



# PERSPECTIVES

## *On Religion*

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## New Religion Professor Examines the Relationship between Religion and Politics

Professor Howard Rhodes, a recently appointed assistant professor in the Department of Religious Studies, has a passion for examining the role religion plays in modern democracies like the United States.



Howard Rhodes

Rhodes is teaching two classes this fall, "War & Peace in Western Religious Thought" and "Religion and Democracy." "War and Peace..." explores the history, major themes, and contemporary applications of western religious traditions on the proper use of armed force, while "Religion and Democracy" examines the relationship between religious, primarily Christian, political thought and the normative commitments of a democratic culture.

"Both my teaching and research are focused on how religious thinkers reflect on public issues that democratic societies are called upon to address," Rhodes explained.

Rhodes, originally from Plantation, Fla., received his B.A. in English and Religious Studies from the University of North Carolina-Greensboro before earning his M.T.S. from Harvard Divinity School in

1998 and his M.A. in Religion, Ethics and Politics from Princeton University in 2000. His PhD dissertation at Princeton focuses on "Religion, Public Law, and Ethical Formation."

Rhodes said he was attracted to the University of Iowa because of the Religious Studies Department's engaging faculty, and he said that Iowa City "looked like a good place to raise children." Rhodes has a one-year-old daughter with his wife, Aimee, a lawyer at Bradley and Riley Law Firm in Iowa City. When asked to compare the intellectual communities at Ivy league institutions where he pursued his graduate degrees and the University of Iowa, Rhodes said that there are more similarities than differences. "Princeton and Harvard have a high percentage of motivated undergraduate students," Rhodes explained. "But there are probably just as many bright undergraduates studying here as there are at either of those institutions." Rhodes's research focuses on the intersection of religious thought and the philosophy of law, especially debates concerning the legal enforcement of public morality, and the ethics of modern warfare.

Although the bulk of Rhodes's research focuses on Christianity and modern society, he also has expertise in several religious traditions.

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## Religion and Politics (cont'd.)

"I have long been interested in modern Jewish approaches to law," Rhodes said. "Modern Jewish philosophy has been particularly influential in criticizing some of the fundamental presuppositions in Christian and secular approaches to law and the moral life."

Professor Rhodes said one of the most interesting areas of his teaching is the comparative analysis of Christian and Islamic approaches to the ethics of warfare.

"My work on the Christian just war tradition has carried me increasingly into the study of Islamic

traditions of Jihad," Rhodes said. "The notion of Jihad in Islamic traditions past and present is a particularly important issue for Western people to consider, especially in this time of profound cultural antagonism and the Iraq war. One way in which a religious studies professor can contribute to the public discussion of ethical issues during the 'war on terrorism' is by clarifying the complex differences between Western and Islamic approaches to warfare."

—By Jeffrey Patch  
*Journalism and Political Science major, UI*

## Antioch Teaching in India



*Mahabodhi Temple*

Each Fall semester Antioch College runs a Buddhist Studies program in India. The students on this program live in a Burmese monastery in Bodhi Gaya, a major Buddhist pilgrimage center. While there, the students choose from courses in

Buddhist history and philosophy, and can study Hindi or Tibetan. A regular routine of Buddhist meditation supplements these studies. The academic requirements include an Independent Study project, wherein the students spend a month in a Buddhist community in south Asia studying a topic of their own devising. The Antioch College model of learning is one of teaching students to reflect critically on their experience.

Matthew Bingley, Ph.D. candidate, was hired as one of Antioch's teachers last fall. Here is his own account.

In the Fall of 2004 I was hired as a faculty member with this program to teach Buddhist Philosophy and Beginning Hindi Grammar. The schedule was intense. My day started every morning at 4:30 am, when I could drink my coffee and listen to monks across town begin their chanting. By 5:30 am I joined the students for the morning round of meditation. By lunch every day I had

taught two classes, and still had to grade homework, meet with students, and prepare for the next day's classes. And I learned to expect questions from students about assignments, about Buddhism, or about India at all hours of the day.

When I had time I would visit the other temples in town. The main temple is the Mahabodhi Temple, marking the spot where the Buddha is thought to have become Awakened. It wasn't difficult to lose a few hours wandering the grounds or sitting under the Bodhi Tree with various pilgrims and monks.

During the Independent Study month, I was assigned to supervise students in Dharamsala, India, where the Dalai Lama and the exiled Tibetan government live. The projects the students worked on were diverse and interesting. One student was studying the town government of an isolated community of Tibetan refugees. A few students were studying Tibetan medical lore, and another student conducted interviews with Tibetan women on their attitudes toward death and dying. And then there was the trio of students who spent their study period on a meditation retreat at Sherabling, a secluded monastery in the mountains.

While it was a demanding schedule, it was also a valuable experience. Perhaps the most rewarding part came when the students returned from their month of Independent Study. The students sought out each other and faculty to tell their stories and adventures, what they had seen and learned. Many students echoed the sentiment of one student who exclaimed that it was the best time of his life—a sentiment that made this such a wonderful teaching experience.

