Summaries of Doctoral Dissertations*

Emma J. Anderson [Ph.D. 2005]

Fatal Ambivalence: The Conversion and Apostasy of Pierre-Anthoine Pastedechouan, Seventeenth-Century Native American

This dissertation explores the collision of post-Tridentine Catholicism with traditional aboriginal religions through its intimate study of the single seventeenth-century Innu convert, Pierre-Anthoine Pastedechouan.

Born into a traditional Innu hunting and gathering culture in the St. Lawrence River valley of seventeenth-century Canada, Pastedechouan experienced an irrevocable change during the five years he spent as a young boy at a Franciscan Recollet convent in Angers, France. Based on the precedent of previous Innu overseas delegations, Pastedechouan's community perceived his journey as an opportunity to glean military, political, and economic information about their enigmatic French allies on their own soil. His Recollet hosts, however, by affecting this young boy's total religious, cultural, and linguistic transformation, sought to prove their ability to alter fundamentally the religious lives of North America's indigenous peoples. While they fell considerably short of their continental aspirations, the Recollets so transformed Pastedechouan's religious and cultural identity that, when requested to return as a missionary to his people, he apparently replied: "My Father, how could your Reverence want to send me back to those beasts who do not know God?" Pastedechouan's subjection to the conflicting expectations of his own people and

*_HTR_ periodically includes summaries of Harvard doctoral dissertations recently accepted in the Th.D. and Ph.D. programs under the Committee on the Study of Religion, a standing committee of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences with membership from both that faculty and the Faculty of the Divinity School. Relevant theses from the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (NELC) are also included.

Dissertations submitted for the Th.D. are deposited in the Andover-Harvard Theological Library at the Divinity School. All the dissertations summarized in this section are available from University Microfilms, Inc.

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his missionary hosts caused his subsequent personal suffering. His inability to conform to Innu social expectations following his return to Canada condemned him to a lifelong struggle to regain the acceptance of his people. These desperate efforts, however, progressively alienated him from the European missionaries, who had overseen his religious transformation. Torn between his desire for the regard of his community and his lingering attachment to Catholicism, Pastedechouan experienced a profound, painful religious ambivalence during the last years of his life. Eventually rejected both by the Innu, whose approval he had so assiduously courted, and by the church, which he had recurrently embraced and spurned, Pierre-Anthoine Pastedechouan died alone of starvation at the age of twenty-eight.

This dissertation uses the narrative framework of Pastedechouan's life to suggest a new model for understanding aboriginal religious change in seventeenth-century Canada, to explore a range of aboriginal responses to post-Tridentine Catholicism, and to explore the continuing resonance of Pastedechouan's story, as contemporary Native Americans struggle to recover from the debilitating effects of their own strikingly similar experiences in modern residential schools.

Stephen T. Campagna-Pinto [Ph.D. 2004]

"The Workshop of Being": Religious Affections and Pragmatic Value in Jonathan Edwards and William James

This study brings into conversation the thought of Jonathan Edwards and William James on religious affections and pragmatic value. The thesis assesses the relationship of these concepts to the idea of America. Edwards and James share a discourse that traces the tradition of Protestant piety, as it evolves into the concept of experiential religion. These thinkers each confront forms of theological and materialist determinism that shape their investigations. Critical to each thinker is the consideration of the nature of human freedom in the face of theological and scientific forms of determinism. Each author responds with the argument that human life is purposive and future-oriented in such a way as to make religiousness of primary interest and value. Their responses include the development of experimental and processive metaphysical visions; assessment of the role of language and of systematic thinking in experiential religion; and emphasis upon the critically important orientation to the future that has informed the interpretation of the American project as a quest that has important implications for the creation of a charitable community. Critical to this argument is discussion of the religious psychologies developed by each thinker: of Edwards's philosophy of excellency and James's philosophy of radical empiricism; of the role of pragmatic evaluation in the interpretation of religious experience; and the use of the saint and the religious genius as models of the religious life. This study concludes with the argument that these models, so different in historical context, carry out a similar purpose of inspiring

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the development of a charitable community based upon justice and love that is best inspired by experiential religion that has been pragmatically verified. The thesis employs biographical study, and theological, philosophical, and literary methods to carry out close textual analysis of the works of these two authors.

Heather D. Curtis [Th.D. 2005]

The Lord for the Body: Pain, Suffering and the Practice of Divine Healing in Late-Nineteenth-Century American Protestantism

This study explores how participants in the divine healing or faith cure movement that flourished among Protestant evangelicals in the late nineteenth century worked to transform the ways in which Christians comprehended and coped with physical pain and illness. Drawing upon autobiographies, theological treatises, and tracts that defend faith healing, and numerous articles and testimonials from evangelical periodicals, I argue that advocates of faith cure endeavored to break free from a deep-seated, devotional ethic that linked bodily suffering with spiritual holiness and valorized patient resignation as the proper Christian response to affliction.

