



# THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION AT FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

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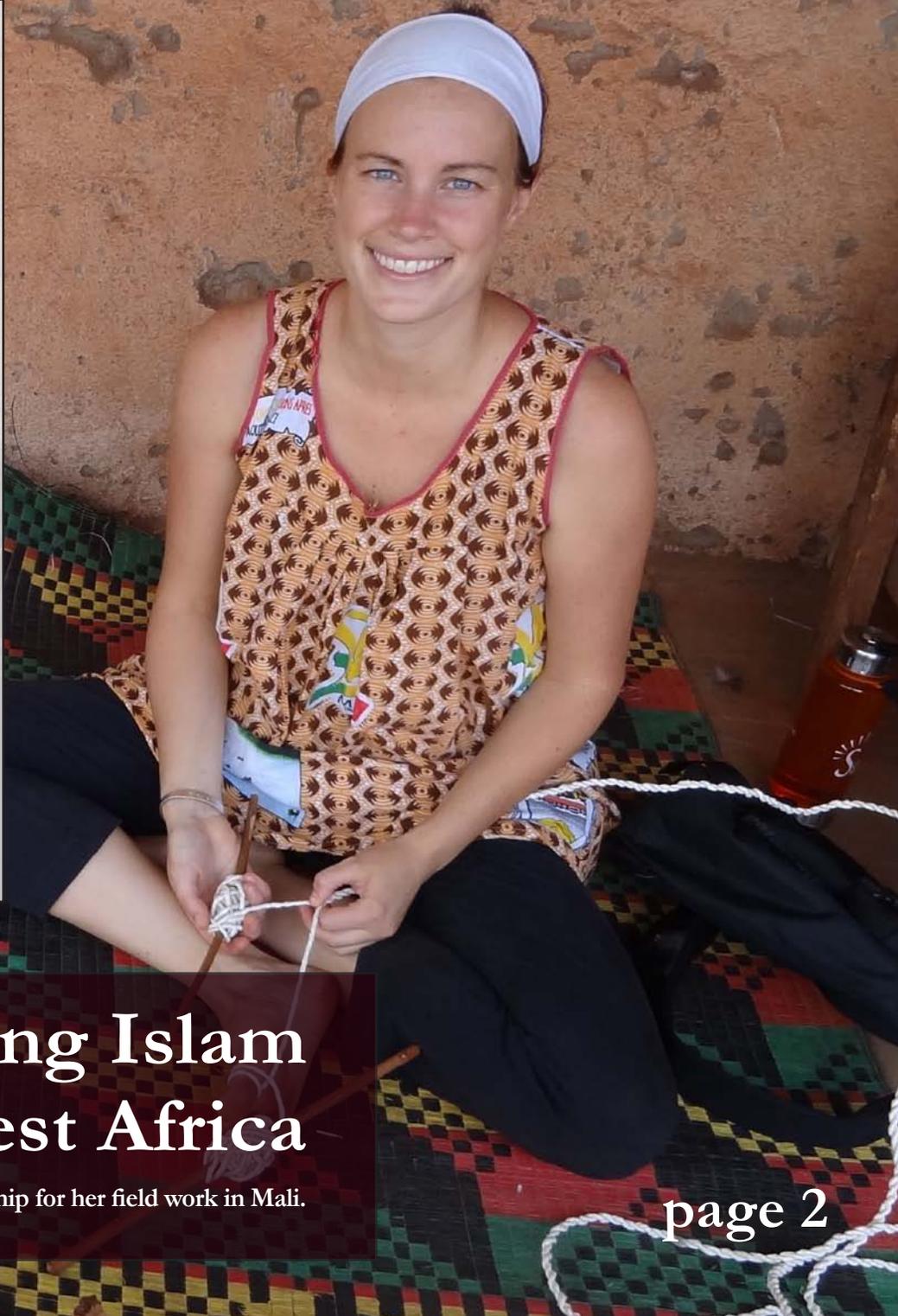
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Alumnus Colin Brown travels to Haiti.

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## Studying Islam in West Africa

Grad student Dianna Bell wins fellowship for her field work in Mali.

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# GRADUATE STUDENT *SPOTLIGHT:*

## DiannaBell

HISTORY AND ETHNOGRAPHY OF RELIGION  
STUDENT WINS INTERNATIONAL DISSERTATION  
FELLOWSHIP TO STUDY ISLAM IN WEST AFRICA

My interest in religion in Africa began as an undergraduate student in anthropology at Brigham Young University. I made my initial trip to Ouélessébougou, a town located in the West African State of Mali, for five months of fieldwork on religious life in the region as a master's student at University of Idaho in 2007. After completing my master's degree, I moved to Tallahassee to begin my studies as a PhD student in the History and Ethnography of Religion track under the direction of Dr. Joseph Hellweg. I returned to Ouélessébougou during the summers of 2009 and 2010 for preliminary dissertation research. In 2011 I was awarded FSU's International Dissertation Semester Research Fellowship and moved to Ouélessébougou for eight months of extensive fieldwork.

My dissertation, tentatively titled, "Between Prayers: The Life of a West Africa Muslim," presents the life history of a town elder in Ouélessébougou. This man, named Amadou Diallo, works making rope near Ouélessébougou's central market, and most days I worked alongside him while recording his memories and opinions. As part of my research, I also interviewed Amadou's family and friends as well as political and Islamic leaders in Ouélessébougou. I used these semi-structured interviews to corroborate Amadou's life experiences and hear varied perspectives on community and religious life in Ouélessébougou. I conducted my



*Dianna Bell with Yirigo Konaté*

research in French and Bamanankan, the interethnic lingua franca of Mali.

The clear connection between Amadou's everyday life and Islam came into obvious focus as he frequently recalled memories from the various jobs he held: herding cattle throughout the rural corners of West Africa, mining gold in Guinea, farming in Côte d'Ivoire, and trading throughout Mali and Guinea. Amadou, like most Malians, found it difficult throughout his life to earn enough income to support his family and lived under the stress of perpetual poverty. Amadou said that he never had the chance to earn a lot of money, but he consoled himself during moments of special difficulty by saying that his hard work had religious worth and had earned him *baraji*.

I noticed during my conversations with Amadou that he often focused on explaining how his experiences and decisions had generated *baraji*. The concept of *baraji*, which loosely translates from the vernacular as "divine reward" or "recompense," offers a framework for understanding Islam in daily life in West Africa. Muslims in the region approached their religious lives and decisions primarily in terms of *baraji*, as informants continually explained that they hoped to acquire units of *baraji* through various religious practices and daily pur-

suits. For some ritual and religious practices, people in Ouélessébougou could articulate the numerical sum of *baraji* that the action brought, while other practices were deemed immeasurable.

