TTC VIII: Decolonizing Epistemology

by Christopher Haynes

The theme for the 2008 eighth annual Drew Transdisciplinary Theological Colloquium was “Decolonizing Epistemology: New Knowing in Latina/o Philosophy & Theology.” The colloquium was held November 20-23, 2008 and brought together fifteen of the nation’s preeminent Latina/o scholars to discuss various proposals for the development of fresh ways of knowing from marginalized perspectives, using the experiences of Latina/o persons as an interpretive framework. The statement of purpose of the conference affirms that its focus on Latina/o experiences in the United States is meant as a way of opening discussion about the particular forms of knowledge of all oppressed peoples, by providing “methodological signposts to other marginalized and minoritized communities, and to those who stand in solidarity with them, for their own epistemic elaborations.”

The panel presentations and ensuing discussions among colloquium participants were truly transdisciplinary, drawing rich insights from such fields as theology, sociology, history, philosophy, queer theory, ethics, political science, feminism, liberation thought and biblical studies. Invited scholars raised questions about authority—by whose authority is knowledge considered legitimate, proper and trustworthy? Some sought to reconcile embodied forms of knowledge of marginalized people with the rational ways of knowing recognized by so many scholars. Others explored how various forms of knowledge “from the margins” challenge monolithic, centralized sets of standard knowledge, and how Latina/o conceptions contribute to these efforts.

Conference organizer and Drew professor Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz stated during the gathering that the colloquium’s narrative was not meant to be a synthesis in the sense of eliminating differences among participants, but was rather intended to foreground similarities among them. She gave her own thoughts about the importance of this year’s TTC in the final session: “How do we use our work as a platform for the knowledge of our communities? How do we come together to have understandings that come out of our communities, and how do we foreground them and put them out there as a platform? I come from a school that really believes that knowledge can be liberating. That’s how I would talk about this event.”

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This fall and spring, through a grant from Drew’s Center for Religion, Culture and Conflict, Professor Catherine Keller has sponsored a “Process Theology Visiting Scholars Series” in which six guest scholars have been invited to Drew to share their latest research in various facets of Process thought. This lecture series has worked in partial conjunction with two fall semester classes Professor Keller offered on Process theology/philosophy. Keller received her training at Claremont Graduate University (her advisor was John Cobb) where Process thought and the Whiteheadian philosophy on which it is largely based came to exert a significant (if sometimes implicit) influence on her work. As Keller’s latest research interests have been at the intersection of theological cosmology, quantum theory and questions of truth/epistemology, and Alfred North Whitehead was arguably one of the first philosophers to recognize the radical implications of early quantum theory for speculative cosmology and theology, it is no surprise that Whitehead has returned to the “inner orbit” of Keller’s research interests. The unique balance Whitehead strikes between pluralistic becoming and relationality seems to have remarkable resonances with certain articulations of quantum physics—in physicist David Bohm’s terms, reality must be described both in terms of its “explicate order” (individualized particles) and its “implicate order” (interconnected waves), neither of which alone are sufficient to make sense of the strange behavior of matter at the quantum level. Indeed, Process thought has always seen at the very heart of reality a rhythmic oscillation between the public and the private, “prehensive” connection and individual “concrescence”—in Whitehead’s famous words, “The many become one and are increased by one.”

Our lecture series began at the end of September with Chilean scholar, Gorgias Romero Garcia, one of only a small handful of Latin American thinkers engaged seriously with Whitehead’s philosophy. Romero presented an extremely well-researched paper on the philosophical roots of Whitehead’s thought, in particular elucidating the remarkable balance Whitehead seems to achieve between, on one hand, the relational monism of his more idealist, neo-Hegelian influences and, on the other hand, the pluralism of his more empiricist-leaning, neo-realist influences. Romero’s research makes significant strides in clarifying the historical and philosophical context of Whitehead’s work. The same week we also hosted the Rev. Ignacio Castuera, a Methodist minister and former bishop who grew up in Mexico, studied at Claremont School of Theology (where he worked extensively with John Cobb), and went on to a remarkable ministerial career that has applied the central insights of Process thought to practical issues of ministry and church leadership in a way few others have. Castuera has been an especially articulate and effective spokesperson on issues of sexuality and reproductive rights within the church (he currently serves as the National Chaplain for Planned Parenthood Federation of America) and, among other things, his talk helped to unmask the classist/se.xist underpinnings of the Christian right’s political mobilization of evangelicals around issues of sexual orientation and abortion. His appreciation of Process thought stems in part from its prioritization of Jesus’ “love commandment,” which, in its rejection of coercive power (on both a divine and human level) demands that we move beyond an inflexible moralism in order to truly be present for the actual needs of our diverse neighbors.

