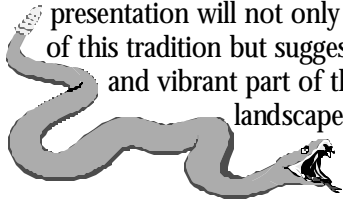


Christian Serpent Handlers of Modern Appalachia: A PCR 2000 Pre-session Event

Psychologist of Religion **Ralph Hood** will make a presentation of his research on *Christian Serpent Handlers of Modern Appalachia* at the PCR Friday Pre-session of the 2000 AAR/SBL Annual Meeting in Nashville. Hood has known serpent handlers for over twenty-five years, and in the last six years he has done extensive videotaped documentation of their beliefs and practices. His presentation will not only confront stereotypes of this tradition but suggest that it is a viable and vibrant part of the American religious landscape, and one that has much to teach religionists about sacred



texts, traditions, and the value of religious practices that may maim and kill and yet be essential to the practice of a faith tradition. Ralph Hood is Professor of Psychology at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He is a past President of the Division of the Psychology of Religion of the American Psychological Association, and a recipient of its William James Award. He is the immediate past Editor of the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*. His most recent texts include *The Psychology of Religion* (2nd ed., coauthored with Spilka, Hunsberger, and Gorsuch); *Measures of Religiosity* (with Peter Hill); and *Dimensions of Mystical Experience*, currently in press.

(The full pre-session schedule is on page 2.)

PCR Sessions at AAR Annual Meeting November 18-21, 2000 in Nashville

SESSION #1 THE VARIETIES OF SELF EXPERIENCE

*Belief and Practice: Toward Embodied
Perspectives on the Self*

Rebecca Sachs Norris, Boston University

The Self of No-Self

Daniel Capper, Hartwick College

Franz Metcalf, *Presiding*
The Forge Institute

*Models of the Self and Attitudes Toward Death:
Confucian and Daoist Perspectives*

Mark Berkson, Hamline University

*Schizophrenia and Godspeak: Self, World and
Almighty Power*

Susan Bruno, North Charles Mental Health

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PRESESSION: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17
2:00 PM-6:15 PM

THEME: VARIETIES OF SELF EXPERIENCE
Andrew Kille, Presiding
Santa Clara University

Newark Narratives: City Girls Tell Tales Out of School
Kathleen Bishop, Drew University

Self and Other: Piaget and Postmodernity
Helen Daley Schroepfer, Temple University

Serpent-Handling Christians
Ralph W. Hood, Jr., University of Tennessee
at Chattanooga

Psychology of Religion: the Need for an International Organization
Jacob Belzen, University of Amsterdam

PRESESSION: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18
9:00 A.M.-11:30 A.M.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

THEME: SEEING CLIENTS
Trevor Watt, Canisius College, *Presiding*

To Tell the Truth: Truth Telling in Psychotherapeutic Encounters
Patrick J. Hayes, Catholic University of America

*A Multi-Therapeutic Approach to Narcissistic Personality Disorder:
Clinical Data for the Psychotherapist and Pastoral Counselor*
Kirk A. Bingaman, Graduate Theological Union

BUSINESS MEETING
Lucy Bregman, Temple University, *Presiding*

SESSION #2

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND MYSTICISM: UNFAMILIAR VOICES

Kelly Bulkeley, *Presiding*
Santa Clara University

Hans Loewald: the Psychoanalyst as Mystic
James Jones, Rutgers University

Marion Milner and Mystical Experience
Kelley Raab, St. Lawrence University

Marion Milner, Psychoanalysis and the Study of Religion
Mary Ellen Ross, Trinity University

Respondents:
John McDargh, Boston College
William Parsons, Rice University

PCR Friday Dinner

This year's PCR Friday dinner will be greatly facilitated by **Bonnie Miller-McLemore** and several of her Vanderbilt students, who have agreed to chauffeur us after the Friday Pre-session from the confines of Opryland to downtown Nashville, where we will be able to enjoy a non-resort meal together. Thanks to Bonnie and her students!

Are You Presenting in Other AAR/SBL Sessions?

Many PCR members are also actively involved in other AAR/SBL sections, groups, seminars, and consultations. If you are making a presentation in one of these units at the 2000 Meeting in Nashville, please let us know--we would like to gather a list of the wide-ranging intellectual pursuits of the PCR membership.