## Pesantubbee Appointed Executive Secretary of AAR



Michelene Pesantubbee

Members of the American Academy of Religion, the largest international organization of scholars dedicated to the academic study of religion, elected Michelene Pesantubbee as Secretary of the Board of Directors for a three-year

term beginning in January 2005. As secretary of the Board of Directors, Pesantubbee also serves *ex officio* as a member of the Executive Committee and the Program Committee which oversees the annual meeting program. She is responsible for preparing and maintaining the formal record of actions and deliberations of the AAR Board of Directors. The American Academy of Religion holds one Annual Meeting and eight regional meetings each year. This year the Annual Meeting was held in Philadelphia November 19-22.

As a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and an active member of Native Traditions in the Americas and the Society for the Study of Native American Religious Traditions, a related organization, Pesantubbee perceives her election as a unique opportunity to bring the concerns and interests of scholars of Native American religious traditions to the attention of the Academy. "As a member of the Board I am responsible for representing the interests of all members of AAR, but I can also work to insure that the voices of less visible members of groups such as Native Traditions in the Americas are heard, too," says Pesantubbee.

Pesantubbee has been active in the American Academy of Religion since 1990 when she attended her first regional meeting in Southern California as a graduate student in Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She remembers the excitement of attending her first Annual Meeting in San Francisco in 1992 where she first met a number of graduate students and scholars of Native

American religious traditions, many of whom became friends. She continues to look forward to each annual meeting where she can catch up on the news about her colleagues and discuss common interests. She regularly presents papers on issues related to Native American religious traditions and Native American women. Her service to the Academy includes two 3-year terms as co-chair of Native Traditions of the Americas Group and as a steering committee member of that group. Currently, she is on the steering committee for the Women and Religion Section.

Pesantubbee attributes her selection by the Nomination Committee to her service to various units of the American Academy of Religion from presenting papers in different units to serving on steering committees. "I think the members of the nominating committee noticed my service to the academy and my willingness to work across religious groups, cultures and programs. The interests and locations of members of the AAR vary widely and members of the Board need the ability to work with diverse groups," explains Pesantubbee. Barbara DeConcini, the Executive Director of AAR since 1991, is pleased with the addition of Pesantubbee to the AAR Executive Board. "She brings a valuable perspective to deliberations. She is consummately responsible in carrying out the duties of the office—and quick!" praises DeConcini.

Pesantubbee, who joined the faculty at the University of Iowa in 2003 where she teaches Introduction to Native American Religious Traditions, Native American Women and Religious Change, Native American Environmentalism, and Religion and Violence in America, also sees her election as an opportunity to make colleagues and graduate students more aware of the Religious Studies Department at the University of Iowa. Pesantubbee also has a joint appointment with American Indian and Native Studies Program where she teaches Introduction to American Indian Native Studies and American Indian Activism.

—By Margaret Nixon

## The University of Iowa Department of Religious Studies Honor Roll of Contributors

This honor roll gratefully recognizes alumni, faculty, and friends who contributed \$100 or more to the Department of Religious Studies through the UI Foundation from January 1, 2004, through December 31, 2004. Contributors are listed alphabetically.

Baird, Patty Jo, Cottage Grove, Wis.  
Baird, Robert D., Cottage Grove, Wis.  
Bentz, Dale M., Iowa City, Iowa  
Bentz, Mary Gail, Iowa City, Iowa  
Boyd, Susan K., Iowa City, Iowa  
Boyd, Willard L., Iowa City, Iowa  
Buchanan, Ellen K., Iowa City, Iowa  
Buchanan, John W., Iowa City, Iowa  
Caplan, Fredda Ellen, Iowa City, Iowa  
Caplan, Richard M., Iowa City, Iowa  
Carroll, Vincent W., Sarasota, Fla.  
Christensen, Jerry R., Solon, Iowa  
Coles, Katherine J., Phoenix, Ariz.  
Collins, Chris, Coralville, Iowa  
Collins, Tracy L., Coralville, Iowa  
Coren, Alfred B., State College, Pa.  
Coren, Martha L., State College, Pa.  
Davis, Gary W., Lincoln, Ill.  
Davis, Karen Sams, Lincoln, Ill.  
Dierks, David R. S., Iowa City, Iowa  
Dierks, Sally B., Iowa City, Iowa  
Ely, John M., Jr., Cedar Rapids, Iowa  
Ely, Shirley W., Cedar Rapids, Iowa  
Handy, Lowell K., Des Plaines, Ill.  
Hershberger, Diana K., Goshen, Ind.  
Hershberger, John K., Goshen, Ind.  
Huber, Coletta D., Davenport, Iowa  
Huber, Lawrence R., Davenport, Iowa  
Kohn, George F., Pacific Grove, Calif.  
Kundrat, Mary A., Windsor Heights, Iowa  
Lee, H. Douglas, DeLand, Fla.  
Lewis, Molly, Pacific Grove, Calif.  
Lyman, Mary Keough, Iowa City, Iowa  
McCabe, Brian F., Iowa City, Iowa  
McCabe, Yvonne L., Iowa City, Iowa  
McNulty, Patrick J., Windsor Heights, Iowa  
Mentzer, Elizabeth J., Iowa City, Iowa  
Mentzer, Raymond A., Iowa City, Iowa  
Narmi, Charlie M., Council Bluffs, Iowa  
Narmi, Melissa M., Council Bluffs, Iowa  
Price, Susan M., Jefferson City, Mo.  
Price, William Ray, Jr., Jefferson City, Mo.  
Quirk, Charles E., Waterloo, Iowa  
Rose, Earl F., Iowa City, Iowa  
Rose, Marilyn M., Iowa City, Iowa  
Smith, Robert F., Kansas City, Mo.  
Stenger, Mary Ann Small, Louisville, Ky.  
Stenger, Robert L., Louisville, Ky.  
Stuit, Dewey B., Iowa City, Iowa  
Sueppel, William F., Iowa City, Iowa  
Tollefson, Robert J., Storm Lake, Iowa  
Wheatley, Alice E., Carlisle, Pa.  
Wheatley, Ira M., Carlisle, Pa.  
Whitehouse, Glenn A., Tampa, Fla.  
Wilkinson, Barbara Renk, St. Peter, Minn.  
Wilkinson, Steve L., St. Peter, Minn.  
Wilson, Boyd H., Holland, Mich.  
Wilson, Sarah A., Holland, Mich.