On October 22, we welcomed Dr. Monica Coleman, a graduate of Claremont Graduate University, who has also recently taken a faculty position there teaching Process theology. Coleman spoke on (and then signed copies of) her new book, Making a Way out of No Way—a truly original piece of scholarship weaving together Whiteheadian metaphysics, Womanist theology (in a whole range of incarnations), various traditions of African ancestor worship (especially as they are practiced in the U.S.) and even black women’s science fiction. Coleman values Process thought’s capacity to open up constructive conversations among diverse forms of religious practice in the African-American community, including non-Christian varieties. Perhaps her most original move is to relate African ancestor worship to Whitehead’s notion of the “consequent nature of God”—that irreducibly multiple (though not fragmented) aspect of the divine which takes into itself the actualized world in its entirety, thus making the past salvifically available for future moments of becoming.
On November 18, Dr. Roland Faber, another Professor of Process theology at Claremont School of Theology and Claremont Graduate University, gave a talk on his adventurously post-modern and deeply philosophical approach to Process theology. Among other topics, he discussed his book, *God As Poet of the World: Exploring Process Theologies*, recently translated and published in a new English edition. Faber’s book is one of the most in-depth and erudite explorations of the movement of Process theology as a whole, offering exhaustive treatments of its philosophical roots, its historical context within North American liberal theology and its various internal “schools” and offshoots. One of the most original contributions of the book is to work out a deeply satisfying Trinitarian vision (an ongoing challenge for Process theologians who are inevitably faced with the “two-ness” of Whitehead’s di-polar God) in which the three phases of creaturely becoming (prehension, satisfaction and superject) are conversely reflected in three, inseparable phases of God’s own becoming (God’s primordial nature, consequent nature and superjective nature—corresponding respectively to the Son, Holy Spirit and Father). Faber’s more recent work explores some of the “wilder” constructive/deconstructive interfaces between Process thought and the post-structuralist philosophies of Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Derrida.

This spring we hosted two other scholars, the first of which was Dr. Philip Clayton, Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Claremont Graduate University and Ingraham Professor at Claremont School of Theology. Dr. Clayton, a renowned scholar of science and religion, has published and lectured extensively on many branches of this debate. Rejecting the scientism of Richard Dawkins and others of the “new atheist” persuasion, he argues, need not lead theology down a more sectarian or, still less, a fundamentalist path, in which it effectively forfeits any respectable participation in the public sphere. Instead, Clayton draws on a whole range of resources within the sciences, philosophy, theology, and comparative religious thought to develop constructive partnerships between these two great cultural powers. As a public intellectual he seeks to address the burning ethical and political issues at the intersection of science, ethics, religion, and spirituality (e.g., the stem cell debate, euthanasia, the environmental crisis, interreligious warfare). As a philosopher he works to show the compatibility of science with religious belief across the fields where the two may be integrated, in particular the areas of emergence theory, evolution and religion, evolutionary psychology, neuroscience and consciousness. He defends a form of process theology that is hypothetical, dialogical and pluralistic.

Our final guest this spring was Dr. Karen Baker-Fletcher, Professor of Systematic Theology at Perkins School of Theology at SMU. Baker-Fletcher has developed her own unique brand of Womanist eco-theology, heavily informed by Process-relational theism. Her commitment to literature/poetry (both her own and works by some of her favorite authors such as Alice Walker) and the historical resources of Wesleyan religious traditions (including the Holiness movement) have contributed in fascinating ways to her uniquely “earthy” and “earthly” theological vision, which both beckons us forward toward an open future and keeps us grounded in the living roots of our past.

If you have any questions about our guest scholars please contact Luke Higgins (student coordinator) at lhiggins@drew.edu.

Luke Higgins is a Ph.D. candidate in the Theological and Philosophical Studies Area of the Graduate Division of Religion.