Scholars researching religion in West Africa have so far paid no attention to

man feelings that have driven Amadou's lifelong pursuit to acquire the unspecified amount of *baraji* that God requires for a person to enter paradise in the afterlife.

I plan to defend my dissertation during the 2013 spring semester, and hope



*Dianna Bell with Amadou Diallo*

the complex concept of *baraji* and the personal, cultural, and theological logics through which it is understood. By presenting the life history and personal perspectives of Amadou, my ethnography shows how Muslims in West Africa use *baraji* to find religious relevance, significance, and comfort in daily life by exploring the events, experiences, and hu-

to begin applying for assistant professor positions in departments of religion and anthropology later this year. I hope to return frequently to Mali throughout my professional life in order to advance understanding and to build scholarly connections and research collaborations between the United States and West Africa. •



*Joseph Hellweg sitting next to Amadou Diallo and talking with residents and neighbors in the compound where Dianna Bell lived.*

# The Breakfast Club

Retired professors  
mark ten years  
of camaraderie

*From left: Walter Moore, Leo Sandon,  
Bob Spivey (in back), and Bill Swain*

This summer marks the tenth year retired faculty **Walter Moore, Leo Sandon, Bob Spivey,** and **Bill Swain** have been getting together for a weekly breakfast. The four were among the founders of the department, with Spivey arriving in 1964 and becoming the department's first chair in 1965, Swain coming in 1965, followed by Moore in 1967 and Sandon in 1969. The group was organized in the summer of 2002 by John Carey, who came to FSU in 1960 and joined the newly established Religion Department in 1965. John now lives with his family in Anchorage, Alaska. We look forward to catching up with him and retired faculty Richard Rubenstein and Bill Jones in our next newsletter.

**Walter Moore** reports that since his retirement in 1999, most of his energy has gone to volunteer activities with university, community, and church. He has served on the board of the FSU Association of Retired Faculty and on the planning team for the FSU Faculty Luncheon Series. He has been an active board member and also a chair of the Tallahassee Citizens Against the Death Penalty and of Tallahassee Equality Action Ministry (TEAM), an organization through which local religious congregations worked together for social justice. At First Presbyterian Church he continues to teach a Sunday School Class, provides leadership in the church's social justice ministry and sings in the choir. He has written an informal biography for family and friends of



his father, Walter Moore, Sr., a Baptist minister in Mississippi and Georgia, who was a pioneer in civil rights in the south. Since retirement, Walter has returned to a regular tennis schedule including weekly matches with Bob Spivey. He and Marian enjoy visiting son David, a composer and choral conductor in St. Paul, Minnesota, and daughter Martha, who is an Associate Professor of Theology at Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta.

After retiring in 2003, **Leo Sandon** has continued his active schedule as a lecturer and teacher for a wide range of local service organizations, book clubs, and church groups. He has also from time to time presided over word and sacrament services as a Presbyterian minister and remains an active member at the First Presbyterian Church. He continued to address the Tallahassee community through his regular column on "Religion in America" in the Tallahassee Democrat, which he closed out on Oct. 9, 2010 after a 26-year run. He reports that he and Marvel Lou have over the years "shamelessly indulged themselves in doting on the achievements of granddaughter Catherine (18) and grandson Caleb (16)." In the past several years he has become the primary

care-giver for Marvel Lou, who has advanced Alzheimer's.

After almost 20 years away from FSU and the Department of Religion, ten as president of Randolph-Macon Woman's College, and nine as president of the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges, **Bob Spivey** retired to Tallahassee in 1998. Shortly thereafter, FSU president, Sandy D'Alemberte, asked him to consult with the FSU Foundation, which he has been doing for the past 12 years, the last 5 as a volunteer. Bob reports that in addition to fund- and friend-raising for FSU, his major passion has remained the Society for Values in Higher Education – a national fellowship of teachers and others who care about and attend to ethical issues in higher education. As a several times board member, former president and current associate executive director, he "reflects on the big questions with folks smarter than I am in order to make small steps in the right direction." He is delighted that the Society's interdisciplinary journal *Soundings* is now located at FSU, with the department's John Kelsay as editor. On Friday mornings for the last six years, Bob has worked with colleagues and about thirty inmates at nearby Wakulla

Correctional Institute on "Quest," a three-month program "for the building of better lives." On Sunday mornings he teaches a Bible class for his contemporaries "for the building of better faith." He continues to produce revised versions of his popular textbook *Anatomy of the New Testament*, now in its sixth edition (Fortress Press: 2010) with longtime Duke colleague Moody Smith and, recently, Princeton Theological Seminary's Clifton Black. He and Martha have loved being back in Tallahassee and at FSU and being close to their Florida children and grandchildren.

Since retiring, **Bill Swain** has been much more active with public interest advocacy in the arena of funeral/cemetery affairs - a concern that grew out of his work in developing the "Death and Dying" class that was taught in the Religion Department for many years. He continues to serve as an Elder in the congregation of First Presbyterian Church. His most recent adventure has been to establish and mentor a chess program at the Wakulla Correctional Institution, a state prison about half an hour's drive south from Tallahassee. He and his wife, Elaine, continue to enjoy concerts and plays, and dining out. •



## New Research Lab

*The Department of Religion received an FSU Technology Grant for \$29,500.00 to establish a Religion Research Lab. The lab, located on the "M" floor of Dodd Hall, provides students of religion, both graduate and undergraduate, as well as students from other departments at FSU, the technology they need to do, discuss, and write up their research: six computers, a smartboard, digital video and still cameras and audio recorders, scanners, and a color printer, as well as computer programs for processing digital data and field notes--all in a comfortable environment. The lab attracts daily use, sometimes till the wee morning hours, as students write and complete their work for courses, conference talks, and defenses.*

# Faculty Awards and Grants

## 2011-2012 COMMITTEE ON FACULTY RESEARCH SUPPORT (COFRS) AWARDS:

**Adam Gaiser**, “Shurat Literature and Ibadī Identity”

**Joseph Hellweg**, “Manding Verbal Production, From Political Songs to Medical Literacy: Dozo Hunters and Post-Election Violence in Côte

d’Ivoire and the N’ko Alphabet in Mali”

## OTHER AWARDS:

**Matthew Goff**, 2010-2011 Developing Scholar Award; Planning Grant

**Jimmy Yu** named Sheng Yen Assistant Professor in Chinese Buddhist Studies

## John Corrigan

National Endowment for the Humanities Advanced Digital Humanities Grant for Summer Institute on “Spatial Narratives and Deep Maps: Explorations in Advanced Geo-spatial Technologies and the Spatial Humanities,” 2011 (\$240,000).

