

**2006 Annual Meeting
November 17-21, 2006
Washington, DC**



PCR Steering Committee News

At the PCR business meeting during the 2005 AAR Annual Meeting in Philadelphia the members voted on several Steering Committee positions. Pamela Cooper-White and Kathleen Bishop were reelected to a second three-year stint as co-chairs, Felicity Kelcourse was reelected to a second three-year term as SC member, and Hetty Zock was elected as a new SC member. Continuing SC members are Greg Schneider, Bill Barnard, and Lallene Rector. Welcome to Hetty, whose introduction is on page 2, and thanks to the rest of the SC for their ongoing service to the PCR. Of course, the personal trainer, generous expense account, and private jet make it a little easier, but the SC members are ultimately serving out of the goodness of their hearts, and we appreciate their selfless work on our behalf.

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May I present myself as a new member of the steering committee? I am from the Netherlands, and I am working as a professor in psychology of religion & pastoral care & counseling at the University of Groningen (in the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies). Groningen is in the north of the Netherlands. But, of course, we are such a small country... One can cross the Netherlands by car from north to south in about 4 hours, and from west to east in about 2 hours. Groningen is 3 hours by train from Amsterdam.

As a theological student at the University of Leiden, I specialized in psychology of religion. I wrote a dissertation on Erik H. Erikson arguing that he is a hermeneutic, existential-psychological thinker who more and more integrated the existential-religious dimension of human development in his life-cycle theory. I have been working some years as a minister in the Dutch reformed church (in its liberal wing), and then, since 1994, as a psychologist of religion at the university (first in Leiden, now in Groningen).

My main research interests are identity theory, meaning-giving, and the role of imagination in identity formation. I have published on Erikson and Winnicott. At the moment I am working on Hubert J.M. Hermans' theory about 'the dialogical self': it brings along an intrinsically cultural-psychological approach, which throws light on how people in our dynamic, globalizing society put together an identity, negotiating all kind of cultural identity elements. From this kind of theoretical perspectives, I am analyzing contemporary cultural phenomena, such as the Harry Potter phenomenon. Why is Harry Potter so attractive, all over the world? What do the books and films tell us about how contemporary people look for a meaningful life, and deal with culture-bound anxieties?

At the moment, an important part of my work in Groningen consists of managing the new Master program 'pastoral care & counseling in a non-denominational context'. Here we have a typical Dutch phenomenon. Keep in mind that in the secularized Netherlands only a third of the Dutch population has a religious affiliation (and that includes Muslims!). We see now – as a result both of the secularization and of a new health care financing system – that a new health care profession is arising: the existential counselor, paid by the health care institutions and the health assurance companies. This existential counselor is the contemporary successor of the traditional Protestant, Catholic, Humanist or Muslim counselor. A lot of reflection, research etc. is needed to position this new profession in the field of health care, and to give it a theoretical underpinning.

For me, PCR is a very stimulating environment, because of the combination of good practitioners (pastoral counselors, psychotherapists, etc.) who present good research. I hope to contribute to PCR by bringing in news and developments from Europe. Let me start at once, and draw your attention to the IAPR, and an upcoming conference in Belgium:

The **International Association for the Psychology of Religion**, IAPR, (www.iapr.de/) is an association of psychologists of religion in Europe, but we heartily welcome members from other parts of the world. (All information about membership are on the website.) The IAPR has a long and tumultuous history, but has been readapting itself to the contemporary academic context. For instance, the IAPR publishes a yearbook (Archives for the Psychology of Religion), and is now working on getting it included in major databases and into the social citation index. Further, the IAPR organizes a conference (about 100 participants) every two years.

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PCR News

Volume 29; No. 1

Winter 2006

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Layout: D. Andrew Kille

Person, Culture and Religion Website:

pcr-aar.home.att.net

PCR-List online e-mail discussion group:

To subscribe send a message to:

pcr-list-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Hetty Zock

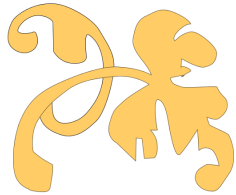
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The next conference will be in August 27-31 2006, in Louvain (Belgium). Louvain is 30 minutes by train from Brussels' airport, and very near to both Paris and Amsterdam. The IAPR-conferences are 'networking' conferences, with a lot of parallel sessions and a few plenary lectures. One can always get a good idea of what everyone is working on etc.