Focusing upon the primacy of spiritual practice in the enterprise of divine healing, I show that participants in this movement employed a distinctive interpretation of the role of human action, specific rituals, and devotional disciplines as means for modifying the meaning and experience of pain in the Christian life. According to these Protestants, overcoming illness and its effects upon the flesh required an ability to translate belief into behavior. Healing, they contended, meant to believe that God had banished sickness from the body, despite any sensory evidence to the contrary, and to act accordingly. The practice of healing, therefore, involved training the senses to ignore lingering pain or symptoms of sickness and disciplining the body to "act faith" by getting out of bed and serving God through active engagement with others. For the ailing women and men who espoused this perspective, participating in practices such as meditation, prayer, laying on of hands and anointing helped to foster the requisite mental habits, corporal behaviors, and spiritual dispositions that faith in divine healing demanded.

Paradoxically, however, proponents of divine healing also insisted that "acting faith" involved receptivity to the invigorating influx of the Holy Spirit, rather than exertion of the human will. Elucidating the complicated ways in which men and women within the faith cure movement described the relationship between divine power and personal passivity in the process of "acting faith" enables me to illumine the connections between Protestant practices of healing and broader cultural discourses about gender and the body. In this period, conversations concerning the relationship between will, mind, and body, as well as between divine providence and human agency, appeared inextricably bound up with debates about the nature of true womanhood, virile masculinity, healthy-mindedness, muscular Christianity,

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and the advancement of Anglo-Saxon civilization. Within this context, practices of healing operated as tools for the spiritual formation of the self and as tactics for negotiating the various gender norms, medical discourses, and theological idioms that shaped the experience of bodily affliction.

Divine healing as a movement thus sought both personal transformation and broader cultural reform. In addition to enabling believers to conquer illness and to counteract its effects upon their own flesh, the doctrines and rites of divine healing supplied strategies for navigating, and sometimes resisting or modifying, the complicated religious, cultural, historical, economic, and social circumstances that influenced the ways in which pain and suffering, illness, and healing were understood and performed.

Robin J. DeWitt-Knauth

The Jubilee Transformation: From Social Welfare to Hope of Restoration to Eschatological Salvation

This dissertation traces the Jubilee tradition through two profound historical tranformations separating three distinct stages of interpretation. These stages are reflected in an editorial transformation of Leviticus 25–26 and in related biblical passages. The earliest stage has roots in ancient Near Eastern traditions. The third stage extends the tradition into the further interpretations of the Dead Sea scrolls and the Gospel of Luke. The Jubilee tradition originated as ancient social welfare legislation written for humanitarian purposes, based on economically sound principles aimed at limiting the consequences of debt in a subsistence economy. It required the observance of Sabbatical rest, the freeing of slaves, the cancellation of debts, and the restoration of landed inheritance. But at the end of the exile, the Cyrus Edict (issued coincidentally forty-nine years after the destruction of Jerusalem) inspired a "Jubilee Transformation" among priestly circles in Babylonia, who fundamentally reinterpreted the law and transformed it into a political message of hope for restoration. As reinterpreted, "Jubilee" indicated the completion of the Sabbatical rest of the land, the freedom of the Israelite captives, and the restoration of the promised land. Minor alterations of the original text of Leviticus 25 plus some major additions in Leviticus 26 accomplished this transformation, but also partially obscured the original intent of the laws. An exilic editor transformed the pre-exilic Jubilee tradition for political purposes into propaganda for the restoration effort in order to persuade a complacent exilic population to return to Israel and to rebuild the nation. The Jubilee thus became a symbol of God's favor, which signaled the authorization of a second Exodus and the restoration of the covenant. The editor stresses God's continued remembrance of that covenant in the face of perceived abandonment. Following the trajectory established by this exilic transformation, the Jubilee tradition developed further along apocalyptic lines into a message of hope

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for eschatological salvation. In this new transformation, reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in Luke, Jubilee means the realization of true Sabbath rest, the cancellation of the debt of sin, the liberation from slavery to sin, and the restoration of the rightful inheritance of eternal life. These radical interpretive transformations of the Jubilee tradition illustrate a fundamental property of Scripture, whereby it maintains its relevance within the community of faith.

Peter Dubovsky [Th.D. 2005]

A Study of the Neo-Assyrian Intelligence Services and Their Significance for 2 Kings 18–19

In this dissertation I have reconstructed the Neo-Assyrian intelligence services as a context for Sennacherib's invasion described in 2 Kings 18–19. This reconstruction presents a collection of case studies that illustrate the flexibility and concerns of Neo-Assyrian intelligence. The Neo-Assyrian archives published in the series State Archives of Assyria serve as the main sources for this reconstruction. In this study I have demonstrated that the Assyrians gathered intelligence by means of regular Neo-Assyrian administrative structures, local administrative structures, and local temple personnel. The Assyrians developed a sophisticated system of verification of gathered information as well as mechanisms that assured the timely and accurate flow of intelligence to Nineveh. The final part of this reconstruction consists in a collection of case studies on Neo-Assyrian psychological warfare.