# Selected Faculty Publications

## John Corrigan

- “From Unity to Locality,” *Church History* 80 (2011).
- “Meaninglessness,” in *Frequencies: A collaborative genealogy of spirituality* (November 14, 2011).
- “The Spatial Humanities,” lead author with D. Bodenhamer and T.M. Harris, National Science Foundation White paper
- “Spatial Narratives and Deep Maps: Explorations,” in *Advanced Geo-spatial Technologies and the Spatial Humanities* (2011).

## Bryan Cuevas

- Paperback editions of *Travels in the Netherworld* (Oxford 2011) and *The Buddhist Dead* (University of Hawai’i

Press, 2011).

- “Illustrations of Human Effigies in Tibetan Ritual Texts With Remarks on Specific Anatomical Figures and Their Possible Iconographic Source,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 21.1 (2011).

## Kathleen Erndl

- “Rita Gross as Teacher, Mentor, Friend,” *Journal of Buddhist-Christian Studies* 31 (2011).

## Adam Gaiser

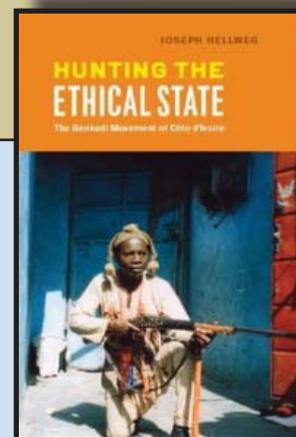
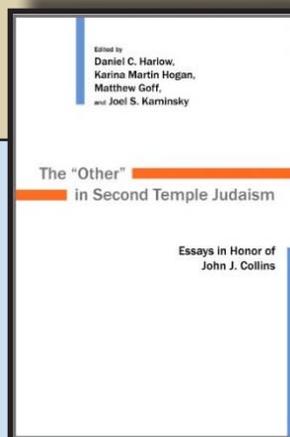
- “What do we Learn about Early Khārijites and Ibādiyya from their Coins?” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103 (2011).
- “A Module on Islam” in *Fostering Religious Literacy Across Campus*, ed.

Miriam Diamond (Stillwater; New Forums Press).

## Matthew Goff

- *The Other in Second Temple Judaism: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins*, co-edited with Daniel Harlow, Karina Martin Hogan, and Joel Kaminsky (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011).
- “‘The Foolish Nation that Dwells in Shechem’: Ben Sira on Shechem and Other Peoples in Palestine,” in *The ‘Other’ in Second Temple Judaism: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins*.
- “Being Fleshly or Spiritual: Anthropological Reflection and Exegesis of Genesis 1-3 in 4QInstruction and 1 Corinthians,” in *Christian Body, Christian Self: Concepts of*

## Recent Faculty Books



*Early Christian Concepts of Personhood*, edited by C. Rothschild and T. Thompson (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).

**Joseph Hellweg**

- *Hunting the Ethical State: The Benkadi Movement of Côte d'Ivoire* (University of Chicago Press, 2011).
- *Anthropologie, les premiers pas: Introduction à la modélisation et aux méthodes de la recherche qualitative* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011).

**Aline Kalbian**

- "Considering the Risks to Economically Disadvantaged Egg Donors," *American Journal of Bioethics* 11.7 (September 2011).

**Martin Kavka**

- "Should Levinasians Also be Hegelians?: On Wyschogrod's Levinasianism," *Philosophy Today* 55 (2011).
- "The Ends of Anxiety in Merton and Heschel," *Merton Annual* 23 (2010).
- "Translation," in *Cambridge Companion to Religious Studies*, ed. Robert Orsi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
- "What Is Immanent in Judaism?: Transcending Charles Taylor's A Secular Age," *Journal of Religious Ethics* (2012).
- "Can Jews Be Radical Theologians?" in *Soundings* (2012).

- "Verification (Bewährung) in Franz Rosenzweig," in *German-Jewish Thought Between Religion and Politics: Festschrift in Honor of Paul Mendes-Flohr on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, edited by Christian Wiese and Martina Urban (de Gruyter, 2012).
- *Cambridge History of Jewish Philosophy: The Modern Era*, co-edited with David Novak and Zachary Braiterman (Cambridge University Press, 2012).
- "Introduction" and "Phenomenology," in *Cambridge History of Jewish Philosophy: The Modern Era*.

**Nicole Kelley**

- "The Punishment of the Devil was Apparent in the Torment of the Human Body': Epilepsy in Ancient Christianity," in *Disability Reader*, edited by C. Moss and J. Schipper (NY: Palgrave, 2011).

**John Kelsay**

- "The Limits of the Arab Spring," *Dissent* (June 13, 2011).
- "The Author Responds to Comments on Arguing the Just War in Islam," *Journal of Church and State* 53 (2011).
- "How Friends become Enemies: the Construction of Muslims as Enemies by Other Muslims," in *Who is My Enemy? Religious Hope in a Time of Fear*, edited by D.F. Weaver and J.S. Mayer (Villanova University Theology Institute, 2011).

**David Levenson**

- "Messianic Movements," in *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, edited by A. J. Levine and M.Z. Brettler (Oxford University Press, 2011).

**Amy Koehlinger**

- "Religion and Sport" in *Oxford Handbook of Sport History* (Oxford University Press, 2011).
- "Knights of Columbus," *Oxford Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural History*, (Oxford University Press, 2011).

**Amanda Porterfield**

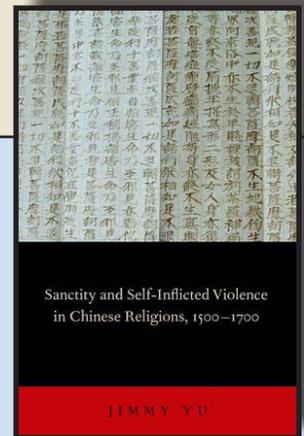
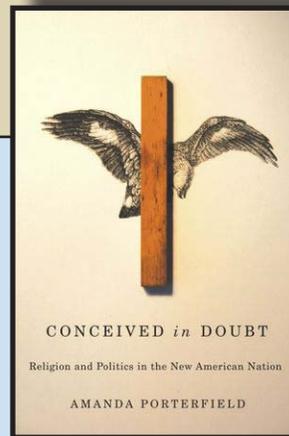
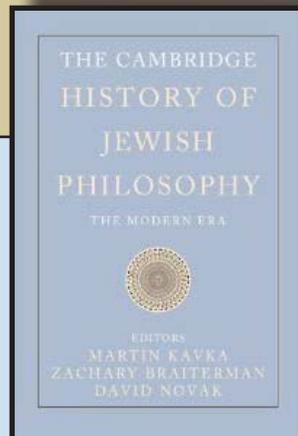
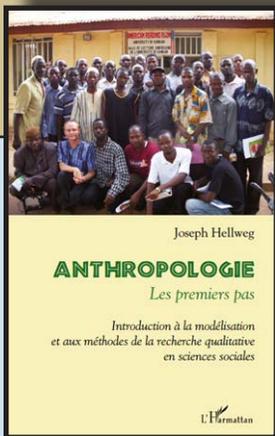
- *Conceived in Doubt: Religion and Politics in the Early American Nation* (University of Chicago Press, 2012).
- "The Problem of 'Formation' for Historians Teaching Religion," *Teaching Theology & Religion* 14 (2011).