For more information about private support for the Department of Religious Studies, contact Jeff Liebermann, director of development, Social Sciences and Humanities, for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the UI Foundation, at the address or phone number listed below.

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## FACULTY PERSPECTIVES

At the Spring meeting of the American Society of Church History in Savannah, **Dwight Bozeman** delivered a paper on issues of religious toleration in seventeenth century England and New England. His current research focusses on themes of epistemological scepticism and religious jihadism in the English Revolution of the mid-seventeenth century. He continues as University of Iowa liaison for the American Society of Church History. During 2005 he refereed articles for the *William and Mary Quarterly* and *Church History* and served as referee for a tenure candidacy at another university. In the current semester he serves on six promotion committees in the Departments of Religious Studies, History and Classics, and is chairperson of two.

During the spring of 2005 **Diana Cates** was supported by a University of Iowa Career Development Award. She took up residence at the University of Iowa Obermann Center for Advanced Studies as an Obermann Scholar. There she wrote several chapters of a book on religious ethics and emotion. She was invited to participate in a Humanities and Human Rights Education Project—a faculty reading and research group organized by colleagues from Florida State and John Carroll Universities. Ten scholars of ethics from the U.S. and Canada met to study a common set of texts; our discussion focused on the use of experiential narratives (especially narratives of torture) in human rights education. Each member of the group is now writing a chapter for a forthcoming volume. The group will meet one more time to critique each other's scholarship. This year Prof. Cates published "The Religious Dimension of Ordinary Human Emotions," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, Christine Gudorf and Paul Lauritzen, eds., 25/1, 35-53. She also published "Spending the Day with a Good Friend: Autobiography, Moral Character, and the Religious Imagination," sponsored by the Bonfils Seminar Project on Theological Ethics and the Arts and appearing in *Seeking Goodness and Beauty: The Use of Arts in Theological Ethics*, Patricia Lamoureux and Kevin O'Neil, eds. (Lanham, Md.: Roman and Littlefield), pp. 33-54 (Communication, Culture, and Theology Series). She delivered the keynote address for the Fourth Annual Graduate Symposium in Religious Studies at Florida State University on "The Religious Ethical Study of Emotion." While she was at Florida State,

she also taught a graduate seminar, "The Ethics of Aquinas." She celebrated the achievement of her student Mary Nona Pugh who successfully defended her Ph.D. dissertation, *The Neglected Dimension of Love: Sacrificial Love and its Role in Christian Ethics*. Prof. Cates became a member of the newly constituted University of Iowa Arts and Humanities Initiative Board. She continued her work on the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Religious Ethics*. She also continued to serve as Ethics Representative for the Center for Congenital and Inherited Disorders, Iowa Department of Public Health. She taught a mostly new course, "Genes and the Human Condition," which examined the philosophical, religious, and ethical implications of recent developments in genetic science and technology.

**Jay Holstein** continues to commit fully to undergraduate education as more than 800 students have enrolled in his five classes this fall. He is leading six undergraduate independent study projects; four of them learning biblical Hebrew with the aim of doing an Honor's paper on the Hebrew Bible. Holstein has developed two new courses: Quest 3: Heroes, Lovers, and Knives; which he plans to offer in the Summer of 07, and The Biblical God and the Suffering of Animals; which he plans to offer in the Spring of 07. Holstein also has more than 50 students enrolled in his three Guided Independent Study courses.