From the Publisher: In the early part of the twentieth century, Methodists were seen by many Americans as the most powerful Christian group in the country. Ulysses S. Grant is rumored to have said that during his presidency there were three major political parties in the U.S., if you counted the Methodists. *The Methodist Unification* focuses on the efforts among the Southern and Northern Methodist churches to create a unified national Methodist church, and how their plan for unification came to institutionalize racism and segregation in unprecedented ways. How did these Methodists conceive of what they had just formed as “united” when members in the church body were racially divided?

Moving the history of racial segregation among Christians beyond a simplistic narrative of racism, Morris L. Davis shows that Methodists in the early twentieth century—including high-profile African American clergy—were very much against racial equality, believing that mixing the races would lead to interracial marriages and threaten the social order of American society.


From the Publisher: With immediate impact and deep creativity, Catherine Keller offers this brief and unconventional introduction to theological thinking, especially as recast by process thought. Keller takes up theology itself as a quest for religious authenticity.

Through a marvelous combination of brilliant writing, story, reflection, and unabashed questioning of old shibboleths, Keller redeems theology from its dry and predictable categories to reveal what has always been at the heart of the theological enterprise: a personal search for intellectually honest and credible ways of making sense of the loving mystery that encompasses even our confounding times.


From the Publisher: The art of Samuel Bak depicts a world destroyed and yet provisionally pieced back together. Across nearly seven decades of artistic production Samuel Bak has explored and reworked a set of metaphors, a visual grammar and vocabulary, that ultimately privileges questions. Bak’s pictorial readings invite reconsideration of the Post-Reformation privileging of word over image, and of the Post-Enlightenment privileging of reason over experience. Bak preserves memory of the twentieth century ruination of Jewish life and culture by way of an artistic passion and precision that stubbornly announces the creativity of the human spirit.


From the Publisher: Reflecting on the twenty-fifth anniversary of Alan Culpepper’s milestone *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* (1983), *Anatomies of Narrative Criticism* explores current trends in the study of the Gospel of John as literature. The contributors to the volume represent a wide range of methodological approaches that all explore ways that contemporary readers generate meaning from John’s story of Jesus. The book includes an introduction to narrative-critical studies of John; essays on specific themes and passages that focus on interpretation of the text, history of research, hermeneutical approaches, and future trends in research; and, a reflective response from Alan Culpepper. Overall, the book seeks to trace the history and project the future of the study of the Bible as narrative.


From the Publisher: An array of cultural forces is coming together to present the church with unprecedented challenge and unequaled opportunity. Such “category 5” realities as postmodernism, postChristendom attacks on belief in God, and the threat of global warming have coalesced to make a “perfect storm” that will leave people uncertain of their place in the world, and all they have previously believed in. Like the disciples when Jesus calmed the storm, the church can cower and cry out for relief. Or, when everything is spinning and whirling in the wind, the church can go out to meet the storm, embrace the gale, and pass out kites.

Faculty News

Since the Fall 2007 semester, the Graduate Division of Religion has welcomed four new members to the faculty.

Kenneth Ngwa  
Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible  
Kenneth Ngwa’s teaching and research interests are in the Hebrew Bible and African literature, including Israelite and African wisdom literature, oral traditions, history of interpretation/receptions, and narrative ethics.

Hyo-Dong Lee  
Assistant Professor of Theological Philosophy  
Hyo-Dong Lee’s teaching and research interests lie in the area broadly defined as theology of religions and comparative theology, and more specifically, dialogue between the Christian/Western theological tradition and Northeast Asian religious thought, including Confucianism Daoism, Tonghak, etc. His interests extend also to postcolonial theories and European postmodern thought.

Catherine Peyroux  
Associate Professor of History of Christianity  
Catherine Peyroux is a scholar of the cultural and social history of medieval Christianity, especially the history of Christianization, the history of women and Christianity, and the role of religious thought in social life. Before coming to Drew, Dr. Peyroux held positions at New York University, Duke University, the University of Chicago, and Princeton University.