**Sumner B. Twiss**

- "Global Ethics and Human Rights: A Reflection," *Journal of Religious Ethics* (2011).

**Jimmy Yu**

- *Sanctity and Self-Inflicted Violence in Chinese religions, 1500-1700* (Oxford University Press, 2012).
- "Contextualizing the Deconstruction and Reconstruction of Chan/Zen Narratives: Steven Heine's Academic Contributions to the Field," *Religious Studies Review* 37 (2011).



# Lectures 2011-2012

Feb. 18, 2011

**Tessa J. Bartholomeusz Lecture:** Matthew Kapstein, University of Chicago and École pratique des hautes études, “‘Spiritual Exercise’ and the Interpretation of Buddhist Philosophy in India.”

*Matthew Kapstein*

Oct. 4, 2011

Elaine Howard Ecklund, Rice University, “Science vs. Religion: What Scientists Really Think.”

Nov. 15, 2011

**Charles Wellborn Lecture in American Religious History:** David D. Hall, Bartlett Research Professor of New England Church History: Harvard Divinity School, “The Place of the ‘People’ in American Religious History.”



*David D. Hall*

Oct. 10, 2011

Kelly J. Baker, University of Tennessee, “‘There’s us and the dead’: The Zombie Apocalypse in American Culture.”

Jan. 26, 2012

**John F. Priest Lecture:** David Brakke, University of Indiana-Bloomington, “Why the Church Did Not Reject Gnosticism.”



*David Brakke with Gloria Priest*



**April 2, 2012**

François Dupuigrenet Desroussilles, “The God of Books and the Body of Christ: Printing and Reading the Bible in Renaissance England (1535-1640),” lecture given in conjunction with the Strozier exhibit he curated, “Book of Kings, King of Books: Early Printed Bibles from the Carothers Collection.” (Online version at <http://strozierbiblesexhibit.omeka.net/>)

## February 17, 2012

Manuel Vásquez, University of Florida, “Beyond the Fetishism of Commodities? Hyper-Animism and Materiality in the Present Age,” keynote address at 2012 Grad Symposium.



*Manuel Vásquez*

## April 11, 2012

Kevin Pittle, Biola University, “Theological Transvestites, Duplicious Imposters, or Just a Bunch of Wannabees? Messianic Judaism’s Ambivalent Relationships with Mainstream Jewry and Evangelicalism.”



*Jimmy Yu, Kathleen Erndl,  
Liz Wilson, and Bryan Cuevas*

## April 5, 2012

**Tessa J. Bartholomeusz**  
**Lecture:** Liz Wilson, Miami University, “The Buddha’s Mother as Feminist Conundrum: Exploring the Death of Gautami.”



# Tenth Annual Graduate Symposium



*Sylvester Johnson and John Kelsay*

The Tenth Annual FSU Department of Religion Graduate Symposium, “Discourses of Ritual and Power,” was held Feb. 18-20, 2011. Emily Clark, PhD student in American Religious History, directed the symposium with the assistance of MA and PhD students from all department areas. Jimmy Yu served as FSU faculty liaison. Graduate students representing 26 institutions in the United States, India, and China participated. Faculty respondents to student papers included Professors Gaiser, Corrigan, Kelley, Erndl, Porterfield, Koehlinger, Yu, and Kelsay from FSU, Kathryn Lofton from Yale University, and Elizabeth Barre from Marymount Manhattan College.



*Matthew Kapstein and Amanda Porterfield*



*Dianna Bell, James Broucek, and Bryan Cuevas*

Saturday’s roundtable discussion on “What the Foucault Do We Do Now?: the Power of Authority in Religious Studies,” featured Professors Matthew Day from FSU, Sylvester Johnson (Indiana University–Bloomington), Matthew Kapstein (University of Chicago), and Kathryn Lofton (Yale University). On Sunday, recent FSU PhDs Kelly Baker (University of Tennessee), Elizabeth Barre (Marymount Manhattan College), Arthur Remillard (St. Francis University), Howell Williams (Learning House), and Joseph Williams (Rutgers) led a panel on “Life After Grad School: Post-Grad Prospects.”



*Nicole Kelley responding to papers by Amanda Davis, Jenny Collins-Elliott, Matthew Gallion, Darryl Schafer, and Seth Bledsoe*

Professor Matthew Kapstein, University of Chicago and Ecole pratique des hautes études, delivered the keynote address and the Tessa J. Batholomeusz Lecture, “‘Spiritual Exercise’ and the Interpretation of Buddhist Philosophy in India.”

The winner of the Leo Sandon award for best paper went to John Robichaux of Harvard Divinity School for his paper, “Democracy, Power and Religion: Power and Domination in the Liberal Democratic Theory of Rawls and Murray.” •



*Left: Jimmy Yu and John Corrigan*

# Eleventh Annual Graduate Symposium



This spring's symposium with the title, "Beyond Borders: Constructing, Deconstructing, and Transgressing Boundaries," took place February 17-19, 2012. Religions of Western Antiquity PhD student Seth Bledsoe served as director and Joseph Hellweg as faculty liaison. Participants included students from UNC-Chapel Hill, Arizona State, University of California–Riverside, Boston College, Ohio State, Emory, Duquesne, Methodist Theological School, University of Missouri, UNC-Charlotte, Georgia State, Rice, Princeton, Indiana–Bloomington, Mississippi, UF, USF, UCF, and FSU.

Serving as faculty respondents to student papers were Elijah Siegler and Katie Hladky (College of Charleston), Kathryn Lofton (Yale), Trevor Luke (FSU Classics Department), and FSU Religion Department faculty Porterfield, Corrigan, Hellweg, Gaiser, Dupuigrenet-Desroussilles, Kavka, Cuevas, Koehlinger and Goff.