Analysis of 2 Kings 18–19 reveals which techniques of psychological warfare the biblical redactors attributed to the Assyrians. According to the biblical sources, the Neo-Assyrian intelligence services attempted to obtain political and military intelligence. A comparison of the biblical and Neo-Assyrian sources dealing with Neo-Assyrian intelligence shows that all cases of psychological operations reconstructed from the former sources had their corresponding operations in the latter. Moreover, further evidence from the Neo-Assyrian sources illustrates some techniques of Neo-Assyrian psychological warfare such as diplomatic negotiations, speeches delivered at the city wall, and letters sent to the king. The dissertation concludes with an investigation of the historicity and meaning of 2 Kings 18–19.

Benjamin Harrison Dunning [Ph.D. 2005]

Aliens and Sojourners: Self as Other in the Rhetoric of Early Christian Identity

This dissertation investigates the use of "alien rhetoric" in early Christian texts—that is, the language of foreignness, sojourning, resident-alien status, and citizenship as a means for communicating varying forms of Christian "alterity." In contrast to previous scholarship that has understood early Christians' self-designation as outsiders, either in terms of their technical socio-legal status or as a metaphor in

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response to persecution, this study focuses on the rhetorical shaping of the topos in texts of the first and second centuries C.E. To this end, it employs a methodological approach that interacts with theoretical issues in contemporary historiography (as raised by Michel Foucault, Hayden White, and others) and draws on the practice theory of Pierre Bourdieu, the reflections of Jonathan Z. Smith on the politics of constructing difference, and the work of literary theorists such as Mikhail Bakhtin, Roland Barthes, and Umberto Eco.

This study examines specifically the varied deployments of the resident-alien topos in 1 Peter, Hebrews, *Shepherd of Hermas, Similitude* 1, *Epistle to Diognetus* 5-6, and *Apocryphon of James.* The dissertation argues that alien rhetoric in early Christianity did not reflect a fixed and univocal response to some singular external situation (such as being marginalized by the surrounding Roman society), but rather it represented a versatile rhetorical resource that early Christians could use for the purposes of identity formation in strikingly *different* ways—with respect to both internal self-definition and the situating of Christian identity within the vast range of social, philosophical, and cultic identities and practices that proliferated in the Roman world. At one end of the spectrum, some Christians used this language to construct a workable and relatively integrated identity for themselves very much within Roman society while at the same time justifying their existence as a distinct group. At the opposite end, other Christians utilized the same rhetoric both to engage and to contest the basic legitimacy of the move to ground Christian identity in an understanding of the self as "other."

Talal Youssef Eid [Th.D. 2005]

Marriage, Divorce, and Child Custody as Experienced by American Muslims: Religious, Social, and Legal Considerations

This dissertation completes a contemporary exploration and interpretation of the issues facing American Muslims and suggests solutions to those issues. The research comes from my broad experiences as an Imam of an Islamic Center in America for over twenty-three years, from interviews with other Imams, from members of the community, and from the available literature.

As Muslim communities integrate into mainstream American society, one must examine how the dynamics at work in American society will absorb this youngest of the Abrahamic traditions. Muslims retain their separate identity by adhering to the fundamental tenets of Islam but have a clear tendency to fit within the local dominant non-Muslim socio-cultural system. As a diverse and growing population, American Muslims currently face many of the same problems confronting other communities and faith groups. In particular some American Muslim wives face serious domestic problems and discrimination from members of the community who lack knowledge about the true teachings in the Qur'ân and the Sunnah. Con-

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flicts in the areas of marriage, divorce, and custody of children occur inevitably. At present, Islamic organizations, mosques, and centers have jurisdiction over Islamic matters. Each of these organizations may react differently to these conflicts, create tensions among themselves, and become a source of confusion for Muslims. At the same time, the state's involvement in matters that were, and for many still are, religious issues raises difficult legal problems as well as other issues concerning the relationship between religion and the state in America. Thus the need for a thorough study presses more urgently today than at any other time, and an attempt to resolve these obstacles will enable Muslims to contribute more effectively to the American cultural landscape.

I propose five solutions for the unique problems of Muslims in America: (1) educational outreach to Muslims; (2) pre-marital counseling; (3) a parenting plan for interfaith couples; (4) the prenuptial agreement; and (5) the establishment of Sharî'ah courts that would manage the family affairs of American Muslims and mediate their religious affairs within the scope of American law.

Curtis Junius Evans

The Burden of Black Religion: Representing the Race and Enlisting the Black Churches in the Nation's Racial Struggle

This dissertation takes a broad view of interpretations of African American religion and pays particular attention to the social and political contexts of interpreters of black religion. I attempt to trace significant changes in the ways in which Africans were imagined and understood in terms of their place in American society and their ultimate destiny within the human family. I argue that views about African American religion and the "innate" capacities of Africans have been central to these historical debates.

I begin with an examination of the heated discussions in the 1830s between abolitionists and pro-slavery advocates about the character of Africans and their destiny in America. I examine how assertions of African "natural" religion emerged as a common way of speaking of black Americans, explore what it meant to assert that blacks were naturally religious in the antebellum period, and I chart this discourse of natural religion into the late nineteenth century. I look at major interpretative shifts to understand why religion was deemed to be an innate quality of African peoples and what this meant for debates about blacks' place in American society.