**Ralph Keen**, moving beyond his earlier work in Reformation-era hermeneutics to research in theologies of revelation and nature during the Age of Reason and Enlightenment, completed essays on Natural Law, Bible, Enlightenment, Jean Bodin, and Hugo Grotius for a forthcoming encyclopedia on slavery and abolitionism being edited by J. McGivigan. He is also a contributor to *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*. During the past year five entries appeared in Richard Levy, ed., *Antisemitism: A Historical Encyclopedia of Prejudice and Persecution*, 2 vols. (ABC-CLIO, 2005); and a chapter on Counter-Reformation hermeneutics will appear shortly in vol. 2 of *The History of Biblical Interpretation* being published by Eerdmans. Last spring he gave a presentation on Spinoza and Jewish mysticism at Southern Methodist University as part of their Bridwell Judaica lecture series, and during the summer he completed an essay on teaching the Spanish mystics for a volume in the

MLA "Approaches to Teaching" series. His ongoing work on the emergence of modern scientific and historical laws, and their impact on traditional Jewish and Christian concepts of divine activity, is a focus of a new graduate seminar this fall on theologies of nature. He is also conducting the honors section of the departmental senior seminar, and presenting the Christianity component of the new introductory course in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. His text for that course, *The Christian Tradition* (Prentice Hall, 2004), is quickly becoming the leading introduction to the subject. He continues to serve on the editorial board of *Studies in Early Modern Religious Reform* (Kluwer) and is active in the department as director of undergraduate studies and honors advisor. He is involved in the community in various ways, including serving as secretary of the Iowa City Jewish Federation.

**David Klemm** was elected and inducted as a Fellow into the Society for the Arts, Religion, and Contemporary Culture in New York City last May, 2005. SARCC was founded by Paul Tillich, Amos Wilder, and others in 1961. He also serves on the Editorial Board of both *Literature and Theology: An International Journal of Religion, Theory, and Culture* and the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. On November 8, his paper on "Theology and the End of Art" was presented at the University of Glasgow's Centre for the Study of Theology, Literature, and the Arts. During the fall semester, he taught a graduate seminar in contemporary theology entitled "Theological Humanism," which is also the title of his current research and writing project. Over the past year Klemm published two chapters in edited books. He published "Culture, Arts, and Religion," in the *Cambridge Companion to Schleiermacher*, edited by Jacqueline Marina (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). He also published "Intermedial Being," in *Intermedia: Enacting the Liminal*, edited by Hans Breder and Klaus-Peter Busse (Dortmund, Germany: Dortmunder Schriften zur Kunst, 2005).

**J. Kenneth Kuntz** attended the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in San Antonio in November, 2004, and represented the department at a session of the Council on Graduate Studies in Religion. In February, 2005, at an event sponsored by the Geneva Forum at the University of Iowa, he was respondent to a paper entitled "The Liberation

of Israel in Luke-Acts: Intertextual Narration as Countercultural Practice,” delivered by Richard B. Hays of Duke University. Kuntz’ article, “Affirming Less as More: Scholarly Engagements with Aphoristic Rhetoric,” focusing on gains and trends in biblical scholarship during the past two decades as it engages the self-contained aphorisms of Proverbs 10-29, was published in the December, 2004 issue of the *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* (29:2, pp. 205-242). Two book reviews were published in vol. 67 (2005) of *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*—Gina Hens-Piazza, *The New Historicism*; and Harold W. Attridge and Margot E. Fassler (eds.), *Psalms in Community: Jewish and Christian Textual, Liturgical, and Artistic Traditions*. The later hosted papers presented at “Up with a Shout!,” an international conference focused on the Psalms in Jewish and Christian religious, artistic, and intellectual traditions held in January, 2001 at Yale University that Kuntz attended. During the spring 2005 semester Kuntz completed his service to the department as Director of Graduate Studies. Currently he is engaged in his second and last year of phased retirement. He teaches his last two courses, Personalities of the Old Testament and Biblical Archaeology, during the spring 2006 semester. In January 2005 Kuntz was recognized through the “Thank a Teacher” program in the university’s Center for Teaching. Recently he was appointed to the Board of Alumna Affairs at Yale Divinity School. At present he is midway in rewriting his Old Testament textbook, *The People of Ancient Israel*.

**Raymond Mentzer** continues as director of the Department of Religious Studies. He also teaches a series of courses and seminars on western Christianity and the Reformation in particular. During the past year, these offerings included Traditions of Religious Reform and Medieval Religion and Culture. His research program has meant the publication of “The Synod in Reformed Tradition,” in *Synod and Synodality: Theology, History, Canon Law and Ecumenism in New Contact, International Colloquium Bruges 2003*, edited by Alberto Mellon and Silvia Scatena, Christianity and History, Series of the John XXIII Foundation for Religious Studies in Bologna (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2005), pp. 173-184; and participation in “The Concept of Social Disciplining and its Applicability in Current Historiographical Debate. A Discussion Initiated by Maria Crăciun,” *Colloquia* 10-11 (2003-04): 70-85. Mentzer wrote several book reviews for *Renaissance Quarterly*.