Friday evening's keynote address was given by Professor Manuel Vásquez of the University of Florida on "Beyond the Fetishism of Commodities? Hyper-Animism and Materiality in the Present Age," and was followed by the presentation of the Leo Sandon Best Paper Award to Zachary Johnson, FSU MA student in American Religious History, for his paper, "Heathen Chinese: Protestant American Narratives of Chinese Religiosity in the 19th Century." •

*From top: Shawntel Ensmenger and Lauren Gray; Manuel Vásquez talking with students; Aaron Ellis, Kirk Essary, and Tamara Marks; Joseph Hellweg with 2011 Director Emily Clark, 2012 Director Seth Bledsoe, and 2012 Co-Director Tara Baldrick-Morrone; Jenny Collins-Elliott presiding at panel with David Woodington, Thomas Whitley, Daniel Wise, and Matthew Goff (faculty respondent); Joseph Hellweg talking with Sandon Award winner Zachary Johnson*

# Graduate Student News

## RECENT GRADUATES

### Spring 2011

**Harold Short, MA**  
**Kristen Muldowney, MA**

### Summer 2011

**Kathleen Mahoney Hladky, PhD**  
“Chasing the American Dream: Trinity Broadcasting Network and the Faith Movement” (directed by John Corrigan)

**Barton Edward Price, PhD**  
“Evangelical Periodicals and the Making of America’s Heartland, 1789-1900” (directed by John Corrigan)

**Nahed Artoul Zehr, PhD**  
”Responding to the Call: Just War and Jihad in the War Against Al-Qaeda” (directed by John Kelsay)

### Fall 2011

**Matthew Ray Hagele, PhD**  
“Rethinking Liberal Political Thought: John Locke, Religious Forms of Reasoning, and Institutional Participation in Democratic Discourse” (directed by John Kelsay)

**Brooke Elizabeth Sherrard, PhD**  
“American Biblical Archaeologists and Zionism: The Politics of Historical Ethnography” (directed by Amanda Porterfield)

**Timothy Frederick Simpson, PhD**  
“Not “Who Is on the Lord’s Side?” but “Whose Side Is the Lord on?”: Contesting Claims and Divine Inscrutability in 2 Samuel 16:5-14” (directed by Matthew Goff)

**Michael Graziano, MA**  
“The ‘Peculiar Children’ of the Nation: American Civil Religion at Antebellum West Point” (directed by Amanda Porterfield)

**Patrick Ley M.A.**

## GRADUATE STUDENT PLACEMENTS 2012

**Shannon Dunn**, Assistant Professor, Gonzaga University; **J. Baron Price**, Visiting Assistant Professor, Grand Valley State College; **Nahed Zehr**, Assistant Professor, Western Kentucky University; **James Broucek**, Assistant Professor, Iowa State University; **Michael Gueno**, Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater; **Molly Reed**, Lecturer, Louisiana State University

## GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS

**Shannon Dunn.**



Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship for 2011-2012; Dissertation Completion Fellowship for 2011-2012 from the American Association of University Women (had to decline because she won the Newcombe Fellowship); Mary Jo Small Travel Fellowship 2011.

**Joshua Fleer.** Christian Scholarship Foundation for 2012-2013 academic year; Hamilton College Library

Special Collections Research Fellowship for research on the House of David and Mary’s City of David; Gerd von der Lippe Young Scholar Grant to present paper at the International Society for the History of Physical Education and Sport held in Frankfurt, Germany; named Associate Editor of *Communal Societies*.

**Jenny Collins-Elliott.** Ermine M. Owenby, Jr. Fund travel award.

**Tammy Heise.** Ermine M. Owenby, Jr. Fund travel award.

**Rosemary Kellison.** Ermine M. Owenby, Jr. Fund travel award.

**Cara Burnidge.** White House Historical Society Research Grant; Koniag Education Foundation Scholarship for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 academic years.

**Christopher Blythe.** Wildermuth Scholarly Paper Award, for “The Twelve Have Swallowed Thirty Eight”: Minority Views of the Council of Fifty,” awarded by John Whitmer Historical Association; Lester E. Bush Best Master’s Thesis Award from the Mormon Historical Association, 2012.

**John Crow.** Best Philosophy Paper, Third Annual Southeast Regional History Graduate Student Conference, 2011.

**Zachary Johnson,** Leo Sandon Best Paper Award at 2012 FSU Graduate Symposium, for “Heathen Chinese: Protestant American Narratives of Chinese Religiosity in the 19th Century.”

# San Francisco 2011

Faculty, alumni, and current students at the FSU reception at the annual meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature and the American Academy of Religion. Clockwise from bottom left: David Barr (PhD 1974) and Elizabeth Struthers Malbon (BA 1969; MA 1970; PhD 1980); Andrea Allgood (BA 2004), Joan Branham (BA 1983; MA 1985), John Whitley (BA 2001); Nahed Zehr (PhD 2011), Rosemary Kellison (MA 2009; PhD candidate) Shannon Dunn (PhD 2012); Barney Twiss and John Kelsay; Jason Staples (BA 2004; MA 2007), Andrea Allgood (BA 2004), Chris Hooker (BA 2004), Nicole Tilford (BA 2004; MA 2008).



## GRADUATE STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

### John Crow

“Accessing the Astral with a Monitor and Mouse: Esoteric Religion and the Astral located in Three Dimensional Virtual Realms,” in *Contemporary Esotericism*, edited by K. Granholm & Egil Asprem (London: Equinox Publishing, 2012).

### Rosemary Kellison

“Studying and Advocating,” *Soundings* 95.2 (2012).

### Tamara Monet Marks

“Kierkegaard’s Understanding of the Afterlife,” in *Kierkegaard and Death*, edited by Patrick Stokes and Adam J. Buben (Indiana University Press, 2011).

### Daniel Dillard

“Nature, Natural History, and the Dilemma of Religious Liberalism in Thoreau’s The Maine Woods,” *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 6:1 (2012).

“Raising People’s Rile: Transnational Muslim Literature in post-9/11 America,” in *Global Literatures and Islam*

*in the Post-9/11 Era*, edited by Beyazit Akman and Filiz Barin (Cambridge Scholars Publishing: Newcastle, 2012).

“The American Transcendentalists: A Religious Historiography,” *49th Parallel: An Interdisciplinary Journal of North American Studies* 28 (2012).

### Adam Park

“In the Octagon: Mixed Martial Arts Comes to Life,” in *American History Through American Sports: From Colonial Lacrosse to Extreme Sports*, edited by Danielle Coombs and Bob Batchelor (Praeger: Santa Barbara, CA, 2012).

# GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTATIONS AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

## Society of Biblical Literature 2011 Annual Meeting

**Andrew Polk**, “I Want You to Understand Your Book?: Mythmaking, Fard Muhammad, and the Lost-Found Nation of Islam.”

**Seth Bledsoe**, “Magic vs. Miracle in the Apocryphal Acts of Peter.”

**Jennifer Collins-Elliott**, “Jesus is Jealous?: The Use of Dinah in the Instruction of Virgins in Early Christian Literature.”

**Shem Miller**, “The Poetic Structure of Stichographic Texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls.”

## American Academy of Religion 2011 Annual Meeting

**Rosemary Blackburn-Smith Kellison**, “Feminism and Imperialism as Just Causes for War?: Assessing the Justice of the War in Afghanistan.”

**Adam Park**, “Body Studies: A Nature/Culture Problem.”

**Adam Ware**, “In the Air There’s a Feeling of Christmas: On the Discursive Deafness of Body Studies.”

**Joshua Fleer**, “Spectator versus Participant: The Gaze of the

Historian in the Field of Sports and Religion.”

**Lauren Gray**, “On Embodiment and Lived Religion.”

**Shannon Dunn**, “Justice in the Family: The Challenge of Muslim Family Law in the United States.”

**Andrew Polk**, “The Best Knower: Mythmaking, Fard Muhammad, and the Lost-Found Nation of Islam.”

**Emily S. Clark**, “Noble Drew Ali’s ‘Clean and Pure Nation’: The Moorish Manufacturing Corporation and Identity.”

**Emily S. Clark**, “New World, New Jerusalem, New Orleans: The Apocalyptic Art of Sister Gertrude Morgan.”

## American Society of Church History 2012 Meeting

**Cara Burnidge**, “Champions of Mankind: Woodrow Wilson, World War I and the Protestant Establishment.”

## American Historical Association 2012 Annual Meeting

**Andrew Polk**, “Faith Battling Fear: Military Chaplains and the Regulation of Fear during World War II.”

## American Culture Association 2011 Annual Meeting

**Andrew Polk**, “The Demarcation of an Imagined Place: The Search for the Elusive Bible Belt.”

## Southwestern Historical Association 2011 Meeting

**Andrew Polk**, “Where Those People Live: The Bible Belt as Cultural Myth.”

## American Society for Bioethics and Humanities 2011 Meeting

**Shannon Dunn**, “Adoption and Kinship in Contemporary Western Muslim Thought.”

## Society for the Study of Muslim Ethics 2012 Meeting

**Rosemary Kellison**, “Tradition, Authority, and Immanent Critique in Comparative Studies of Muslim Ethics of War.”

## Nineteenth Century Studies Association 2012 Meeting

**Tammy Heise**, “Prophetic Visions and Political Compromises: The Intersection of Native American, Mormon and Evangelical Protestant Religions in the Mid-Nineteenth Century American West.”

## American Studies Association 2011 National Meeting

**Emily Clark**, “Use the Moorish Treatments and Get Well?: Moorish Science Temple Teas and Tonics.”

## Conference on Kierkegaard’s *Upbuilding Discourses of 1847*, University of Sheffield, 2011

**Tamara Monet Marks**, “Tremble, Because You are Immortal.”

# Undergraduate News

## RECENT GRADUATES

### Spring 2011

Samantha Aupperlee  
Emily Austin  
Lauren Bedford  
Crystal Betts-Green  
Gregory Buchanan  
William Burke  
Christopher Capaldo  
Adam Cushing  
Roy Daniel  
Kelsey Griner  
Scott Harvey  
William Humphrey  
Zachary Hutchinson  
Matthew Lewis  
Nicole Looney  
Charlsye Lyle  
Logan Miles  
Isabel Morgan  
Patrick Perez  
Meredith Ross  
Amber Senna  
Tanya Skura  
James Smith  
Nicole Stevens  
Tiffany Summers  
Fallon Upton  
Leah Wise

### Summer 2011

Andrew Arias  
Daniel Brenner  
Roberto De La Noval  
Jordan Depratter  
Nicholas Detrio  
Barry Epperson  
Maribel Esperanza  
Brendan Kirley  
Kyle Leaman  
Aaron Ley  
Angela McFarland  
Christopher Roberts

September Sweet  
Brogan Wikarek

### Fall 2011

Milan Alley  
Gardy Arisme  
Travis Benton  
Annie Davis  
Benjamin Gurrentz  
Matthew Lombardi  
Jenny Penland  
Susan Shore  
Ian Thomas  
Sergio Torres  
Laura Zinnerman

## GRADUATION HONORS

### Summa Cum Laude

Lauren Bedford  
Benjamin Gurrentz  
Logan Miles  
Meredith Ross  
Leah Wise

### Magna Cum Laude

Emily Austin  
Adam Cushing  
Roberto De La Noval  
Jordan Depratter  
Zachary Hutchinson  
Laura Zinnerman

### Cum Laude

William Burke  
Barry Epperson  
Scott Harvey  
Ian Thomas

## 2011 BETTY PHIFER AWARDS

Adam Cushing and Leah Wise



*Adam Cushing, Betty Phifer Award winner, with his parents.*



*Leah Wise receives Betty Phifer Award from Matthew Goff.*

## 2011 ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Rob De La Noval, Lauren Bedford,  
Meredith Ross



*Rob De La Noval receives Academic Excellence Award from Matthew Goff.*

# ALUMNUS IN ACTION:

## Colin Brown

I became a Religion major at FSU after taking Professor Levenson's Intro to New Testament course in the spring of 1997. My interests included Christianity as a messianic Jewish sect, as well as Jewish mysticism and post-Holocaust Jewish theology. I graduated in the spring of '99 with a focus in Religions of Western Antiquity and, at the suggestion of some of my professors, entered the Master's program at FSU in the fall with the intention of eventually earning a PhD.

Unfortunately, my graduate school career was to be short-lived. My father passed away in June of 2000, and I moved home to Atlanta to take over his small metal fabrication company, which had foundered during his illness. On June 26, 2000, four days after my father's death, I made the jump from the insulated and wonderful world of academia to the harsh reality of trying to right this sinking ship of a company on which ten families, including mine, depended for their livelihood. It was hard. It took a really long time. However, very slowly, things started to improve. I found that the skills that I had developed in my studies were of great benefit to me in my new situation. I knew how to find information. I knew how to dig

beneath the surface to figure out how and why things worked as they did. I had a great respect for, and ability to communicate with, people of disparate backgrounds – something that served me well both in my management of people and in building customer relationships. While I found myself wishing at times that I had studied engineering instead, I found that my Religion degree served me well in this job.