I also explore the rise of social scientific interpretations of African American religion in the late nineteenth century and assess why social science eventually became the central tool that black intellectuals used in the 1940s to interpret African American religion. My basic contention is that African American social scientists argued that the influence of the "Negro Church" had significantly declined as blacks migrated to the urban North and that this transformation would speed up blacks'

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assimilation into American culture. This approach to the study of African American religion had the practical effect of social scientific research pointing out those "peculiarities" of African American culture that would have to be excised if blacks were to be integrated into American society. Black nationalists and advocates of a distinctive African sentiment reacted vehemently to this approach in the 1960s and viewed it as an unhealthy elevation of degenerate European American culture over against the culture of African Americans.

The "Burden of Black Religion" therefore analyzes the cultural, intellectual, and historical shift in claims about the centrality of religion in African American life. It ends with an examination of the meaning of debates that assessed the extent to which the "Negro Church" would fade or diminish in influence as blacks made economic, political, and social gains in the broader society. Throughout the work, I compare interactions between black and white interpreters of African American religion and their varied expectations about the nature and meaning of religion in American society.

Christopher G. Frechette, S.J. [Th.D. June 2005]

The Name of the Ritual: Investigating Ancient Mesopotamian "Hand-lifting" Rituals with Implications for the Interpretation of Genre in the Psalms

Principally an investigation of one of the best attested rituals preserved from ancient Mesopotamia—the Akkadian rituals known by the rubric ŠU.IL$_2$.LA$_2$, pronounced *shuilla* and translated 'hand-lifting'—the present study draws methodological implications for the interpretation of genre in the Psalter. Like other rituals of the ancient Mesopotamian scholars known as "exorcists," *shuilla*s included offerings, gestures, and recitations, which have long been compared with the biblical psalms of individual lament. This study addresses the issue of how to interpret what distinguishes and characterizes *shuilla*s as rituals and questions the adequacy of prior interpretations both of the meaning of the term ŠU.IL$_2$.LA$_2$ and of the character of the rituals to which it is applied. In order to disclose what typifies and distinguishes these rituals, prior studies have tended to apply form-critical methods, which rely heavily on the text-type of the recitations in them and resemble a tendency not foreign to interpreters of the Psalter. Drawing upon the rich fund of textual and figural evidence available for establishing numerous aspects of a cultural context within which to interpret *shuilla*s, the present study makes the following four proposals: (1) Contrary to an opinion embedded in the field of Assyriology, the concept of "hand-lifting" to which the rubric ŠU.IL$_2$.LA$_2$ and related terms refer is not simply "prayer" or "petition-prayer." Rather, seen against the conventional depiction in Mesopotamian figural art of the auspicious reciprocal exchange of hand-lifting gestures between client and patron, the *shuilla* concept of "hand-lifting" referred to a formal salutation addressed to a deity and was seen as effective

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for prompting a favorable response. (2) Since rituals of the exorcist were attributed to divine origin, the metaphorical application of this auspicious concept to such a ritual would have intensified its perceived effectiveness. As a ritual strategy, *shuilla*s would have lent such effectiveness to the petitions included in them as well as to those petitions in rituals associated with them. (3) *Shuilla* rituals are characterized by an array of tendencies both toward consistency and toward flexibility. Among other things, their flexibility includes the frequent insertion of texts for particular occasions into prewritten texts of more general character. (4) Some recitations were likely performed in *shuilla*s and also applied to other functions. From these findings, this study cautions methodologically both against relying too heavily on text-type in determining genre and against the rigid association of particular texts with a single genre. Having argued that the metaphorical application of the *shuilla* rubric functions alongside text-type as a key aspect of genre, this study concludes by suggesting such an aspect of genre be considered in the interpretation of psalm-titles in the Psalter.

Jeremy M. Hutton [Ph.D. 2005]

The Transjordanian Palimpsest: The Overwritten Texts of Personal Exile and Transformation in the Deuteronomistic History

In this study, I take an interdisciplinary approach to the symbolic geography of Transjordan and the Jordan River as portrayed in the Deuteronomistic History. This literary approach utilizes concepts and models from anthropological, sociological, and philosophical thought. The meaningful, symbolic concept of the Jordan River as a boundary, in biblical as well as modern times, derives from both the Israelite experience of historical events and the legendary tales that feature journeys over the river. The symbolic understanding of Transjordan as a place of transformation and formation or renewal of personal authority in the Israelite community began with the early stories that related the ordinary course of significant events, such as battles and political exiles, and developed gradually in the literature. This symbolic understanding of Transjordan shows signs as well of elaborating in concord with the historical development of the Deuteronomistic History itself. The literary motif of the symbolic geography of Transjordan and the Jordan River recurs throughout the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman periods. Deutero-Isaiah overwrote it, like a palimpsest, to portray the reentry of Israel into Canaan under the auspices of Cyrus, and the authors of the Synoptic Gospels overwrote it as a way of contextualizing Jesus' baptism.