He presided and offered comments for several panels at various scholarly conferences to include the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference and the Calvin Studies Society Conference. In April 2005, he gave the Biennial Lecture entitled “No benches are reserved? Seating Disputes in the French Reformation Church” at the H.H. Meeter Center for Calvin Studies, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 6 April 2005. He presented a paper on “La Réforme et la hiérarchie sociale dans les petites villes” at a conference on La vie religieuse dans petites villes at Mamers (France) on 19 March 2005 and co-organized a conference on consistorial records—La mesure du fait religieux: l’approche méthodologique des registres consistoriaux (Espace calvinien européen)—which met at Pau (France) on 9-11 June 2005. At the latter conference, he also gave a presentation on “Un inventaire des registres de consistoire des églises réformées de France aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles.” Mentzer was named Vice-President and President-Elect of the Calvin Studies Society and continues to serve as general editor of the monograph series Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies as well as corporate vice-president and editorial board member for the *Sixteenth Century Journal*.

**Micheline Pesantubbee’s** book, *Choctaw Women in a Chaotic World: The Clash of Cultures in the Colonial Southeast* (University of New Mexico Press) came out in July of this year. She was elected Executive Secretary of the American Academy of Religion (AAR) and assumed her duties in December 2004. She continues to serve on the steering committee of the Women and Religion Group of AAR. In June she participated in the “Teaching for Change” conference sponsored by the *Journal for Feminist Studies*. As part of the ongoing work of that conference, she is a member of a subcommittee that is putting together the Feminist Scholars in Religion Consortium. In the spring she taught Native American Women and Religious Change and the Introduction to Native American Religious Traditions. This semester she is teaching Religion and Violence in American and Introduction to American Indian Native Studies. This past summer she began research on her new book project on the Shawnee Movement of 1811-12.

**Janine Tasca Sawada** returned to teaching in January after pursuing research into modern Italian religion and culture under the auspices of the UI Global Scholar Award. During the spring semester she presented a paper called

“Physical Disciplines in Late Tokugawa Religion” at the World Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions in Tokyo; in her capacity as President of the Society for the Study of Japanese Religions she also moderated a panel called, “Cosmic Disc: Mediating the Kumano Jikkai Mandala on DVD.” at the Society’s annual meeting, held in conjunction with the Association for Asian Studies convention in Chicago. Sawada recently completed an article on the role of sexual relations in the eschatology of Fujidō, a Japanese movement dedicated to the worship of Mount Fuji that flourished in the early nineteenth century. She is now writing an essay on religious themes in popular tourist prints of post-Napoleonic Rome. In the meantime, she has published a piece called “Ishida Baigan’s Learning of the Mind and the Way of the Merchant” in the long-awaited second edition of Volume Two of the *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, compiled by W. T. de Bary, Carol Gluck, and Arthur E. Tiedemann (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), pp. 294-307. She continues to teach general education courses in Asian culture, as well as upper-level and graduate courses in her primary field, Japanese religious history.

**Morten Schlütter** is finishing his book project, *When Chan Became Chan: Sectarianism, Patronage and the Quest for Enlightenment in Song-Dynasty (960-1279) Chan Buddhism*. Schlütter is also writing a paper entitled “Transmission and Transcendence in Medieval Chan Buddhism (7th to 13th Centuries)” which he was invited to present at the 2006 Chung-hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies International Conference on Buddhism, to be held in March in Taiwan. In April 2005 Schlütter organized, chaired and was the discussant on a panel at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, entitled “Windfalls and Pitfalls: The Use of Digitized Source Material in the Study of Asian Buddhism.” In June 2005 he presented a paper with the title “The Family of the Buddha: Creation, Power and Lineage-building in Song-dynasty Chan” at the Conference on the Study of Chinese Buddhism held at the Hsi Lai Temple in Los Angeles. Schlütter’s most recent publication is “Vinaya Monasteries, Public Abbeys, and State Control of Buddhism under the Northern Song (960-1127)” in *Going Forth: Visions of Buddhist Vinaya*, William Bodiford ed., Honolulu: Hawai’i University Press, 2005.

**Frederick Smith** completed his book manuscript, *Friendly Acquisitions, Hostile Takeovers: Deity and Spirit Possession in South Asian Literature and Civilization*, which is now in press with Columbia University Press and due out in Summer 2006. He has also had the following major articles published in 2005: "Vedic and Devotional Waters: The Jalabheda of Vallabhācārya" (*International Journal of Hindu Studies*), and "The Hierarchy of Philosophical Systems according to Vallabhācārya" (*Journal of Indian Philosophy*). He also had a number of book reviews appear in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, *Journal of Vaisnava Studies*, and the *Religious Studies Review*. He continues as the Director of the University of Iowa's South Asian Studies Program. He gave talks at the American Academy of Religion, American Oriental Society, Brown University, Vassar College, and Beijing University. He traveled to China over winter break and returned for six weeks in the summer. While in China, besides lecturing at Beijing University on the history of the Sanskrit language and on aspects of Indian devotional literature, Fred visited numerous Buddhist sites in Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, some located in the high mountains in the Tibetan hinterlands, and accompanied a team of scholars on an expedition to Baoshan, an unresearched Buddhist site near the ancient city of Anyang in eastern China.