PERSON, CULTURE AND RELIGION/ HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY CO-SPONSORED SESSION

HISTORY, PSYCHOLOGY, AND RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE:

SANDRA DIXON'S *AUGUSTINE: THE SCATTERED AND GATHERED SELF* AND

ANN TAVES' *FITS, TRANCES AND VISIONS:*

EXPERIENCING RELIGION AND EXPLAINING EXPERIENCE FROM WESLEY TO JAMES

A. Gregory Schneider, *Presiding*
Pacific Union College

Panelists:

John C. Cavadini, University of Notre Dame

Roger Johnson, Wellesley, MA.

Robert Orsi, Indiana University

Wayne Proudfoot, Columbia University

Respondents:

Sandra Lee Dixon, University of Denver

Ann Taves, Claremont School of Theology

Kelley Raab (St. Lawrence University) has written *When Women Become Priests: The Catholic Women's Ordination Debate* (Columbia University Press), a psychoanalytic treatment of the symbolic implications of women becoming priests, especially with regards to the Eucharist. Kelley also notes that the Conference for European Psychologists of Religion will be held July 28-31 in Sigtuna, Sweden. For more information contact Onver Cetrez (andreas.onver.cetrez@teol.uu.se).

Robert Fuller (Bradley University) has a new book out from Westview Press, titled *Stairways to Heaven: Drugs and American Religious History*. The book describes the role that various drugs (LSD, alcohol, marijuana, caffeine, peyote) have played in the religious and cultural life of Americans.

Lucy Bregman (Temple University) will be on study leave during the academic year 2000-2001, and will spend the time as a resident scholar at the Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research in Collegeville, Minnesota. She

will be working on a project dealing with "Spirituality and Religions in the Death Awareness Movement." She is interested in looking at how a movement that began naturalistic-secular (as "scientific thanatology") has moved to embrace "spirituality", has received ideas and images from a variety of religious traditions (sometimes without really

acknowledging the debt), and has created a new set of images to help North Americans encounter death. How this movement is and is not in continuity with older religiously-based images is Lucy's main concern: what roles do popular Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, and a very romantic-

nostalgic picture of tribal religion play in the "spirituality" of the death awareness movement?

Kelly Bulkeley (Santa Clara University) recently won an award from the 2000 Science and Religion Course Program, administered by the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences, for his course "Dreaming: Religious and Scientific Perspectives."

**News from
PCR Members**

Welcome New PCR Members

Ruqayya Khan (Swarthmore College) is currently a Mellon Fellow in Swarthmore's Religion Department, where he is teaching courses on Islam and Islamic culture. By way of familiarizing himself with another subfield, he recently designed and taught the College's first "Psychology of Religion" course. His Doctorate is in another field: Ph.D. (1997) from University of Pennsylvania in Arabic Literature and Islamic Studies. He is working on a book project involving the application of psychoanalytic concepts to the study of early Arabic love literature and Qur'anic material. The monograph is tentatively titled, *Secrecy in the Qur'an and Early Arabic Love Literature*. He is generally interested in integrating psychodynamic ideas and approaches with the study of religio-cultural phenomena of the Islamic world.

Rick Jarow (Vassar College) is currently teaching courses on "Religious Responses to Suffering and Death" and "Myths, Dreams, and Visions." His interests are in the death narratives of Hindu literature, the yoga of work and strategies for right livelihood drawn from the world's wisdom traditions, and dreams as non-linear processes of meaning-making.

A Supreme Act of Foolishness?

Teaching Freud in the seminary: at first glance, it must seem like a supreme act of foolishness; the two hardly go hand in hand. After all, we all know by now that Freud was a reductionist, a positivist and, especially galling to the seminary community, an unapologetic atheist. It was, as Freud himself saw it, his duty to agitate the sleep of humankind, and particularly of the religious believer. So why devote a whole semester to someone who was so misguided, who confused his scientism with science, who was not always completely candid and objective about his clinical data, who posited that religion, more than anything else, is responsible for the intellectual retardation of the human species?