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Vivian L. Johnson [Ph.D. 2005]

David in Distress: TheTransformation of David through the Historical Psalm Titles

This dissertation analyzes the thirteen historical psalms (3, 7, 18, 34, 51, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 63, 142) in the Psalter that refer to crucial moments in King David's life as recorded in the Samuel narrative (1 Sam 16–1 Kings 2). Because most Psalms research focuses on the original setting, the so-called *Sitz-im-Leben*, of these late additions to the book of Psalms, they have received little attention. Using a text-based analysis, I have found that these historical psalms focus on episodes of King David's life in which he experienced trouble. Such moments of distress or trouble in David's story include his flights from Absalom (Psalm 3) and from Saul (Psalms 52, 54). In contrast to the Samuel portrait of a mostly callous and tricky military hero and adventurer, these historical psalms highlight David's responses to his times of distress and thus tend to recast him as a pious man who prayed to his God in every moment of difficulty.

Nami Kim [Th.D. 2004]

Constructing "Asian Women": A Critical Examination of Cultural-Theological Rhetoric

This dissertation poses a critical examination of the homogeneous category of "Asian women" in cultural and theological discourses. This so-called category has rendered *wo/men in/from Asias* as a monolithic group irrespective of its varied socio-cultural, religious, political, and economic differences among them. I argue that Christian feminist theology needs to reassess and to reconsider critically the use of the category "Asian women" in order to remain a relevant and liberating force in the lives of *wo/men in/from Asias*. The category of "Asian women," based on two identities—that of woman and that of Asian—presents two problems. First, when the geopolitical, cultural designation called "Asian" is taken as a mark of difference, important differences among "Asian women" are erased and the essentialist portrait of "Asian women" is produced. Second, the use of the category of "Asian women" subscribes to the additive notion of identity, which prioritizes sex/gender and understands oppression as cumulative rather than intersecting.

The historical investigation of various scripts concerning Japan's military sexual slavery demonstrates that "hierarchically structured differences" existed among "Asian women" along the axes of race, ethnicity, class, nationality, and age among other categories. I argue that the production of the essentialist portrayal of "Asian women" could be traced back to Christian overseas missionary discourse from

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the late nineteenth century through early twentieth century, and that the traces of this missionary discourse are found in contemporary feminist scholarship, which constructs "Asian women" as the victims of their own patriarchal religion(s)/cultures/traditions. The study of a genealogy of the unifying category "Asian" also shows that its current usages in Asian theology needs reconsideration in the face of increasing forces of globalization, that compel us to rethink national borders, citizenship, identity, and community. Finally, I argue that Asian feminist theology needs to define itself as a critical global feminist theology rather than as a theology that speaks only for and by "Asian women" from the "Asian women's perspective," as transnational capitalism and international military hegemony closely interrelate women's lives across national borders.

Anna Adrienne Marianne (AnneMarie) Luijendijk [Th.D. 2005]

Fragments from Oxyrhynchus: A Case Study in Early Christian Identity

This dissertation studies Christian identity in the pre-Constantinian era by means of papyrus fragments found at the site of the ancient city of Oxyrhynchus in Egypt. Using the image of the city marketplace as a place of social interaction, this study asks whether Christians would stand out as distinctive there. It employs the methodology of the fields of Early Christian studies and papyrology. Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* and the recent scholarship in the concept of "constructedness" of identity by Karen L. King and Judith M. Lieu constitute its main theoretical framework.

The study reviews traditional criteria used to identify Christians in documentary texts and proposes a more productive methodology, one which employs the deliberate use of marked behaviors, expressions, and symbols in conscious acts of identity construction within a given *habitus*. It then applies this method to examine the monotheistic and henotheistic references to divinity, the use of *nomina sacra*, and the onomastic practices.

A group of documents (five or possibly six) related to a "papas Sotas"—mostly letters of recommendation—give evidence of a codified system of identity, centered around in-group practices, which signal across an extensive Christian social network. Sotas, who clearly functioned as the bishop of Oxyrhynchus in the mid-to-late third century (thus the earliest bishop known from that city), collaborated with church members in constructing "authorized" identities and acted, in his formal capacity, as the guarantor of that identity for the travelers carrying them. These documents also reveal a staged process of catechumenate and the importance of education.

Documents pertaining to relations between Christians and Rome in the period of persecutions show that the Roman bureaucracy prosecuted Christians in a systematic and thorough way with a particular interest in the confiscation of property—catego-

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rized in official lists—of individuals and churches alike. Unlike the martyrologies, which associate Christian identity with a refusal to sacrifice ending in violent death, these documents reveal the practical solutions, which Christians developed in order to live within their society and to maintain their identity as Christians.

Thus the study shows that Christians constructed their common identity in a shared cultural context (*habitus*), and that pre-Constantinian Christians in Oxyrhynchus in particular shared many practices with their neighbors. It also demonstrates, at the same time, that Christians constructed their own distinct identities in different everyday life contexts.