In late 2008, I received a call from a large, Swiss-owned company interested in buying mine. We were able to come to terms, and we closed the deal in early 2009. I was to stay on for three years to continue managing my location, but the stress of ownership was off. My wife, Christie,

and I did some things that we had been putting off, including returning to London, where we met in 1998 as residents at the FSU London Study Centre. We also took the opportunity to do some humanitarian work, becoming involved with Mercy & Sharing, an Aspen-based organization that operates two schools, three feeding programs, and two orphanages in Haiti. We traveled to Haiti in August, 2010, eight months after the earthquake that ravaged the already poverty stricken country. Spending time there put a lot of things in perspective for me, and gave me some ideas about what my next steps will be after my contract for my current job ends.

While I'm not certain what my next move will be, I'm excited about the future. My contract with the company that bought mine ended at the end of 2011, and on December 16, Christie and I welcomed Mary Grace Brown into the world. I'm going to take a year off to spend time with her and do some volunteering. After that, who knows – maybe I'll finish that degree. •



# Alumni News

**Laura Richards Johnson** (BA 2007). I graduated from Duke Divinity School in 2011 with an MDiv. I am currently serving as the Associate Pastor at Union Grove United Methodist Church in Hillsborough, NC. I live in Durham, NC with my husband, Kevin, whom I married in August 2010.

**Heather McMurray** (MA 1999). I am living in Nashville where I am the reference editor at Thomas Nelson. I recently had the great pleasure of editing Jessica Tinklenberg deVega's new book (see below).

**Kendall Green** (BA 2010). I am in my 2nd year of graduate school at the University of Central Florida, working towards an Ed.S. in School Psychology and have accepted an internship with Lake County Schools as a school psychologist intern for the upcoming school year.

**Ashley Douglas** (BA 2010). After graduation I moved to Thessaloniki, Greece, to work at Perrotis College. I started my MDiv at Duke Divinity School in Fall 2011.

**Heather Kantrowitz** (BA 2009). After getting a Masters from Brandeis in teaching Hebrew Bible, I have been working as a Youth Director for Beth Jacob Congregation in St. Paul, MN.

**Heather McVoy** (MA 1985 PhD 1992). After a long career in social services, I am currently taking some time off to renew contact with old friends, do lots of reading and be open to what may come next.

**Anna Masi** (BA 2010). I'll start my third year of an MDiv at Duke Divinity School in Fall 2012. For my MDiv thesis in the program on Gender, Theology, and Ministry, I'm studying disabled bodies in the sacramental life of the church. After my MDiv, I plan to pursue a PhD in religion.

**Dawn Betts-Green** (BA 2011). Since graduation, I've been working for Scholastic Book Fairs, and I've had an essay accepted for publication in the anthology *It's All in Her Head: Women Making Peace with Troubled Minds*, due out in Spring of 2013 from Seal Press.

**Betsy Barre** (MA 2004; PhD 2009). After receiving my PhD, I was hired as the ACM-Mellon Post Doctoral Fellow in Islamic Studies at Lake Forest College in Lake Forest, Illinois. In the summer of 2010, I moved to the Upper East Side of Manhattan, where I am currently working as an Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Marymount Manhattan College.

**Jessica Carr** (BA 2005; MA 2007). I'm a PhD student in the Religion Department at Indiana University. My dissertation traces representations of Palestine in Jewish-American public and material culture in the first half of the 20th century. Last summer I had the opportunity to study Yiddish at the Vilnius Yiddish Institute in Lithuania.

**Tammy Jaycox** (BA 1995; MA 1997). I've just had my third daughter to join my other two who are just finishing kindergarten and second grade. I've been working as an elementary reading specialist, and am on the SAC and PTA boards at my daughters' school. I'm also working with our school board to write more STEM-based curriculum, which is the focus of their magnet school.

**Shannon Zellars-Strohl** (BA 2006; MA 2007). I'm working on my PhD in Victorian literature at Indiana University, writing a dissertation on the relationship between Darwin and the Victorian 'crisis of faith' in late-Victorian supernaturalism. This spring I presented a paper on "Spirisexual Selection in the work of Charles Kingsley" at the Nineteenth-Century Studies Association conference. I also spend

alot of time teaching variations on freshman composition here, and I am a contributor to the *Victorian Bibliography*, which is produced annually by the journal Victorian Studies.

**Raphael Camilo** (BA 2009). I am currently pursuing my MDiv at Asbury Theological Seminary and am serving as a student pastor for the United Methodist Church in Daytona Beach, Florida.

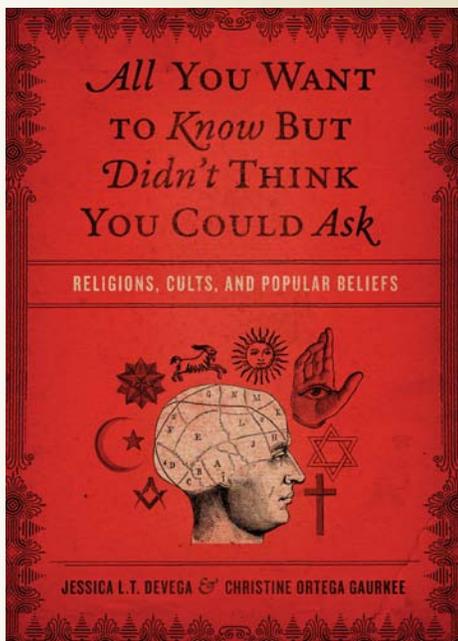
**Lindsay Hirsch (Newman)** (BA 2004). I am currently the Director of Academic and Jewish Affairs for the Consulate General of Israel to Florida and Puerto Rico. As the Department Director and official liaison between the State of Israel and all academic and Jewish institutions throughout Florida and Puerto Rico, I provide educational resources and materials in the areas of politics, culture, travel, religion, advanced technology, and law.

**Glen Torbert** (BA 1994; MA 2000). When I'm not working on insurance claims, I am seeking enlightenment in northern California.

**Rob De La Noval** (BA 2011). I'm currently interning full-time with the Anglican College Ministry of St. Peter's Anglican Church in Tallahassee, FL. I'm leading Bible studies (using skills and resources I learned in the religion department), and promoting the ministry on FSU's campus. This summer I'm moving to South Bend to start a master's program in Early Christian Studies at Notre Dame.

**Christopher Bell** (BA 2003; MA 2006). I am currently working on a PhD in Tibetan Studies at the University of Virginia, and I have been in Lhasa, Tibet, conducting my dissertation research. I have recently submitted an article on Tibetan Prophecy for publication in a book on prophecies in world traditions.