My personal interest in Freud - to the extent of teaching a course and writing a dissertation on the subject - began to take shape 3 years ago, in the context of the Graduate Theological Union course, "Religious Conversion." Lewis Rambo asked me to present to the class an overview of the classical psychology theorists - Freud and Jung - and their interpretations of religion. At one point, during the lecture on Freud, I noted that the philosopher, Paul Ricoeur, had suggested that because of Freud's unique and extraordinary influence in the West, the religious believer has no choice but to "converse" with Freud about his theory of religion. I told the class that Ricoeur offers no guarantees, except that the believer will not and cannot, following the encounter, be the same person with the same faith. In fact, the believer will have to concede, after applying a Freudian "hermeneutics of suspicion" to the "text" of his or her religious faith, that Freud not only deserves a "no" but also a "yes" - while he did not get everything right about religious faith, he still managed to get some things right. The believer, then, according to Ricoeur, is obligated to hold in dialectical tension religious faith and Freudian theory, rather than embracing the totality of one and rejecting the totality of the other.

"Nothing but a false prophet"

I concluded my presentation to the "Religious Conversion" class by indicating that if we take Ricoeur's words to heart, then this will have major implications not only for one's personal religious faith, but for theological education in general and pastoral care and counseling courses in particular. To put it more succinctly, if we take Ricoeur as our guide, then we will begin to make Freud and his theory of religion more of an integral part of theological

education. Up to this point, the presentation had gone smoothly, with few interruptions - hardly any questions or comments from members of the class. I suspect that as long as we discussed Freud in a general and detached - i.e., safe - sort of way students could acknowledge, without too much difficulty, that of course the field of psychology and even that of pastoral care and counseling owes something of a debt to Freud. But to up the ante, by bringing Ricoeur and his philosophy of "total engagement" with Freud into the discussion, was more than some of these students could handle. I remember one student, in particular, who raised his hand and very angrily proceeded to inform the class that we had no business devoting so much of our time to an atheist like Freud, someone who was, verbatim, "nothing but a false prophet."

Freud, Jung and Seminarians

The implication was that because Freud came down on the "wrong side" of the issue, religious believers are therefore under no obligation to take him and his theory of religion seriously. Indeed, I have witnessed and/or been involved in the teaching of the classical psychology theorists - Freud and Jung - at the GTU, and what I have found is that the ordination-track (M.Div.) seminarian will readily sign up for a class on Jung, the perceived "friend" of religion, but not one on Freud, the perceived "enemy" of religion. Two years ago, James Jarrett, professor emeritus of education at the University of California, Berkeley, taught a course on Jung at the GTU; several dozen seminarians, most of whom were M.Div. students, attended the class. Last year, Lewis Rambo and I taught a course on "Freud and Religion" at the GTU; we had about half as many students as the Jung class, with one M.Div. student, a woman who was not even considering a call to parish or specialized ministry. She, along with the other M.A. and Ph.D. students, were all academic-track students. A second ordination-track seminarian, who decided to drop the class on Freud, commented that "if only this had been a class on Jung, then I would stay because I'd be learning something relevant to my future ministry."

For the last three years, I have been consumed by an interest which is twofold: (1) Freud's theory that religious faith is psychological projection, and (2) the responses Freud and his theory of religion evoke within

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

the religious believer. In a sense, I have been "testing" Ricoeur's hypothesis - the religious believer is obligated to hold his or her religious faith firmly in dialectical tension with Freud's interpretation of religion - in the "laboratory" of seminary education. Moreover, I have witnessed a variety of emotional responses to Freud: anger, on the part of my student in the "Religious Conversion" class, distancing, on the part of the seminarian who dropped the "Freud and Religion" class, and apparent mass indifference on the part of the entire student body, whose members believe that Freud must be kept at arm's length, presumably because he has nothing constructive to offer the candidate for ministry.

Aversion to Freud and his Theory of Religion

Though the emotions and responses differ, there is at least one unifying feature: an aversion to Freud and his theory of religion. Rarely do we find students in the context of theological education engaging and/or reengaging Freud and his theory of religion, let alone acknowledging, with Ricoeur, that Freud still has much to teach us about the intrapsychic dynamics of religious faith. I have found myself wondering if my student in the "Religious Conversion" class actually deserves more credit than I have given him; he, after all, was willing to engage Freud and the Freudian interpretation of religion for at least this one class session, which is more than I can say for most other seminarians. True, he reacted very angrily to Ricoeur's suggestion that religious believers are obligated to listen to and learn from Freud, but then again I suspect that if more of his classmates had been sitting there with him that day, and were taking Ricoeur's words to heart, they too would have reacted with emotions more potent than indifference.