**A. E. Souaiaia** offered the high enrollment course Introduction to Islam during Fall semester of 2004. This course continues to increase students' interest in Islamic studies as evidenced by their enrollment in more advanced courses such as Modern Islamic Thought and Political Movements and Islamic Ethics and Philosophy which were offered during Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 semester respectively. In addition to teaching, he also offered public lectures in Iowa City, presented in the International Conference on Islam held at the UW-Madison, and conducted a seminar entitled Human Rights Law and Islam at The Evergreen State College in Washington. His most recent article "From Transitory Status to Perpetual Sententiae" appeared in *HAWWA* journal in its spring 2005 issue.

**Richard Turner** gave a paper titled "Constructing Masculinity: Interactions Between Islam and African-American Youth Since C. Eric Lincoln, *The Black Muslims in America*," at the annual American Academy of Religion meeting in San Antonio, Texas, November 2004. In March 2005 he chaired the "Social Activism and American Religion" panel at the Missouri Valley History Conference in Omaha, Nebraska. In April 2005 he presented a lecture on "The Spread of Islam among African-Americans" at the

University of Arkansas; and a lecture on "African-American Islam: Past, Present, and Future" at the Organization of American Historians National Meeting in San Jose, California. Here at The University of Iowa he presented "Politics of Hip Hop Panel Discussion" along with Mark Neale, Kembrew, McLeod, and Raquel Cepeda. Turner received an Arts & Humanities Initiative Grant for a book project on "Jazz Religion: Black New Orleans and the African Diaspora." Turner was the Journal of African-American History Carter G. Woodson Distinguished Lecturer for 2004-2005, and listed in *Who's Who in Higher Education*, 2005. Turner has done review work for the University of Missouri Press (2005) and *American Nineteenth Century History* (U.K.) 2005. In August 2005, he did a radio interview for Voice of America Radio, New York City on "Islam in America". Turner contributed an article on "Black Islam" to *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics, Second Edition* (Elsevier Ltd., U.K.) in press; and is currently editing a volume titled "Islam and African American" for *Schomburg Studies on the Black Experience* New York Public Library, (in progress).

## Baltutis Receives Fullbright

Michael Baltutis was awarded a Fullbright Grant for 2005-06 that is supporting the ethnographic and historical research for his Ph.D. thesis on the Indra-jatra festival of Kathmandu, Nepal. Michael's primary goals in conducting this research are to trace the history of this relatively obscure festival from

early medieval India to modern Nepal; to account for the patterns of patronage that have allowed the festival to survive; and to hypothesize on the ritual logic behind this royal festival. We look forward to a full report in next year's newsletter!

## 2004-2005 Doctor of Philosophy

### AUGUST 2004

**Wang Li** “A Daoist Way of Transcendence: Bai Yuchan’s Inner Alchemical Thought and Practice.” (Committee Co-Chairs: Professor Janine Sawada and Professor Wendi Adamek [Barnard College])

**Robert Menzies** “Symbols of Suhag: Paradigms of Women’s Empowerment in Hindu Domestic Ritual Stories.” (Committee Chair: Professor Frederick Smith)

### DECEMBER 2004

**Robert Stephens** “Competing Concerns: Religious Conversion and Its Respondents in Modern India.” (Committee Chair: Professor Robert Baird)

### MAY 2005

**Kirk Macgregor** “The Sacramental Theology of Balthasar Hubmaier and Its Implications for Ecclesiology.” (Committee Co-Chairs: Professor Ralph Keen and Professor Raymond Mentzer)

**Mary Pugh** “The Neglected Dimension of Love: Sacrificial Love and Its Role in Christian Ethics.” (Committee Chair: Professor Diana Fritz Cates)

**Russ Reeves** “Contra-Revivalism: Churchly, Confessional, and Romantic Critique of the Second Great Awakening, 1835 to 1855.” (Committee Chair: Professor Dwight Bozeman)

<b>Department of Religious Studies</b>	
<b>Course Enrollments</b>	
Summer 2004	115
Fall 2004	1,432
Spring 2005	1,477
<b>Student Profile</b>	
Undergraduate Majors	109
Undergraduate Degrees	
Conferred 2003-04	36
Conferred 2004-05	35
<b>Graduate Students Enrolled</b>	
37 Ph.D.; 9 M.A.; 2 P.I.	
<b>Graduate Degrees Conferred 2004-05</b>	
6 Ph.D.; 6 M.A.	

