, Sacred History and Space Roger Stump (University of Albany)

Historical Representations of the 'Other' in the Islamic Tradition from the Qur'ân to al-Qâ'ida. Jean Butler (University of Copenhagen)

Identity, Ethnicity and Religion in the Western Balkans Reinhard Henkel (University of Heidelberg)

**Friday 15th September:
Stream B:**

Space, Place, and Power in the Roman Catholic Sacrament of Confession Martha Kinney (Suffolk County)

Circulating Sacred Place: Nineteenth-Century Russian cards of Mount Athos as travelling object-icons Veronica Della Dora (University of California, Los Angeles)

Beyond the Veil of Illusion: A look at ritual in today's world. Catherine Flynn (National University of Ireland)

You are What you Eat: the Christian universe and the cult of the body Helen Frisby (University of Leeds)

The Healthy Body as Religious Territory: health consumerism as new religious practice? Matthias Z. Varul (University of Exeter)

Dining in the Kingdom: food, community and place in Christian spiritual practice David Grummett (University of Exeter)

Report from the 2006 AAG Conference

Eleven Sessions were held on the Geography of Religions and Belief Systems at the Chicago AAG meeting, March 7-11, 2006. (Most of these were sponsored by GORABS)

Mapping Geographies of Religion

William Noble, Toda Funeral Sites and Funerals

John Bauer, A Geography of Roman Catholics in the United States

John Kostelnick, An Interactive Mapping System for Exploring the Geography of American Religion

Michael Ferber, Cartographic Representation and Scale in the Mapping of Religion

Geographies of Religious Nonconformity

David Butler, Careful of their breeding: Survival strategies of Protestant dissenters in southern Ireland during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

Joy Ackerman, Different Drums: Poetics, politics, and pilgrimage at Walden

Amy Mills, A gendered geography of nonconformity: Minority intermarriage, migration, and the spaces of women "left behind"

Adrian Bailey, Constructing the nonconformist citizen: Methodist mutual improvement in Cornwall (UK)

John-David Dewsbury, Non-conformist communion: Performance and materiality in spiritual landscapes

Peruvian Landscapes II: Religion, Mining, and the New Cityscape

Elizabeth Olsen, Just like Switzerland: the myth of development and construction of religious landscapes in the Southern Peruvian Andes.

Heidi Scott, Excavating the landscape: mining and religion in early colonial Peru

Interdisciplinarity and the Geography of Religions and Belief Systems

Allison Hayes-Conroy, Becoming the land walking: An analysis of agro-ecology of local culture using the analytic of 'intimate knowing.'

James Smith, Japanese American identities: Ethnicity, religious institutions and social space.

David Rutherford, Hybrid Geographies: Identifying imagined and real divides

Discussant James E. Mills

Sacred Space from the Underworld to the Rooftop of the Earth

Shankari Patel, The moon has gone to her well: Sacred space at ancient Cozumel

Catherine Carter, Heaven on earth: shaker religious art.

Richard Jackson, Contested space: Salt Lake City's main street plaza as sacred or secular

Christopher Limburg, Habermas' public sphere and Tibetan spiritual landscape

James Mills, The evolving landscapes of the dead.

The Role of Religion and Religious Organizations in the Development Process

Charles Fuller. Bahai faith perspective on social and economic development.

Mark Rockeymoore, Evangelical Christianity and development in Africa.

Laurence Simon, Theologies of Place: Theory, dogma and the struggle for a third world development.

Jennifer Kopf, After the caravans

Bryan Froehle, Religion and megalopolis in the global south

Geographies of Muslim Masculinities

Holly Hapke, Gulf migration and changing patterns of gender identities in a South Indian Muslim community.

Farhang Rouhani, Liminal masculinities: Displacements and emplacements among transnational queer Muslims

Cameron McAuliffe, Resisting the fundamentals: Reproduction of identity in the second generation of the Iranian diaspora

Patricia Ehrkamp, Racialization, masculinity and public space: Spatial practices of Turkish men in Germany.

Claire Dwyer, From cricket lover to terror suspect – young British Muslim men challenging moral panics and media representations.

Discussant Linda McDowell

**Report from the 2006 AAG Conference
(continued)**

Religion as Geopolitics

Jay Joshi, St. Augustine, geopolitics, and the Roman ideology.

Tristan Sturm, The Prophetic eyes: The theatricality of mark Hitchcock's Premillennial geopolitics

Chad Emmet, From on high: Geopolitics and Christianity in Indonesia

Frank Fillebeck, Geopolitics, religiosity and the Rastafarian Poetics of Scale

Steven Flusty, Cities of Heaven

Geographies of Religion and Worship in North America

Heidi Hoernig, Spatial multiculturalism, urban planning and the geography of places of worship

Yvette Pye, The role of "the black church" in local urban youth academic achievement

Steven Graves, Abstract: Mapping usury laws and the Christian right.

Jennifer Livengood, Leisure programming in the new paradigm church

Lisa Brownell, Community by design: Spaces of community in American mega churches.

Faith-based responses to Disasters: Natural and Cultural

PANEL: Ghazi Falah, Darrel McDonald, William Dando, Daanish Mustafa, Bruce Crew

Migration, religion and changing places

Garrett Smith, Atlanta's changing religious landscapes: The Korean Christian community

Komolafe Akinwumi, The geography of Nigerians' churches in Ireland.

Joseph Mensah, Transnational religious practices and identities among Ghanaian immigrants in Toronto: A preliminary commentary.

Denis Bekaert, Spatial distribution and demographic uncertainties of Muslims in the United States.

William Rowe, the genesis of "Cultural Islam" and its effects on Post-Independence Central Asia.