Joel David Stormo Rasmussen [Ph.D. 2005]

Between Irony and Witness: Kierkegaard's Poetics of Faith, Hope and Love

This dissertation proposes a novel interpretation of the relationship between religious concern and artistic creativity in the works of the self-styled "Christian poet and thinker" Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855). Although Kierkegaard articulated neither a "Christology" in the sense that term has for systematic theology, nor a generic "theory of poetry" in the sense that phrase has for literary criticism, this study makes the case that Kierkegaard's writings nevertheless do advance a "Christomorphic poetics," a *tertium quid*, that resists conventional distinctions between theology and literature. The term "Christomorphic" signals that Kierkegaard's Christian view of the incarnation of God in Christ shapes his poetics in a fundamental way and that, therefore, Kierkegaard's authorship and his incarnational view of God in Christ work together. Arguing that Kierkegaard's poetics takes shape in conversation with many of the major themes of early German Romanticism (*e.g.*, irony, imaginative creativity, paradox, the relativization of imitation [*mimesis*], and erotic love), this thesis offers a fresh appreciation of the depth of Kierkegaard's engagement with Romanticism and of the contours of his alternative to that literary movement. The study analyzes Kierkegaard's reception of romantic irony and demonstrates that the romantic tendency to fantasize subjective existence (at least on Kierkegaard's reading) motivates the critique of romantic poetry in Kierkegaard's early works. It continues to identify and to explicate Kierkegaard's alternative to romantic poetics in order to elucidate his distinctive Christomorphic poetics in terms of his view of God as a divine poet. Further, it demonstrates the way Kierkegaard's emphasis on the "imitation of Christ" challenges the romantic relativization of "*mimesis*" and signals a reversal of the romantic celebration of the ironic imagination. Finally, this study constructs a typology of Kierkegaard's three senses of the term "poet." By showing how these different senses of the one term function within Kierkegaard's larger poetics, this conclusion makes clear the manner in which Kierkegaard as a "religious poet" distinguishes himself from the "secular poet" of romantic irony by fostering what he considers authentic Christian "witness" in the world according

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to the "Word" of the divine poet embodied in Christ.

Kathryn Schifferdecker [Th.D. 2005]

Out of the Whirlwind: Creation Theology in the Book of Job

This thesis discusses the problem of the interpretation of the divine speeches in Job 38–41. These final chapters do not appear to address the situation of Job as set forth in the first thirty-seven chapters of the book, which deal with issues of undeserved suffering and divine justice. Rather than speaking about suffering or justice, the divine speeches set forth an extraordinarily detailed vision of creation.

The analysis begins with an annotated translation of and commentary on Job 38:1–42:6, in order to elucidate textual problems and larger issues of theme and rhetoric. The commentary discusses allusive language, draws connections between these chapters and other biblical and ancient Near Eastern texts, and establishes the foundation upon which the rest of the thesis is built. The analysis proceeds to explore the views of creation found in Job 1–37, and articulates the creation theology of the divine speeches in comparison and contrast to those views. The discussion highlights the issue of humanity's place in creation and draws on other biblical creation texts. The study also explores the relationship of the divine speeches to what follows them—the second reply of Job and the prose epilogue. It concludes by offering suggestions as to how the divine speeches function in the final form of the book of Job and what sort of answer they offer to Job's situation.

This study argues that the divine speeches in Job 38–41 offer a view of creation—and of humanity's place in creation—that differs fundamentally from any other creation theology in the Bible. The divine speeches depict creation as radically non-anthropocentric. At the same time, however, the divine speeches offer humanity, in the person of Job, a place in the created order, not as the crown of creation nor even as its caretaker, but rather as a full participant in creation alongside the creatures of the non-human realm.

This radically theocentric creation theology, as described in the divine speeches, offers Job a new perspective on the problem of divine justice. YHWH expands Job's vision of the world to include the non-human realm, and thereby teaches him about divine *mishpat*—that is, the order with which YHWH as king wisely governs and sustains his creation. This divine *mishpat* grants a place in creation to chaotic forces like the Sea, Leviathan, and human wickedness, but also puts limits on them. While the divine speeches do not answer directly the problem of undeserved suffering, they do offer an answer to Job's assumptions and attitudes about creation, humanity's place in creation, and God's ordering of it. That answer enables Job to move out of despair into renewed participation in God's often-dangerous but beautiful world.

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Jalane Schmidt [Ph.D. 2005]

Cuba's Rival Rituals: The Virgin of Charity and the Politics of Festivity

Drawing on twenty months of archival and field research in contemporary Cuba, *Cuba's Rival Rituals* interprets twentieth-century public festivals to the Virgin of Charity, the patron saint of that Caribbean nation. Devotion to the Virgin of Charity spread from the local practices of poor Afro-Cubans in the country's rural, eastern region to become a religious phenomenon that is regarded as emblematic of the Cuban "nation" as a whole. Ordered chronologically, the chapters represent case studies of public festivals from 1936 to 1998, which were dedicated to the Virgin of Charity, as well as other "rival" public performances. The fate of public festivals in the shift from Republican (1902–1958) to Revolutionary Cuba (1959–present) receives sustained attention, and the book considers the changes over time in festival claims about religious "syncretism," racial hybridity, regional diversity, and national identity.