## Nearly Four Decades



J. Kenneth Kuntz

With my retirement next summer, I thank the department for inviting me to offer reflections on my time at the University of Iowa. Having taught for four years at Wellesley College, I arrived as an additional member of the School of Religion faculty in August, 1967. During my first semester I conducted a graduate

seminar on Genesis with five students, held a refresher Biblical Hebrew course with four graduate students, and offered lectures in the World of the Old Testament to seven undergraduate and twenty graduate students. At that time more of my energies were devoted to an expanding graduate program in biblical studies than to undergraduate education.

Times have changed. At the first departmental meeting I attended, our director, George Forell, asked, “Where do we want to ask the dean for a new line next year?” We asked and we received. In our current protracted period of severe budgetary restraint, a search for my replacement is tenuous. And no course in New Testament has been offered since spring 2002. With our having to shut down the graduate program in biblical studies, I taught my last graduate seminar in 1993 and directed my last student to completion on a Ph.D. dissertation in 1999.

My pleasure in teaching undergraduates has kept me from brooding over this loss. Throughout my tenure at Iowa I have sought to expose interested students at whatever level to the literature of the Hebrew Bible and the diverse world it reflects. Given the assumption I share with many scholars that biblical literature engages continuing human experience, it was ever my hope to enhance the understanding of my students in the human past and their quest to become well rounded persons in the present. Like my colleagues, I’ve taught a variety of courses. During the 27 semesters that I’ve offered Biblical Hebrew at one level or another, I’ve valued my close interaction with students as I led them down the arduous path of language study and assisted them in opening up the biblical text. In general, such courses as The World of the Old Testament and Theology of the Old Testament

were available every other year. Commenting on the former course after they became alumni, several students recalled that I was vigilant in declaring that biblical Israel did not exist in a vacuum. It seems I made my point. While teaching the latter course, I often recalled a biblical scholar employed at a well respected church-related college asking me, “They let you teach *that* in a public university?” Obviously they do, and my own defense for doing so is that if there is a theology in the Hebrew Bible to perceive, anyone might penetrate it regardless of the specific faith commitment embraced. Most of my students have understood that my main task has been to teach *about* religion—to describe, not advocate. Once a student in my Prophecy in Biblical Israel course quipped to another, “Kuntz teaches this course as if he were running a dishwasher without detergent!” Having hoped that homily as well as analysis would inform my lectures, he was disappointed. Most students weren’t.

When the focus of my instruction fell beyond the center of my discipline, I found the experience energizing. The course I’ve offered most frequently (mainly in summer school and in the Saturday and Evening Program) is Religion and Women: Images of Women in the Bible. Early on it was crosslisted with the Women’s Studies Program with which I’ve been pleased to be linked. With females surfacing as both subjects and objects in the biblical drama, my students and I encountered ample instances of good and bad news. Especially in this course it became clear that our social location largely determines how we see the world and interpret biblical texts.

Team teaching a graduate seminar with Professor George Nickelsburg on the Dead Sea Scrolls, joining Professors Robert Baird and David Klemm in inducting our M.A. and Ph.D. students in Methods and Theories in the Study of Religion, leading undergraduates in the Religion Majors Seminar, and my long-term involvement in Guided Independent Study courses have significantly enriched my teaching experience. In many contexts I’ve learned from my students, but no more so than when I was directing senior majors in their honors projects and graduate students in their M.A. theses and Ph.D. dissertations. Admittedly, I have not always met brilliance. Once a student sent me this email: “Where am I able to turn my late paper in to you at?” I answered the question, but added, “I hope

## Nearly Four Decades (cont'd.)

the English in your paper is superior to that in your email.”

Turning to my research efforts, I've been primarily invested in literary questions, especially those that issue from a rhetorical-critical study of biblical Hebrew poetry. Given the unity of form and content that one expects in a work of art, I've sought to determine the work's meaning by taking careful account of its emerging format and structures of intensification. For me, the “how said” is no less central than the “what said.” Since historical-critical biblical scholarship characteristically approaches the text from the standpoint of its context, rhetorical criticism seeks to redress that imbalance by targeting the text itself. I've attempted that in many papers I've delivered at national meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature and in numerous essays I've published in several academic journals and *Festschriften*.

I've long been interested in channeling the written word toward non-specialists. I wrote many entries for *The Dictionary of Bible and Religion* (Abingdon, 1986) and a few for the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (Doubleday, 1992). Long before that I published a college-level textbook on the Hebrew Bible entitled, *The People of Ancient Israel* (Harper & Row, 1974), which I'm in the process of extensively revising. Also I've contributed four articles on Psalms and other biblical poetry for *Currents in Biblical Research*, a journal inviting entries that critically summarize the spectrum of recent research on particular topics, methods, and biblical books.

Of course my research interests have been influenced by contact with scholars affiliated with academic institutions in this country and abroad. One summer I had a rare opportunity to join two scholars of rhetoric, the late Michael C. McGee from our university and Allen Scult from Drake University, in discussions that led to a joint article, “Genesis and Power: An Analysis of the Biblical Story of Creation,” published in *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* (May, 1986). Reflecting on interactions with colleagues in the Society of Biblical Literature, I take satisfaction in my six-year term (1988-94) as chair of the Biblical Hebrew Poetry Section. Finding some scholars there who think as I do and some who do not, I continue to participate in annual meetings of that section.