For more information, see www.iapr.de/conference2006.htm

I do hope to meet some PCR members there!

Hetty Zock



Diane Jonte-Pace (Santa Clara University) has two publications to note: "Tracking the Emotion in the Stone: An Essay in Psychoanalysis and Architecture" (co-authored with Peter Homans), *The Annual of Psychoanalysis*, Volume 33, 2006, Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis Press; and "Psychoanalysis, Colonialism, and Modernity: Reflections on Brickman's Aboriginal Populations," *Religious Studies Review*, Volume 31: 1, January 2006.

Kelly Bulkeley (Graduate Theological Union) co-wrote the screenplay for the independent film "The Zodiac," which premieres in a select (i.e. very

Publisher inquiry

I'm a religion acquisitions editor with Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. I see from the forthcoming 2006 AAR program that you are heading up a session on "Person, Culture, and Religion." The topics listed sound very interesting. Are you writing in this area currently? If so, can we talk? If you are not, can you recommend one of your colleagues who might be? I'm looking for upper-level undergraduate college texts and supplements, scholarly monographs, and general interest trade books. We are not looking for revised dissertations.

As you know, Rowman & Littlefield is a leading commercial academic press. We have many exciting new things happening in our religion publishing program and I would love to talk with you further about it.

Thanks in advance and all best wishes.

Brian Romer,
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News from PCR Members

small) number of theaters on March 17. Not to be confused with the big-budget Hollywood version of the same story coming out in the fall, "The Zodiac" is a psychological thriller based on an unsolved series of murders in the Bay Area in the late 1960's. Information at www.thezodiacfilm.com.

D. Andrew Kille (Interfaith Space) also ventured into the intersection of (popular) culture and religion as a consultant on *The Bible DVD Game*, produced by B-Equal and The History Channel, working to ensure the accuracy and inclusiveness of the game's questions and answers.

In the Shadow of the Execution House by Judith W. Kay

In Capote, we watch as the protagonist makes the decision to withdraw his help and support from the two men on death row for killing a Kansas family. Capote wants the execution to proceed so that he can complete what he hopes will become “the greatest novel of the twentieth century.” The moral demise of Capote is reached as he hopes for a speedy execution contrary to the prisoners’ hope for a decisive reprieve.

In an ideal scenario, both parties want life, seek to avoid capital punishment, and work together toward a hopeful ending. But what moral quandaries arise when a prisoner wants to be executed and the friend outside wants him to fight his sentence? This was the situation in which I found myself in 1998 when I began corresponding with a prisoner on death row.

When I first wrote to Jim, I did not know that he had tried to commit suicide the day after carefully arranging to murder his female friend. Nor did I know that he had secured a lawyer who agreed to support Jim’s decision to pursue the death penalty. In the courtroom, Jim’s defense lawyer offered up no objections, no defense, and no presentation of mitigating evidence. With the prosecuting and defense attorneys in lockstep, it was a foregone conclusion that the jurors would deliver the desired outcome. Jim consistently waived all rights to appeal.

My liberal friends tried to reassure me that Jim might simply prefer being killed to a life behind bars; my

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conservative friends were relieved that Jim understood the gravity of his crime and so willingly accepted his just deserts.

But as my friendship with Jim deepened, my disquiet with his choice mounted. Instead of sounding like a deviant, Jim spouted the same scripts, stereotypes, and stories as the state.

The state says that some people deserve grave, even lethal harm. As a young boy, Jim concluded that he deserved the grave harms that were happening to him,

PCR Commentary

including the death of his beloved sister, his mother’s descent into alcoholism, the disintegration of his family, and the sexual favors he sold in exchange for food. Even being severely burned as a young boy was no accident in Jim’s mind—this was God’s punishment for a bad thought he had had. Because he believed that he deserved grave harm, he justified the murder of his friend for the harms she allegedly perpetrated against him. Consistent if not laudable, Jim thus insisted that he deserved death for the crimes he committed.

