

SENIOR CLASS 2008

Sari Cornfield- *The Power of Seeing: The Evil Eye in Judaism and Orthodox Christianity*

Margaret Cremin- *The Queen of Heaven Gave Birth in a Barn: Two Contemporary Approaches to the Symbol of Mary*

Aimee Downes- *Children of God, Descendants of the Dragon: Understanding the Protestant House Church Movement in China*

Samuel Estes- *Spreading the Gospel by Joining the Revolution: A Study of Christian Identity and Engagement*

Emma Glidden-Lyon- *Old Earth, New Heaven: The Evangelical Mission and the Saving of the Environment*

Lucy Horns- *The World is at War: Examining Violence in Christian Identity*

Elizabeth Lienesch- *Calling on the Lord: An Analysis of the 700 Club Prayer Counseling Center*

Sanotsh Raju- *Who Is Christ? Answers from Nineteenth Century Bengali Intellectuals*

Celia Segel- *Bending Towards Justice: Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Faith in the Beloved Community*

RELIGION MAJOR HONORS

**Bardwell Smith Prize for
Excellence in the Study of Religion**
Margaret Cremin '08

Distinction on Comps
Margaret Cremin '08

Larson Fellowships
Laura Shatzer '09 (with History Major Emily Tragert '09)
"Pilgrim's Progress: Medieval and Modern Pilgrimage in France and Spain"

Kevin Close '09
"The Khoton of Western Mongolia: A Study of Muslim Minorities"

A Dispatch from the Middle East:

BECOMING EGYPTOLOGISTS AND ISLAMICISTS

By Laura Shatzer '09

Waking up at 4:30 a.m. to give a presentation on ancient Egyptian religions to alumni over breakfast was tough, but being roused at 5:30 a.m. from a deep slumber by the muezzin's haunting call to prayer on a regular basis in Morocco was magical.

This past winter, three other junior religion majors (Jackie Perlow, Hannah Campbell-Gustafson and Hal Edmonson) and I, and newly declared sophomore Caitlin McKimmy, participated in Carleton's brand-new "Middle East Mosaics" off-campus program. Led by President Rob Oden and Professors Steve and Dana Strand, this interdisciplinary seminar took us from Egypt (for the most part, Cairo), to Turkey (where we resided in Istanbul), and lastly, to Morocco, where we stayed with host families in the administrative capital of Rabat.



Shatzer and Hal Edmonson '09 in front of the Blue Mosque in Istanbul

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To read more about the study of Religion, the Carleton Religion Department, and Religion in the News, go to:
<http://apps.carleton.edu/curricular/religion/>

In the Department:

LEAVE REPLACEMENTS FOR 2008-09

Next year, both Michael McNally and Louis Newman will be on leave. Michael McNally, Associate Professor of Religion, has earned a Mellon new Directions Fellowship to explore the complex intersections between the law, the conceptual and legal category of “religion” and Native American sacred places, practices and “objects” that are religious but not plainly so.. “Specifically I aim to gain targeted legal training, research, and writing with law professors around the country who specialize in various sectors of the law that concern Native American Religious Freedom (First Amendment, Cultural Property, Historic Preservation, Intellectual Property)”.

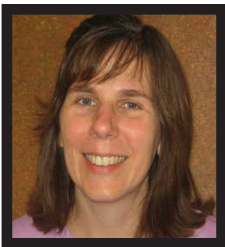
Professor Newman will be working on a book project that he began on his last sabbatical, on the idea of repentance in Judaism. He says, “The idea is to sort through the various concepts of repentance and the closely related concept of atonement that have developed in Judaism over the centuries. Doing this exhaustively is out of the question, but I hope to bring some conceptual clarity to the various dimensions (religious, moral and psychological) of this concept and to investigate its role in Jewish moral life.”

Classes in American Religions and Judaic Studies will be taught by Elizabeth Pérez and Beth Kissileff, respectively. Pérez is currently a doctoral student at the University of Chicago Divinity School doing research on Orisha Worship and Caribbean religions of the African diaspora. Her dissertation is “Returning to the Drum: Conversion and Healing in an African American Santería Community.” In a talk last winter, Ms. Pérez discussed her work studying the religious communities of African-American and Haitian population in Chicago. She detailed her experiences doing field research and the tensions she found between studying and participating in religious practices. Her courses next year will be, “Religion in American Culture”, “Gender and Religion in the African Diaspora”, “Vodou: A Haitian Religious Tradition in Historical Perspective”, and “The Virgin of Guadalupe”.

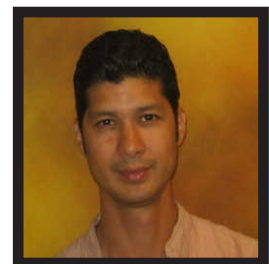
Beth Kissileff is currently a lecturer at the University of Minnesota where this spring she taught a senior seminar, “Reading and Rereading the Bible.” Ms. Kissileff has a PhD from the University of Pennsylvania in Comparative Literature and Literary Theory. Her teaching interests include, literary approaches to the Bible, gender roles in the Hebrew Bible, and Jewish-American studies. During her visit at Carleton she presented the talk “Irrisistable Samson: Performing Artist, Superhero or Suicide Bomber?” Next year she will offer, “Introduction to Judaism”, “The Sacred Journey: Exodus and Other Literary Pilgrimages”, “Hebrew Bible”, “Gender Roles in the Hebrew Bible”, and “Genesis”. □

PROFESSORS PEARSON AND ELISON INTRODUCE NEW CLASSES

Both Professor Lori Pearson and Professor William Elison are teaching new courses this term. Prof. Pearson’s course “Philosophy of Religion” examines the existence and nature of God; the status and nature of religious experience; the problem of evil; the meaning of faith, belief, and truth; definitions of the self and salvation; and the significance of religious pluralism for claims about truth and God. The class has read works by philosophers and theologians such as Gordon Kaufman, Abraham Joseph Heschel and Soren Kierkegaard. A balanced mix of students of philosophy and religion, the class has paid special attention to how the arguments for the existence of God are made, the various portrayals of God’s nature, and the implications of various arguments for the relationship between God and humans.