**Jessica Tinklenberg DeVega** (PhD 2006). I am in my fifth year as Assistant Professor in the Religious Studies department at Morningside College in Sioux City, IA. In 2009 I won the Sharon Walker Faculty Teaching Excellence Award, and have recently co-authored a world religions reference work for teens and young adults, entitled *All You Want to Know But Didn't Think You Could Ask: Religions, Cults, and Popular Beliefs* (Thomas Nelson, 2012).



paper and work at Catholic Charities, coordinating parishes in their social ministries.

**John V. Garner** (BA 2005). I am currently ABD in the philosophy department at Villanova, and have recently published a book of translations of interviews with the French philosopher Cornelius Castoriadis: *Postscript on Insignificance: Dialogues with Cornelius Castoriadis*, ed. Gabriel Rockhill, trans. Gabriel Rockhill and John V. Garner [London and New York: Continuum, 2011]).

**Christine Hutchison-Jones** (BA 2001). I completed my PhD in Religion and Society at Boston University, in May 2011, writing a dissertation on “Reviling and Revering the Mormons: Defining American National Values, 1890-2008.” After 8 years as the program coordinator for the Luce Program in Scripture and the Arts at Boston University, I am currently serving as the Briefing/Administrative Coordinator for the Provost at Harvard University. My husband Chris (BA 2001; MA 2003) got his master’s in Social Work from Boston University in May 2011 and, after five 5 years in academic administration, is serving as

the Program Director at a residential treatment facility in Dorchester, MA, for dual-diagnosis patients with both severe mental health and addiction diagnoses.

**David Trautman** (BA 2006; MA 2008). Megan (BA 2007) and I had our first child, Amanda, on August 23. Megan has one more semester left to complete her M.Div. at Trinity School for Ministry. I received my S.T.M. at Trinity School for Ministry this May, writing a thesis on “The Ideal Community in Early Judaism and Christianity: A Comparative Rhetorical Analysis of Acts 2:42-47.” I am working full-time as the Director of Communications for the Anglican Diocese of Pittsburgh and am also a postulant for Holy Orders in the Anglican Church in North America. God willing, I will be ordained a deacon in the Anglican Church on June 16. In the fall, I plan on applying to PhD programs.

**Caroline Phillips** (BA 2008). I am in the Army and have been serving as a medic for the last 4 years in the 82nd Airborne Division. Now I am in Monterey, CA, at the Defense Language Institute studying Arabic.

**Chris Cochran** (BA 2006). After graduating from FSU in 2006, I ended up in law school at the University of Miami, passed the Florida bar in 2010, and am practicing as an attorney out of Miami. Somewhere in there I also did some volunteer work with the ACLU of Florida on their voter disenfranchisement project.

**Lindsay Rae Myers** (BA 2006). After getting my MA in Theology at Villanova University, I now am working as a barista at a coffee shop in Pensacola. I also write for our local independent

*Heather McMurray (MA 1999), Jessica Tinklenberg DeVega (PhD 2006), Nicole Tilford (BA 2004; MA 2008), and Bill Lyons (PhD 2003) in background*



**Allison Spingler** (BA 2010). I graduated from my accelerated nursing program in December and am now an RN working at the Tallahassee Memorial Hospital Cardiac Progressive Care Unit. Not what I had originally planned, but I actually love cardiac nursing! Not sure if the future holds med school or graduate school for ARNP, but taking some pre-med classes in the Fall just to see.

**Valerie Keebler Paul** (BA 1997). I'm married, living in Birmingham, AL, and work as an Operations Analyst with BBVA Compass. I play in the Southeastern Chamber Orchestra, sing with the Birmingham Chamber Chorus and direct 2nd-4th grade children's choir.

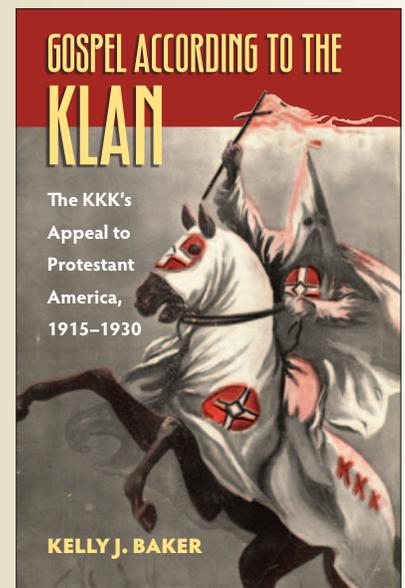
**Andrew Bennett** (BA 2009). At the moment I am living in Siem Reap, Cambodia, where I am studying Khmai language so I can return to North America and do graduate work studying Cambodian religious history. To pay the bills I am teaching English, and will possibly start teaching applied linguistics at Build Bright University here.

**Shawn Graaff (Banks)** (BA 2007). I left my think-tank job in California and moved to KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa almost 3 years ago. My husband Simon and I have carried on the family tradition of innovative agriculture and bought the Koude Vlake farm and Nature Conservancy in the rural Western Cape of South Africa. It's a huge piece of land that's rich in fynbos and a biodiversity hot-spot that we have turned into a completely off-the-grid experiment in sustainable farming that has been a tough journey but progressing nicely. Professionally I'm involved with tech start-ups in Southern Africa, specifically Mobile Development software and Digital Political Consulting in the greater continent of Africa.

**Kelly Baker** (BA 2002; MA 2003; PhD 2008). Since 2010, I've been a



Lecturer in Religious Studies at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where I teach a wide range of courses in American Studies, Religions in the US, and Global Studies. My book, *Gospel According to the Klan: The Ku Klux Klan's Appeal to Protestant America, 1915-1930*, came out in September 2011 with the CultureAmerica series of the University Press of Kansas. I am currently working on two books with the provisional titles, *Between the Living and the Dead: A Cultural History of Zombies in America* and *Consuming the End: Apocalypticisms in Twentieth Century America*.



**ALUMNI AND FRIENDS...**

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Please take a moment to keep in touch and give us an update by sending us your name, grad year and degree earned, your current mailing address and/or email address, and any news (Gotten married? Taken a new job? Written a book?) so we can include it in a future newsletter. You can send your emails to [dlevenson@fsu.edu](mailto:dlevenson@fsu.edu) or, if you prefer postal mail:

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**THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION**  
at The Florida State University

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*Dodd Hall, the home of FSU's Department of Religion, was recently recognized as one of Florida's Top Ten Buildings by the Florida Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Construction on the building began in 1925 and took about four years to complete.*



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*Department of Religion*

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