The state uses the retributive dictum, “do unto others as was done unto you.” Jim finally succumbed to this motto under duress; the only way Jim found to end his brutalization at the hands of his older brother was to violently subdue him. Once conditioned to dish out to others what they dished out to him, Jim employed this dictum to justify all subsequent acts of violence. It was never a good moral guide; that’s why Jim was sitting on death row. But he believed in it as fervently as the state.

Jim had also internalized the big lie—that harming another cures one’s own pain. He desperately believed that if he could make his friend suffer, then the humiliation her slander had provoked would cease. When that failed, he sought relief through attempted suicide. Failing at that, he now wanted a state-assisted death. This same lie animates the state. The state promised closure to the victim’s brother by killing Jim. But the brother remained dissatisfied; Jim “hadn’t suffered enough.” Perhaps more suffering, the lie promises, would have achieved the mysterious alchemy where two wrongs make a right.

Jim had internalized the story Americans use to justify killing their fellow citizens. Seeing the degree to which he parroted the script was a source of deep pain for me. This pain was compounded by his own family’s agreement with the state; they believed he should be executed. I cannot imagine what it would be like to realize that my family and my countrymen wanted me dead. For Jim, these current realities just

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made his past conclusions—that he was a worthless man who should have died instead of his beloved sister—more believable.

Given such bases for Jim’s desire to be executed, I could not support his choice. He would threaten that if anyone stood in the way of his death, his fury would know no bounds. I became one of the few persons close to Jim who dared hold out a different picture of himself, of God, and of his worthiness to live. Not being able to agree with Jim’s decision to pursue execution presented one of the few truly profound moral dilemmas of my life. I tried to stand completely by his side, help him dismantle his allegiance to this narrative of the lie, and free his heart and mind to make a choice less grounded in his painful past. We did not have time for this work; I lived a twelve-hour round trip drive from the prison; the state moved quickly. I was not successful in opening him to a different view of reality before his execution.

As I work now with all nine people on Washington’s death row, friend and colleagues look askance, as if I have made a poor aesthetic choice. What they see is the grit, not the gifts.

Working with people under the sentence of death or

the families who have lost loved ones to murder bring unexpected moments of grace. Once, I was visiting with a woman whose nineteen-year-old son had been beaten to death by a baseball bat over fifteen years ago. She confided that she had a newspaper clipping tucked into her bedroom mirror of a similar murder in a neighboring town. She ached to call the parents, but

feared intruding. With my arm around her waist, we identified a few names in the phone book that might have been the surviving parents. How does one begin such a conversation, “Hi, my son was murdered. Was yours, too?”

Fortunately, the first call found the right home. With tears, she extended herself to a new, grieving parent. After she hung up, she sobbed on my shoulder. What a gift to enable one human reach through their pain to another hurting soul and offer a helping hand.

What can we do after someone has been murdered? There is no scale that can equalize such pain. Justice demands instead that we restore each party to his and her humanness. That, we can do.

*Judith W. Kay is the author of *Murdering Myths: The Story Behind the Death Penalty (Rowman & Littlefield, 2005)*. She teaches ethics at the University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, WA.*

In the Shadow of the Execution House

PCR Commentary

IS THERE A SANTA? DON'T TRASH MYTH by Lee W. Bailey

When our young children asked us whether there is a Santa Claus, we answered, “Do mom and dad love you?” They replied: “Yes.” And we answered, “Well, Santa is as real as our love for you.” We cannot see, hear, touch, or measure Santa or parental love and other meaningful soulful realities of our lives. But reality is far broader than empirically testable material, and indeed we would shrivel in our souls if we did not have that parental love. Myths like Santa are poetry -- symbolic, paradoxical language that expresses invisible but essential juices that give us passion, purpose, and faith. Without positive ones, too many people sink into despair or nihilism.

Myths are not literally true, so of course older children need to distinguish between the symbolic Santa and real parental love. And of course adults need to distinguish between meaningful symbolic myths and beliefs that unnecessarily contradict scientific realities. But tolerance respects many different people’s beliefs, and the world is full of mystery. Astrology, chakras, UFOs and deities are various archetypal expressions of worldviews that exist in the large fuzzy, paradoxical border between literal and symbolic truths. The attempt to whittle down reality to a

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reductive materialism results not just in precise, narrowly scientific language, but also in the crude commercialism that infects the winter holiday spirit of benevolence.