Althea Spencer Miller  
Assistant Professor of New Testament  
Althea Spencer Miller’s teaching interests include the Gospels, Acts, the Pauline corpus, New Testament Apocrypha, Biblical languages, and ancient and contemporary mythologies. Her research interests include the cross-cultural politics of writing, comparative cultural studies, reconstruction of early Christianities within the Greco-Roman Empire using gendered and post-colonial perspectives, comparative mythology, and contextual, feminist, and post-colonial hermeneutics and the implications of all these for textual criticism and historical reconstruction. To both her teaching and research Prof. Spencer Miller brings post-colonial, liberationist, feminist, and subaltern perspectives.

Faculty Booknotes

Leonard Sweet,  
11: Indispensable Relationships You Can’t Be Without (David C. Cook, 2008).  
From the Publisher: As believers, our journey is just as important as the destination. And because relationships are essential to our walk through life, it is vital that we partner with people who positively impact our world. Dr. Leonard Sweet believes these essential people are found in the pages of God’s Word. Using eleven classic figures from the Bible, Dr. Sweet details key personal attributes that make up God’s Dream Team for your life. Readers of all ages will be encouraged to not only seek out such people, but to find their place with those around them.

From the Publisher: In this volume a group of eminent African American scholars of religious and theological studies examine the problems and prospects of black scholarship in the theological academy. They assess the role that prominent black scholars have played in transforming the study and teaching of religion and theology, the need for a more thorough-going incorporation of the fruits of black scholarship into the mainstream of the academic study of religion, and the challenges and opportunities of bringing black art, black intellectual thought, and black culture into predominantly white classrooms and institutions.

Alumni News

Mary Nyangweso Wangila (Ph.D. ’04) has been named J. Woolard and Helen Peel Distinguished Professor in Religious Studies at East Carolina University (North Carolina).  
W. Anne Joh (Ph.D. ’03) was offered and has accepted the position of Associate Professor of Theology at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary (Evanston, Ill.). In the fall 2008 term, Mary Kay Cavazos (Ph.D. ’07) accepted a two-year appointment as Visiting Assistant Professor of Religion at Middlebury College (Vermont).

Samuel Cruz (Ph.D. ’02) accepted an appointment as Assistant Professor of Church and Society at Union Theological Seminary (New York). Matthew Immergut (Ph.D. ’07) accepted an appointment as Assistant Professor of Sociology in the School of Natural and Social Sciences of Purchase College, State University of New York (New York).
Celebrating Our Graduates: 2008 Commencements

**May 2008**


**Sarah Blair**, “Reforming Methodism: 1800-1820”

**Joseph Anthony Donnella II**, “‘Like Other People’s Children’: The Danish West Indies Lutheran Mission A Caribbean Prototype of Liturgical Inculturation”

**Antonia Gorman**, “The Blood of Goats and Bulls: An Eco-Spiritual Response to the Sacrifice of Creation”

**Surekha Nelavala**, “Liberation Beyond Borders: Dalit Feminist Hermeneutics and Four Gospel Women”

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**Do Woong Park**, “Toward an Asian Ecclesiology based on the Asian Liberation Theology and Minjung Theology”

**Steven Pilkington**, “The ABC’s of American Church Music: A First Primer”


**M.A Candidates**
- Kristen Black
- Stephen DiGioia

**M. Phil Candidates**
- Linda Ann Dietch
- John Michael Jordan
- Amy D’Olivio
- Kevin Newburg
- Joel Elowsky
- Neal Presa

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**October 2008**

**Hong Pyo Ha**, “The Emergency of Proto-Apocalyptic Worldviews in the Neo-Babylonian Period: An Analysis of Selected Passages from Ezekiel and Isaiah 40-55”

**Christopher Demuth Rodkey**, “In the Horizon of the Infinite: Paul Tillich and the Dialectic of the Sacred”

**C. Insun Yoon**, “Civilizing Mission for Women: American Methodist Missionary Women and Social Change in Korea”

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**Dean’s Reception, May 2008**

**Left:** Mary Kay Cavazos received The Helen LePage and William Hale Chamberlain Prize, awarded for the outstanding Ph.D. dissertation in any area.