In 1968, field archaeology at Tell Gezer in Israel offered me an initial study abroad opportunity. I spent the 1971-72 academic year in Heidelberg, Germany, where I met new challenges in Claus Westermann's doctoral colloquium. As a Visiting Scholar at Clare Hall College, I enjoyed seven-month sojourns in Cambridge, England, in 1992, 1997, and 2003. I found the University Library, the Tyndale House Library, and fortnightly Old Testament seminar excellent venues for intellectual stimulation. And I cherish the friendships I've made in such contexts that often involve my wife Ruth.

Finally, in rendering professional service at the University of Iowa, I've been seen in Gilmore Hall and beyond. Though it takes its toll on one's time, serving as Director of Graduate Studies for nearly a decade has entailed many satisfying moments as I oversaw the procedural details involved with our graduate program, from the time prospective students make their first inquiries until M.A. and Ph.D. students whom we've admitted submit their plans of study. Serving on such committees as the Judicial Commission, Study Abroad Committee, Admissions Committee in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Hancher Auditorium Review Committee has both widened my perception of this university and enabled me to know colleagues whose specialties are quite distinct from my own.

I close with mention of two recent conversations. At the Java House a faculty colleague from another department asked, “Ken, shall I assume that the university from which you retire is not the same university that hired you?” I replied, “Absolutely!” Today our faculty unit addresses a more diverse array of issues in the academic study of religion, and while undergraduate students remain a delight, they are more firmly anchored in high tech resources and, I believe, more career oriented. In the other conversation, an undergraduate with whom I had worked closely and who knew that my retirement was on the horizon remarked, “It strikes me that you've had a very good position at the University of Iowa.” Again I replied, “Absolutely!” And for that I am truly grateful.

—J. Kenneth Kuntz, Professor of Religion



## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR



Raymond A. Mentzer

Once again, I am pleased to report that the department flourishes. We welcome a new colleague, celebrate faculty accomplishments, and honor our students.

As promised in last year's *Perspectives on Religion*, we have appointed a new faculty member in Modern Religious Thought. Howard Rhodes, the subject of a separate feature story in this issue of the newsletter, specializes in the study of the connections between religion, primarily Christianity, and political culture in contemporary society. He, for example, is currently teaching courses on "War and Peace in Western Religious Thought" and "Religion and Democracy." Howard's presence on the faculty adds considerably to our ability to understand and address many of the complex issues that confront the global community in the twenty-first century. Our appreciation extends to the university Provost, college Dean, and many friends of religious studies at the University of Iowa who have made his appointment possible. We look forward to Howard's ongoing contribution to a crucial scholarly dialogue.

You will also note that the American Academy of Religion recently elected Micheline Pesantubbee to the position of executive secretary. Please join us in congratulating her for this special honor and wishing her well as she embarks upon her duties. As newer colleagues such as Michelene assume these responsibilities, other colleagues are bringing their teaching careers to a close. Ken Kuntz, whom many of you know well, concludes nearly forty years of classroom instruction at The University of Iowa when he retires at the end of this academic year. Not surprisingly, Ken will continue his active research program. Indeed, in the next year or so a revised edition of *The People of Ancient Israel* will appear on the shelves of your local bookstore. Our best wishes and sincere thanks to Ken!

Our graduate students remain, as always, extremely active. This past year Matthew Bingley taught in India under the auspices of the Antioch College Buddhist Studies program. As I write, Michael Baltutis is undertaking his doctoral field research at Kathmandu, Nepal with the support of a Fulbright Grant. Finally, Heather Hartel received a prestigious Seashore Dissertation Year Fellowship from The University of Iowa and is currently completing her dissertation on the meaning of sainthood in twentieth-century American Catholicism.

Before closing, I want to mention that the department's newly created Advisory Board is actively working to carry our message beyond the campus to raise the funds that are ever critical to support and strengthen our work. We remain optimistic that we will soon complete the campaign to establish the Figge Chair in Catholic Studies. It will join the endowed chairs that already exist for Judaic studies and Reformation studies. Again, we encourage you to consider a gift to support the Figge chair and thereby make Catholic studies a permanent feature of our undertakings at The University of Iowa. We are also campaigning to establish a fellowship program to assist graduate students, especially during the final critical stages of writing the dissertation. It goes without saying that we would be pleased if you choose to contribute to any of the department's funds. A complete listing can be found elsewhere in the newsletter. My colleagues and I appreciate everything that you do and have done for us. We are deeply dependant on many friends throughout Iowa and across the country. Please continue to convey your news, suggestions and concerns. We look forward to seeing you at our reception in conjunction with the annual meeting of the AAR meeting—and do let us know if you plan to visit Iowa City.

*Raymond A. Mentzer*  
Raymond A. Mentzer

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