My hunch is that emotional distancing or indifference *vis-à-vis* Freud is a front-line emotion, an unconscious defensive maneuver aimed at keeping Freud and his theory of religion as far away as possible from one's religious faith. To be sure, a Freudian hermeneutics of suspicion can completely deconstruct, in no time, what Ricoeur describes as a pre-critical religious faith of the first naiveté. Maybe this is what the seminarian fears most. The seminarian, then, in keeping Freud at a distance, or in flip-pantly dismissing him as *passé* or irrelevant to any discussion on religion, has mounted, intrapsychically, something of a defense against a more powerful emotional reaction. In that sense, the seminarian I encountered in the classroom was being more honest about his genuine feelings towards Freud and about the evocative power of Freud, even 60 years after his death.

Ricoeur believes, and I share his conviction, that it is a

dismissively, even before encountering his writings on religion. As Ricoeur notes, "[Freud] has not only, or even principally introduced a new kind of therapy, but a global interpretation of the phenomenon of culture and of religion as an aspect of culture. Our culture analyzes itself through him - a fact of extreme importance that must be understood and evaluated" (see "Concilium," Vol. 16/1966, p. 61). However, as Ricoeur acknowledges, the believer, in confronting Freud, does in fact risk becoming a different person with a different faith. This, of course, implies change, which makes the seminarian's reluctance to engage Freudian theory more understandable. With a variety of intrapsychic maneuvers - outrage, indignation, indifference or distancing - seminarians can keep Freud at bay, in order to avoid the risk of change to self and one's religious faith.

Psychical "Splitting"

Might this not be something akin to psychical "splitting," in which Freud, the all-bad object, is kept at a safe distance, far away from an all-good religious faith? Add to this the expectations of the seminary and the seminarian's particular denomination - that the candidate for ministry present to the world a polished persona and polished religious faith - and it is hardly surprising that Freud is not a more integral component of seminary education. My hope would be, for those of us in theological education, and particularly those of us connected to the field of pastoral care and counseling, that we would see the value of helping seminarians move beyond an either/or framework, to one that is more integrative of aspects of both traditional religious faith and a Freudian interpretation of religion.

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PCR COMMENTARY

REGIONAL MEETINGS: AN IDEAL OPPORTUNITY FOR PCR DIALOGUE

KELLY BULKELEY,
SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY

Most PCR members are probably aware that each Spring the AAR/SBL sponsors a series of Regional Meetings around the country, with 2-3 days worth of papers, panels, and other program events. Smaller and less formal than the national AAR/SBL Meeting in November, these Regional Meetings offer excellent opportunities for just the kind of intimate scholarly conversation and collaboration that are the hallmarks of the PCR Group. This past April the Western Regional Meeting was held at Azusa Pacific College in Azusa, California (in the northeast corner of the Los Angeles area), and the two PCR sessions were perfect illustrations of the range of interest and depth of analysis that characterize PCR sessions at the national Meeting.

Healing and Ritual

The first session was titled, "Healing and Ritual," and like many PCR gatherings this one seemed to gather papers with only the most tenuous of thematic relations to each other. **Gay Lynch**, a doctoral student at the Graduate Theological Union, presented a detailed aesthetic and psychological analysis of Greek mourning practices. **Rodolfo Nolasco**, who teaches at Providence Theological Seminary, described his dissertation research using the object relations theory of D.W. Winnicott to analyze the Christian ritual of the Eucharist. **Erika Wilson** of California State University, Los Angeles, compared the depth psychology of C.G. Jung and the healing traditions of Tibetan Buddhism.

Culture and Depth Psychology

The second session, titled, "Culture and Depth Psychology," was no less diverse, with **Karen Borek** describing her Emory University dissertation on a Jungian reading of the Serpent's role in the Biblical story of creation, and **Franz Metcalf** of California State University, Los Angeles providing a sweeping overview of Buddhist and Western psychological views of the concept of the self.