**Right:** Carl Savage received The Rabbi Dr. Sheldon J. Weltman Prize, awarded for the outstanding Ph.D. dissertation in Biblical Studies.
The Graduate Division of Religion Student Association (GDRSA) entered into its second year of existence with an emphasis on creating community for its students. Last year due to the recommendation of graduate students, the GDRSA officially formed an International Student Caucus that would work specifically to serve the unique needs of the International Students present within the Graduate Division of Religion. The officers of the GDRSA along with the student body appointed two co-chairs, Isaac Kim and Robert Wafula, who would help lead the International Student Caucus for the academic year 2008-2009. This Fall the International Student Caucus held its first meeting with much success and it was decided by both the International Students and the GDRSA that the creation of this Caucus was extremely important to help create a communal space for the International Students within the graduate program. In addition to this, the Caucus will also serve as a place where International students within the Graduate Division of Religion can work to enhance their communal life and help create bonds of mutual friendship between International and American students across disciplines and cultures.

In keeping with our efforts to help create community within our programs, the GDRSA hosted its first social event this past Fall during the New Student Orientation. The GDRSA sponsored a Pizza Social where both new and old students were able to interact with each other. In addition to this, the GDRSA also held a barbeque for families of both students and faculty during early October. While on the one hand, the GDRSA focused on the implementation of student groups and sponsoring events that helped enhance the communal life of the student body, on the other hand, the GDRSA also continued to work closely with other student organizations to help secure its representation on various University committees. Currently the GDRSA has student representatives on committees such as Library, Student Life and University Senate etc thus enabling the GDRSA to receive more visibility on campus as a student organization. In addition to this, the GDRSA in the past years has also played an active role to provide conference reimbursements to students within the program who are either presenting or participating in both national and regional conferences. This year has been no exception and the GDRSA has continued to take its role in encouraging students in their academic endeavors seriously. Therefore, this year the GDRSA hopes to carry on the vision seen by our predecessors of building a community that fulfills both the academic and communal needs of our student body.

2008-2009 Officers of the Graduate Division of Religion:

Co-Chairs:
Sharon Jacob and Samuel Laurent

Financial Officer:
Kristeen Black

Administrative Officer:
Christopher Haynes

Sharon Jacob is a Ph.D. candidate in the Biblical Studies and Early Christianity Area of the Graduate Division of Religion.

TTC VIII: Decolonizing Epistemology

In addition to Drew faculty members Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz and Otto Maduro, faculty presenters included: Linda Martin Alcoff (Syracuse University), Rudy Busto (University of California, Santa Barbara), Michelle A. Gonzalez Maldonado (University of Miami), Maria Lugones (SUNY-Binghamton), Nelson Maldonado-Torres (University of California, Berkeley), Hjamil Martinez-Vazquez (Texas Christian University), Eduardo Mendieta (Stony Brook University), Walter Mignolo (Duke University), Paula M. L. Moya (Stanford University), Emma Perez (University of Colorado, Boulder), Mayra Rivera (Pacific School of Religion), Fernando Segovia (Vanderbilt University), and Christopher Tirres (DePaul University).

On Sunday the Student Session of the Colloquium took place at which four student presenters delivered papers that were discussed. The students were from Stanford University, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Drew University, (An Youn Tae and Neddy Astudillo ably representing Drew).

The Transdisciplinary Theological Colloquium aims to “foster a fresh style of theological discourse that is at once self-deconstructive in its pluralism and constructive in its affirmations,” while continuing “Drew’s deep history of engaging historical, biblical and cultural hermeneutics, current philosophy, practices of social justice and experiments in theopoetics.” To learn more about the focus and theme of this colloquium and previous ones, please visit http://www.depts.drew.edu/tsfac/colloquium/.

Chris Haynes is a third-year Ph.D. student in the Religion and Society Area of the Graduate Division of Religion.
Drew Presenters at the 2008 American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting

E. Obiri Addo (faculty), Akua Donkor: A Study in Indigenous West African Religious Imagination (presenting)

Youn Tae An (student), “No Longer Strangers and Aliens”: Deleuzian Reading of “Home” as a Multiple, Fluid, and Peripatetic Space (presenting)

Christopher J. Anderson (alumnus, staff), Miss America and Methodism: Twentieth-Century Beauty Pageants as Christian Mission (presenting)

Sharon V. Betcher (alumna), Relandsaping the Symbolic and Divine Economies Informing Global Cities: On Beauty, Civility, and the Aestheticization of Fear (presenting)

Kathleen Bishop (alumna), Psychologies and/or Race (presiding)

Adelaide Boadi (student), Women and the Future of Pentecostalism: The Case of West Africa (presenting)