As important features of Latin American and Caribbean popular culture, festivals (whether dedicated to a patron saint or to civic rites) often do the "heavy lifting" of objectifying culture and constructing nationhood. But these festivals take place in the streets—a location Cubans often identify with "popular" culture in its most competitive, multivocal, and, at times, chaotic forms. Thus the staging of festivals in the streets often undercuts festival planners' univocal claims that their event "represents" the "nation." Since festivals often serve to model ideal forms of religious and political comportment, these performative events become occasions for their planners to respond to off-stage rivals. Some of these "rivals" are yet other festivals, and festivals engage in competition, and even argumentation, with other public events. In order to establish and to strengthen their own rhetorical power, festivals often siphon the ritual vocabulary, verbal cadences, physical gestures, and overlapping symbols of competing public rites and performances, since attendees' participation in and memory of these other events is presumed. Patron saint festivals, civic rites, and the rituals of local religions, therefore, should be examined and interpreted in relationship to one another, since to examine any of these performances in isolation would render a truncated account. Particularly in situations of political tension, "rival rituals" vie for interpretive supremacy of the nation.

Stephen Paul Shoemaker [Ph.D. 2005]

Dyspeptics, Mystics, and Skeptics: The Evolution of a Scholarly Approach to Religion at Nineteenth Century Harvard

Should a university advocate a particular religious position? The answer to this question changed during the nineteenth century at Harvard. Founded in the seventeenth century to promulgate a specific theological agenda, Harvard espoused

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an altered, but still very religious, perspective by the beginning of the nineteenth century. In the early 1800s Harvard students were taught doctrinal theology in mandatory classes by their Unitarian professor. President Quincy (1829–1845) recognized the political danger of offending religious conservatives through such teaching, and as a result, he put a halt to theological teaching. Later, President Walker (1853–1860), responding to requests for more religious teaching in the College, tried to establish a middle ground by creating a new "non-theological" chair. During this era, Harvard no longer attempted to inculcate belief in a full system of doctrinal theology, but in response to new developments, reduced its agenda to the central tenet of defending the Bible as a historically reliable revelation. President Eliot (1869–1909) saw it as inappropriate for a university to advocate any such religious perspective. In his estimation, contemporary academic standards required freedom from any institutional religious position that attempted to control or to shape scholarly method. He sought to encourage a "scientific approach" to religion not bound by any pre-existing religious beliefs. Eliot's efforts, combined with the inclinations of a like-minded faculty and the methodology of the "new" Biblical criticism, brought about a late nineteenth century restructuring of scholarship in religion at Harvard. Regardless of their personal views, Harvard scholars could no longer attempt to teach "correct" theology. The new approach considered the historical and human dimensions of religion as appropriate fodder for academic inquiry. During the course of one century, Harvard had moved from the pursuit of religious indoctrination to the practice of scholarship deliberately separated from the realm of particular beliefs.

Jason Andrew Springs [Ph.D. 2005]

Between Barth and Wittgenstein: Pragmatist Themes in Hans Frei's "Postliberal" Theology

This dissertation takes as its focus the genesis and development of Hans Frei's so-called "postliberal" theology. I make the case that the full wealth of Frei's thought requires careful attention to the essentially interdisciplinary, conversational, and pragmatic character of his approach to theological analysis and the study of religion. Frei, one of the most influential American theologians of the latter twentieth century, was also a historian of modern Christian thought and a pragmatic social theorist as well. I first explicate his severely neglected use of social and cultural theories inspired by the later work of Ludwig Wittgenstein in order to read Karl Barth's theology. Frei's reading of Barth provides a social-practical framework for thinking about the Christian Church, the "plain sense" of Scripture (*sensus literalis*), and theology as a form of self-reflexive ethnography. In order to expand and enrich these theoretical dimensions—and to accentuate its conversational and interdisciplinary character—I place Frei's theology in critical conversation with the accounts of

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philosophical semantics and conceptual pragmatics articulated by Robert Brandom and Wilfrid Sellars. Through this engagement I demonstrate that, far from being a self-contained theological discourse that relegates itself to the boundaries of the Church (as is often alleged), Frei's theology has much to contribute not only to the further reaches of Christian theology, but to the broader conversations in the Study of Religion about the viability of "tradition" in modern contexts and the conceptualizing of religion as a range of social practices. A theological approach of this type, I argue, will pursue these broader, interdisciplinary engagements in as far as it is faithful to its vocation, and yet, for all of its interdisciplinary character, will maintain the full integrity of its theological claims.

Reading Frei with detailed attention to the pragmatist and social-theoretical themes of his theology provides several important insights into his work. First, it clarifies the unique stance he strikes between an essentially interdisciplinary approach and unapologetic theology. Second, it illuminates the over-arching continuity in the development of Frei's work over the course of his career and thereby diminishes the distinction between the "earlier" and "later" phases of Frei's work. Third, this reading casts into relief the features of Frei's theological approach that distinguish it from other theologians associated with the moniker "postliberal."