As chair of these two sessions, I was prepared with several questions and comments to stimulate things--but I needn't have worried, because once we got going the presenters themselves initiated in a very lively and probing dialogue. The relative merits of Freudian, Jungian, and Winnicottian psychological theories were of course debated at length. The relations between "Eastern" and "Western" religious traditions also received careful attention. Much conversation centered on the practical moral,

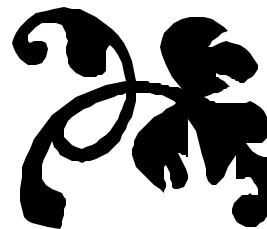
social, and theological implications of the different presentations--what do Greek rituals of lament tell us about our own efforts to mourn the death of loved ones? If the Eucharist is a "compelling illusion," does that change the way it should be practiced? If the Serpent is a "shadow" figure of knowledge and wisdom, what does that imply for the notion of sin?

The Scholar's Personal Life

One key theme in our discussion was the role of the scholar's personal life experience in his or her research. Three of the presenters were doctoral students, and I think they were both surprised and relieved to find that in the realm of PCR discourse a personal connection with one's scholarship is not only accepted but actively encouraged. (Such an idea was evidently not a part of their graduate school training!) This openness to the personal, which I feel is a central value of the PCR Group, led to a wonderful flow of stories about how the different presentations were each rooted in the scholar's life history.

I think I speak for everyone at these two sessions in saying that they represented an ideal form of scholarly dialogue: an intimate, in-depth, free-flowing discussion of academic works and personal lives, drawing on both psychology and religion to explore an excitingly diverse array of topics.

Every AAR/SBL member is affiliated with some regional group, and my understanding is that it's relatively easy to organize and present sessions at the Regional Meetings. I would strongly encourage PCR members to take the initiative in sponsoring a session at their next Regional Meeting. Not only will you stimulate the broader vitality of PCR scholarship, but you will likely meet some kindred spirits living right near you who share your strongest interests.



PCR Membership

Membership in PCR entitles you to three copies of PCR News, goodies at the Friday pre-session, advance copies of the papers for PCR sessions, plus the warm glow of knowing that you're helping us distribute PCR-related information to scholars, clinicians, and clergy members interested in our work.

\$15.00 Regular Membership; \$10.00 Student Membership (with copy of student ID). Checks should be payable to Person, Culture, & Religion Group. Send to: Kelly Bulkeley, Secretary/Treasurer, 226 Amherst Avenue, Kensington CA 94708; Phone: 510-528-0226; Fax is same; E-mail: kellybulkeley@earthlink.net

1999 paid members to date are listed below; if you think we missed you, contact Kelly Bulkeley at the address above.

Lee Bailey	Mary Fraser	Kathleen Koenig	Christopher Ross
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J.A. Belzen	Nancy Grace	Bonnie J. Miller-	Raynard Smith
Kathleen Bishop	John Haule	McLemore	Roy Steinhoff Smith
Lucy Bregman	Jack Hanford	David Morris	John R. Van Eenwyk
Kelly Bulkeley	James Higginbotham	Mary Clark Moschella	Hendrika Vande Kemp
Lee Butler	Rick Jarow	Daniel Noel	Trevor Watt
Pam Couture	Roger Johnson	Rebecca Sachs Norris	Demaris Wehr
Marjorie Davis	Steve Johnson	Linda Olds	Douglas Whitcher
Valerie DeMarinis	Jim W. Jones	William Jay Peck	
Sandra Lee Dixon	Felicity Kelcourse	Martha Reineke	

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If you found a red dot on the address label on your copy of PCR NEWS, it means we have not received dues from you for several years. While we hate to drop anyone from our mailing list, it does cost us for duplication and mailing. Please consider sending in your dues!

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I. These days I find myself thinking about . . .

CURRENT RESEARCH INTERESTS AND WRITING

II. What we need is a good course in . . .

COURSES BEING TAUGHT OR PLANNED

Would a syllabus be available on request? yes___ no___

III. Have you seen ? . . .

ARTICLES, BOOKS AND PRESENTATIONS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE
TO BRING TO OUR ATTENTION
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IV. INFORMATION OF GENERAL INTEREST [calls for papers, announcements, travel, promotions,
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