Adelaide Boadi (student), Emerging Pentecostal Theologies of the Global South and Their Reshaping of Worldwide Pentecostalism: The Case of Africa (presenting)

Richard Bohannon (student), Theodicy in the Public Square: Questioning the City in the Aftermath of Disaster (presenting)

Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz (faculty) and Benjain Valentin (alumnus), Liberation Theologies for the Twenty-First Century (panelists)

Krista E. Hughes (student), Living God’s Promise: Hope as Christian Vocation (presenting)

Anne Joh (alumna), Negotiating Inclusion and Exclusion (responding)

Namsoon Kang (alumna) Reclaiming Theological Significance of Women’s Religious Choice-in-Differential (presenting)

Laurel D. Kearns (faculty), Thinking about Religion and Sustainability: Gottlieb’s A Greener Faith (Oxford University Press, 2006) and Beyond (panelist)

Catherine Keller (faculty), What Makes Theology “Wesleyan”? (panelist)


Otto Maduro (faculty), Becoming Pastora: Latina Pentecostal Women’s Stories from Newark, NJ (presenting)

Anna Mercedes (student), Feminist Desires: Surrender, Pain, and Agency (presenting)

Anna Mercedes (student), Maria Costa (student), Catherine Keller (faculty), Evangelicals and Empire: Engaging Hardt and Negri (panelists)

Mary Nyangweso (alumna), Negotiating Agency, culture, and Religion: A Case of Muslim Women in Kenya (presenting)

Mary Nyangweso (alumna), Persistence of African Religions in African/African Diaspora Points of Contact (presenting)

Elaine Padilla (student), Mulatez: Hybridity, Bodies, and Afro Caribbean-Latina Theology (presenting)

Karen Pechilis (CLA faculty), Globalization and South Asian Religions: Redefining the Discourse beyond Diaspora (panelist)

Mayra Rivera (alumna), Anne Joh (alumna), Women of Color and the Study of Religion and Theology (panelists)

Mayra Rivera (alumna) Women and Christianity in East Asia (presiding)


Christopher Rodkey (student), Contemporary Theology Responds to Tillich (presiding)

Peter Savastano (alumnus), Religious Resources in Resignifications of Queer Identity: The Case of Christopher Isherwood, “Homosexualist” and Disobedient Subject (responding)

J. Terry Todd (faculty), The Construction of Maleness and Masculinity in Diasporic and Post-Queer Contexts (presiding)

Eric Trozzo (student), A Multiplicity of Kingdoms (presenting)

Traci C. West (faculty), Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Luther King Jr.: Receiving Their Legacies for Christian Social Thought (panelist)

Traci C. West (faculty), Criminal Injustice and Christian Responsibility: Christianity and the Criminal Justice Systems (responding)

N. Lynne Westfield (faculty), Theological Illiteracy and Its Effect on the Enterprise of Theological Education (panelist)

Tinesha J. Williams McNeill (alumna), I am Not My Hair: Rerighting the Standard of Beauty for African-American Women (presenting)
Drew Presenters at the 2008 Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting

Obiri Addo (faculty), Biblical Religion and Public Life in Africa (panelist)

Jason Coker (student), Translating from This Place: Social Location and Translation (presenting)

Melanie Johnson DeBaufre (faculty), Feminist Biblical Studies: Interrogating Empires in Diverse Contexts (presiding)

Melanie Johnson DeBaufre (faculty), Reading, Theory and the Bible (presenting)

Scott S. Elliott (student), Translation, Narratology, and Reading the Bible (presenting)

Danna Nolan Fewell (faculty), Arre Stealing Children: Biblical Allusion, Modern Iconography, and the Witness of Samuel Bak (presenting)

Danna Nolan Fewell (faculty), The Children of Israel: Reading the Bible for the Sake of Our Children (Abingdon Press) (panelist)

Stephen Finlan (alumnus), Sacrificial Concepts in Early Christianity (presiding)

Stephen Finlan (alumnus), Reconciliation and Atonement in 2 Corinthians (responding)

Stephen Finlan (alumnus), Ethics, Law and Eschatological Hope (responding)

Herbert B. Huffmon (faculty), Remembering David Noel Freedman (panelist)

Sharon Jacob (student), Surrogacy as a Performance of Violent Love: Reading Luke’s Mary alongside Low Caste Surrogate Women in India (presenting)