Andre C. Willis [Ph.D. 2005]

Hope and Hume: A Study in David Hume's Philosophy of Religion

This dissertation confronts the problem of how to classify the contributions of David Hume to the philosophy of religion. Hume scholars regard him variously as an atheist, as a deist, and even more as a skeptic—as well as both a fideist and an infidel. They lack a precise method by which to assess Hume on religion. This is understandable given Hume's own imprecision and intentional lack of clarity on some important religious questions. Yet, by positing Hume's use of hope as the "way in" to Hume's philosophy of religion, this dissertation uncovers a means to Hume's "true religion."

The argument here posits two types of hope in the work of David Hume: direct passion hopes, which Hume explicitly describes; and fundamental hope—an objectless disposition towards the future, which remains implicit in Hume's philosophical and religious project. Through an analysis of four of Hume's most important texts, the *Treatise of Human Nature*, the first *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding?/Principles of Morals*?, the *Natural History of Religion*, and *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, this dissertation illuminates Hume's variegated uses of hope. The argument details the direct passion hopes and their importance for Hume but especially targets the implicit hope woven throughout Hume's writings and practiced in his life. This fundamental hope, as yet uncovered in Hume, serves as a means of understanding Hume's idea of true religion.

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In the argument that follows, Hume's fundamental hope manifests itself in the action of equanimity, and this very equanimity serves to moderate the passions and improve the quality of life. Hume's positive contribution to philosophy and religion—embodied in this fundamental hope—not only helps ground his concept of "true religion" but also shows that situating Hume as a skeptic misunderstands the profound natural hope, which undergirds his life and thought.

Sheila Faye Winborne [Ph.D. 2005]

"Behold, It Is I": A Theological Interpretation of F. Holland Day's Photographic Representations of Persons of African Descent

In this dissertation I argue that the Boston-based artist, F. Holland Day (1864–1933), intended the central figure in his triptych *Armageddon* to portray an "authentic" representation of Jesus Christ as the "King of Kings" within the Black Magus tradition in Western art and that his photographic approach both critiqued some of the normative political and theological beliefs of his time and reflected some of those beliefs.

Such visual art has theological significance embedded in both the original intent of the artist as creator and in the interpretation of the viewer as a member of a specific culture. The viewer engages the art within "ways of seeing" formed by personal experiences and trained approaches to visual interpretation based upon particular communal teachings. Through an interdisciplinary analysis of Day's photography, I endeavor to illustrate this interpretative correlation, to highlight the potential of the visual arts for theological education, and to present a practical example of how to interpret and present the theological significance of a visual art form.

Visual art works have theological and ethical significance because they play major roles in the transmission of ethics, cultures, beliefs, and normative social preferences. In the United States, we encounter on a daily basis numerous commercial and fine art representations through various visual media, and these visual representations, which are rooted in cultural norms, have direct influences on our worldviews. Our worldviews, in turn, determine our understandings of God and humanity, how we approach our roles within existing social and economic systems, and our ideas of hierarchy and justice. For these reasons, the theological significance of the visual arts in cultural development, although an often-neglected topic, is an important contemporary issue. Some artists define their vocations as prophetic callings or as capable of prompting spiritual awakenings in themselves and viewers and thus contribute to the ethical and theological significance of the visual arts. As one such artist, in his 1900 opening address for the "New School of American Photography" exhibition in London, Day used a quotation from the artist and art theorist John Ruskin, in which he described the moment of artistic creation as the "Behold, it is I" moment or as a type of spiritual revelation for the artist.

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Malcolm Clemens Young [Th.D. 2004]

One World at a Time: Henry David Thoreau's Religious Practices

Twentieth-century scholars tended to underestimate the importance of religious influences on the thought of Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862). This led critics to treat Thoreau's love of nature in essentially ahistorical terms either as a personal eccentricity or as a heightened sensitivity to the environment rather than as an element of his piety. By disregarding Thoreau's transcendentalism, they have failed to see important connections between his *Journal* and the spiritual journals of his Protestant forebears. Important continuities exist between Thoreau's efforts to perceive nature and those of American puritans such as Jonathan Edwards. Even the motivations and methods of Thoreau's daily walking discipline borrow heavily from other Romantic thinkers. Like his mentor Ralph Waldo Emerson, Thoreau's thought is shaped both by natural theology and the religious controversies surrounding New England Transcendentalism.

This dissertation considers the connection that Thoreau sees between the natural environment and piety. It shows that although he is relatively uninterested in Christian doctrine, his writing particularly his *Journal*, his careful observations of nature, and his daily walks around Concord, all function as spiritual practices, which deepen his apprehension of nature and God. Thoreau's goal is not so much to know nature or to communicate this knowledge, but rather a kind of spiritual formation as he tries to cultivate a more profound intimacy or communion between himself and his creator. While he is a great innovator in his approach to these disciplines, Thoreau did not invent them. This dissertation studies the connections between Thoreau and the religious practices both of earlier generations and of contemporaneous Romanticism. Finally, it introduces Thoreau's idea of "the wild" as a theological idea that contributes to our understanding of what nature means in American culture and the history of this sensibility.

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