Prof. Elison’s class is “Beyond Hindu and Muslim: The Lives of Indian Saints.” He is leading the class through a study of Hindu and Sikh gurus and Muslim pirs and their influence as interlocutors between religious communities in South Asia. The course examines the careers and cults of holy men and women from the medieval period to present day by using primary texts. In addition to the use of more traditional sources such as texts, poems and songs, Prof. Elison is also incorporating critical viewing of films. □



Alumni News

Max Mueller '03 has been accepted into the Ph.D. program at Harvard to study American Religions.



Gelperin with Speaker Pelosi and Congressman Holt.

Princeton University, Princeton Township, and Princeton Borough have signed a contract to purchase only 100% recycled paper from now on. We're moving on to non-toxic, eco-friendly cleaning products. Change comes more slowly than I would like...

As for my full time job, I work for Congressman Rush Holt (D-NJ), Carleton class of 1970, as a District Representative. I help disabled, economically disadvantaged, and elderly individuals navigate government bureaucracy and make assistance programs work for the people they were designed to help. On a good day, I restore people's faith in the federal government.

Lexi Gelperin '05 writes, "I'm now vice-chair of the Princeton Environmental Commission and I have initiated an Environmental Purchasing Program. As a result,

On a bad day, I listen with all the compassion I can muster to people who fall through the cracks of existing social and government infrastructure and dream about making the world a better place for all its inhabitants.

I will most likely be moving to San Diego this summer as my fiance, **Andy Ryan '05**, will be starting a PhD program in Chemistry at the Scripps Research Institute this fall. My first step will be to find the local Carleton network." □

Field Trip

This winter students attended a lecture by feminist theologian

Elizabeth Johnson. In the lecture entitled "Seeking the Living God: Nourishing Faith with the Living Tradition," Johnson discussed the role of the Nicene Creed in the lives of modern Christians. □



Students with theologian Elizabeth Johnson, (center).

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The course for which we received Religion department credit was President Oden's "Egyptian Religion from the Pyramid Age to the Beginnings of Islam." Under the President's enthusiastic guidance we explored phenomena such as the role of pharaohs as gods and the ancient Egyptian obsession with the afterlife, through both translations of primary source texts and out in the field on excursions. In the greater Cairo area we visited the pyramids at Saqqara and Dashur as well as Giza, and on a trip to Upper Egypt, we admired the hieroglyphs and paintings in the Karnak and Luxor temples and the tombs of the Valley of the Kings.

In Egypt, we strove to make connections between the touristic side of the ancient religious structures and the lived Islam that we witnessed every day in the bustling streets of Cairo. In Turkey, we wondered how a country with such a secular reputation could at the same time be so devout. The government's ban on the headscarf in universities was lifted while we were in Istanbul, and I felt as though there were more veiled women out and about the day after the amendments were passed. In Morocco, we could not enter mosques as non-Muslims (entrance

is permitted to non-Muslims in Egypt and Turkey), but we could still catch a glimpse of the neighborhood mosques sprinkled throughout the medina of Rabat. We also heard about and saw the five pillars of Islam being practiced by our host families.

Although we had few class sessions devoted specifically to Islam in Egypt, Turkey, or Morocco, I found that Islam permeated our study and daily interactions in all three countries. My focus group had the task of synthesizing what we learned and observed in relation to Islam and presenting this information to our peers at the end of the program. While we of course reveled in this task, it was extremely difficult to make generalizations about Islam within each country, let alone between countries. Having also explored Cairo's Coptic Christian neighborhood, attended churches and synagogues in all three countries, and visited a Jewish-Italian cemetery and the Sephardic Jewish cultural center in Istanbul, we also wanted to capture the religious diversity that exists outside of Islam. In the end, we concluded that the religious traditions and contemporary milieus of Egypt, Turkey and Morocco are incredibly nuanced and rich, much like our experience on the Middle East Mosaics program. □

snapshots:

THE MOSAICS TRIP



Hannah Campbell-Gustafson '09 and Laura Shatzer '09 in the Ibn Tulun Mosque in Cairo

SPRING '08 SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Prof. William Elison

- Hindu Traditions
- Beyond Hindu and Muslim: The Lives of Indian saints

Prof. Roger Jackson

- Theravada Buddhism

Prof. Michael McNally

- Native American Religious Freedom
- Lived Religion in America

Prof. Louis Newman

- Religious and Moral Issues- Holocaust
- Issues in the Study of Religion

Prof. Asuka Sango

- Introduction to Religion

Prof. Lori Pearson

- Introduction to Christianity
- Philosophy of Religion

We invite both your comments and your news updates for future issues of Nume-News. Please contact Jill Tollefsen at (507)222-4232, or jtollefs@carleton.edu