Donna Laird (student), Exploring the Intersection of Translation Studies and Critical Theory in Biblical Studies (presiding)

Althea Spencer Miller (faculty), Feminist Biblical Studies: Interrogating Empires in Diverse Contexts (presenting)

Stephen D. Moore (faculty, GDR chair), The Past, Present, and Futures of the Fourth Gospel as Literature (panelist)

Stephen D. Moore (faculty, GDR chair), Intersections of Sexuality, Gender, and Empire in Biblical Interpretation (panelist)

Thomas C. Oden (faculty), Early Libyan Christianity (presenting)

Carl Savage (alumnus, staff), How Many Light Bulbs does It Take to Change a Culture? Oil Lamp Transition Between Hellenistic and Jewish Bethsaida (presenting)

LeAnn Snow Flesher (alumna), Biblical Hebrew Poetry (presiding)

James F. Srange (alumnus), Galilee and the Economy (presiding)

Louis Stulman (alumnus), Hope, Utopia and the Fantasy of Violence in Jeremiah (presiding)

Eric Thurman (student), With Homi Bhabha on the Banks of the Jordan: Postcolonial Reflections on Mark’s Gospel and the Alexander Romance (presenting)

Robert Wafula (student), This Is My Story: Joban Use of Irony to Resist Divine Tyranny (presenting)

Theologies of the Manifold polydoxy

October 1-4, 2009

As a constructive methodological alternative, polydoxy supports neither the absolute of a refined orthodoxy nor the relativism of a mere many. Its manifold theology engages the internal multiplicity of the doctrinal heritage as well as its productive slippages and failures. It remains mindful of the toxic by-products of any dogic certainty. It attends to the semantics of doxa as ‘mere opinion’, ‘appearance’, ‘illusion’ and ‘glory’ inflecting the doxologies of Christian confession.

The constructive possibilities for such polydoxy are necessarily endless. In enfolding many teachings, from within and beyond the churches, it never presumes “right teaching” but seeks it, hoping to multiply right relations in thought and practice. The theopoetics of the manifold locates this colloquium at a tangled and promising juncture in religious thought and planetary life.

Watch depts.drew.edu/tsfac/colloquium/2009 for a Student Call for Papers and conference details.
In 1956 Peder Borgen became one of the first graduates to receive the Ph.D. from the recently formed Drew Graduate School. His field was New Testament and Early Christianity and his dissertation was on eschatology and salvation history in Luke-Acts. In the decades that followed, he attained international prominence in the fields of New Testament studies and ancient Judaism, becoming the author or editor of more than two-dozen scholarly monographs and essay collections. In particular, he became a major authority on the ancient Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria.

Peder Borgen held academic positions in both the United States and his native Norway. He was Professor of New Testament at the University of Trondheim until his retirement in 1995. In 1998 he was elected president of the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas, the foremost European professional association for New Testament studies. That same year, King Harald V of Norway appointed Borgen Knight First Class of the Norwegian Order of St. Olav. In 2003 he was awarded the Gunnerus medal, the highest honor bestowed by The Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters.

This past summer, Brill publishers and the editorial board of the journal Novum Testamentum honored Professor Borgen during a day of celebration held in Oslo. The celebration included a scholarly symposium. Papers were read by prominent scholars from Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and South Africa on topics related to some of Borgen’s characteristic areas of research in the New Testament and ancient Judaism.

Ambassador Ronald van Roeden of the Netherlands gave a reception in Borgen’s honor at his official residence in Oslo and thanked him for his role as a cultural bridge-builder internationally, and between Norway and the Netherlands in particular. At a gala dinner at the Grand Hotel, the celebration continued. Tributes to Borgen’s academic achievements were delivered by the Dean of the Theological Faculty of the University of Oslo and the Rector of the Norwegian School of Theology. The Methodist Bishop, Øystein Olsen, also thanked Borgen for his services to the World Methodist Council and the World Methodist Historical Society.

Stephen Moore is Professor of New Testament and Chair of the Graduate Division of Religion.

Stay in Touch with the GDR!

Keep up with the news and events, and stay connected with your Drew colleagues, by making sure we have the most up-to-date contact information on file for you. Send an e-mail to: GDRadm@drew.edu, or send in the form below.

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