Minutes of GORABS (Geography of Religions & Belief Systems) AAG Specialty Group Business Meeting

(Draft minutes for review by membership)

Wednesday, 8 March, 2006, 8:00-9:00 pm, Salon 8, Palmer House, Chicago, Illinois

The 16 who attended this meeting (at least those who wrote down their names on my little yellow pad):

Joy Ackerman (Antioch New England Graduate School)

John Benson (Minnesota State University)

David Butler (University College, Cork)

Ed Davis (Emory & Henry College) (Secretary-Treasurer)

Mike Ferber (West Virginia University) (Past-Chair)

Lisa Jordan (University of Colorado)

Jay Joshi (Carleton University)

Kim Logan (University of Washington)

Darrel McDonald (Stephen F. Austin State University)

Kim Naqvi (University of Saskatoon)

Caleb Parker (East Carolina University)

Mark Rockymore (Texas State University)

David Rutherford (National Geographic Society) (Chair)

Eleanor Sanderson (Victoria University of Wellington)

Tristan Sturm (Carleton University)

Edgar Wunder (University of Heidelberg)

Call to order: David Rutherford, Chair, called the meeting to order and presided.

Minutes: David presented the 2005 meeting minutes, which were approved by motion and voice vote.

Financial Report: David made the financial report:

Our savings account has	\$ 2337.00
Our checking acct has	\$ 1386.39
The total of these accounts is	\$ 3723.39
Interest earned this year was	\$ 24.03
Transactions for the year were	\$ 18.00 (the cost of website domain registration)

David noted we are maintaining a high balance and could seek good ways to spend that money.

Report on activities for this year:

GORABS sponsored **Seven Paper Sessions** in Chicago:

- Mapping of Religions
- Geography of Religious Nonconformity
- Interdisciplinarity and the Geography of Religions and Belief Systems
- Religion as Geopolitics
- Sacred Space from the Underworld to the Rooftop of the World
- Role of Religion and Religious Institutions in the Development Process
- Geographies of Muslim Masculinities

Online Journal – our first issue is due out around July. So far 8 manuscripts have been submitted. We expect to publish one issue (volume) per year for now, but perhaps more than that in future years. We may buy an advertisement in the Annals of the AAG and elsewhere to get the journal's first issue some good visibility.

Old Business: Awards and Specialty Group Planning

Sopher Award (which goes to a grad student or junior faculty member, for an original paper presented at AAG): There were 3 papers submitted for the 2006 award. All were judged to be excellent.

The winner is Tristan Sturm (Carleton U.). Tristan was presented with a certificate, and will receive a monetary award.

Stoddard Award (which goes to a senior scholar for substantial contributions to the subfield):

Open nominations for this led to one nomination: Carolyn Prorok. Those present voted unanimously for Carolyn. The officers will arrange for this award.

History and Future of GORABS: David reviewed the history and led discussion. There are 256 people on the GORABS listserve; and the specialty group is growing. We publish a newsletter 2 times per year, as an electronic version. One person suggested podcasting as a hot technology to improve communication. One suggested an electronic bulletin board = friendlier for discussion and networking.

All agreed that we want to support networking options for people doing research. The strongest support was for a bulletin board – at least experimentally. The officers agreed to have the board discuss this and post all discussion to the listserve.

New business: Elections and Planning for 2007 Sessions

Elections: The board needs two new members. Tristan Sturm and Darrel McDonald were nominated and accepted by acclamation.

Planning sessions for 2007 AAG (in San Francisco): there was open discussion of this. Someone suggested regular sessions on several sub-areas (e.g., sacred space). One suggested that a newsletter this summer could serve as a scheduling mechanism. Darrel McDonald agreed to coordinate summer communications on sessions.

Adjourn: David adjourned the meeting. All present were invited to an informal social at a nearby establishment. About 8 were able to gather for this.

Please notify me of any corrections needed!

Minutes submitted for your approval,

Dr. Edward H. Davis

Department of Geography, Emory & Henry College, P.O. Box 947, Emory, VA 24327

ehdavis@ehc.edu

DAVID E. SOPHER NEW SCHOLAR AWARD

The following announcement is presented here to encourage new scholars in the sub-discipline of geography of religions and belief systems to consider applying for the Sopher Award. The deadline for submitting the completed paper for consideration is 15 February 2007. However, the paper must be presented at the AAG annual conference in San Francisco in April of 2007, so if you intend to submit a paper for the award competition, you must submit the paper title and abstract to the AAG before the conference deadline of 26 October 2006.

Description:

The purpose of the David E. Sopher New Scholar Award is to promote intellectual enquiry from new scholars into geographies of religions and belief systems through the presentation of papers at the [AAG meeting](#). Papers will be judged on potential contribution to the field of Geography of Religions and Belief Systems, organization, and written composition.

Eligibility:

Both graduate students and untenured faculty who are not serving on the GORABS board can apply for the award.

Award:

The amount for the 2007 award is a travel grant of \$250. The recipient will also be given an official certificate at the AAG awards luncheon.

Disbursement:

A check will be disbursed to the winner at the 2007 Geography of Religions and Belief Systems annual business meeting at the AAG event.

Requirements:

The paper and application form must be emailed to the GORABS chair in rich text or Microsoft Word format no later than midnight, February 15th. The paper must subsequently be presented at the national AAG meeting, though it does not have to be in a GORABS sponsored session. A panel of previous GORABS chairs will judge the papers and determine a recipient. The winner will be announced in time to attend the awards luncheon with a GORABS representative. GORABS reserves the right to not make an award in a given year.

Application Form:

[In Microsoft Word](#)

[In Adobe PDF](#)

[In HTML](#)

More Information:

For more information please contact the present GORABS chair, David Rutherford, at david.rutherford@geo.txstate.edu