It would be a shallow world without the poetry of art and myth. Literary study of fairy tales and myths opens up important developmental lessons for children, such as Little Red Riding Hood's warning against "big bad wolves," (abusers). Such symbolic language is also needed for adults, whose world is a blend of valuable empirical truths about the material world and essential multi-layered poetry about the invisible psychological and spiritual forces that feed and guide us. People rightly disagree and critique the value and meaning of these, but they are not dispensable.

Our technology is very symbolic. Cars are fast, sexy, social position markers, and, rockets are powerful political expressions of collective soul-in-the-world. Our machines embody both clever engineering and mythic passions. Take robots, for example. There are plenty of important non-humanoid robots that perform valuable functions, such as the Mars Explorers. But these do not try to look human. There are robots that try to look and act human, such as Honda's walking P2. Other androids are mythic robots in science fiction, such as Oz's Tin Woodman, Asimov's robots, Star Trek's Data, Star Wars' C3PO, the Terminator, animated dolls, the robots in films like

robot myths are not lies, but meaningful and symbolic, positive and negative

Metropolis, A.I., and so forth. Some Santas are even robots. Not all of these are for kids. Many are highly symbolic, fervent fascinations of adults. They express hope for techno-utopias, fear of technological dystopias, and our complex, emotional interactions with machines, cute and sexual or powerful and destructive. The Stepford Wives is a feminist cry against the patriarchal effort to bring robots to life and replace real, intelligent, talented

women with submissive housewife robots. These robot myths are not lies, but meaningful and symbolic, positive and negative, inspiring and critical stories for intelligent adults.

Some educated adults even believe that they foretell a day when robots will exceed humans. They exaggerate the importance of the narrow range of literal, cognitive, programmable information and ignore the essential non-programmable aspects of the psyche that use art and poetic language. Even Alan Turing, the computer pioneer, said that he did not expect computers to answer questions such as "What do you think of Picasso?"

I suggest that android robots are mythic, ritual re-enactments of the Pinocchio folktale about bringing puppets to life. Robots function as theatrical puppets, dramatizing central themes such children's' fears (Hansel and Gretel -- abandonment) and hopes (Cinderella -- love), the struggle between good and evil (David and Goliath -- courage), warnings against dangerous attitudes and behavior (Three Little Pigs -- laziness), and so forth.

Now robots enchant us similarly, but with the additional theme that their humanoid behavior demonstrates the triumph of the mechanistic worldview, where developing technology is the ruling purpose of life. The Pinocchio theme of bringing machines to life expresses both the way we project our fantasies onto machines and the expectation that narrow-spectrum literal cognitive artificial intelligence (or better: "machine logic") will replace broad-spectrum human soul's poetic, mythic language. Don't trash myth. It is serious -- and playful. Thoughtfully embrace and interpret the poetry of life's deep mysteries.

Lee W. Bailey is Associate Professor of Religion at Ithaca College, New York. His recent book is The Enchantments of Technology (University of Illinois, 2005).

Is there a Santa? Lee W. Bailey

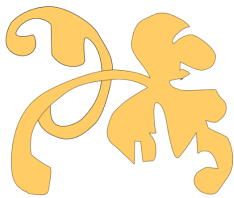


On the Web

PCR in SOSIG

The PCR Website has been included in SOSIG (Social Science Information Gateway): <http://www.sosig.ac.uk/>

The Social Science Information Gateway (SOSIG) is a freely available Internet service which aims to provide a trusted source of selected, high quality Internet information for students, academics, researchers and practitioners in the social sciences, business and law. It is part of the Resource Discovery Network (RDN).



Division 36 goes electronic

Division 36 of the American Psychological Association (Psychology of Religion) has made the transition to an electronic newsletter. You can download Volume 31, Number 1, at the following link:

<http://www.apa.org/divisions/div36/Newsltrs/v31n1.pdf>

Previous issues can be downloaded at:

<http://www.apa.org/divisions/div36/newsletr.html>

Or, if you just want to check out the latest on the web site, go to:

<http://www.apa.org/divisions/div36/>

SBL Psychology and Biblical Studies Call for Papers

- ☛ **“Psychology, the Bible, and Politics”**: Papers are invited which address any psychological issues apparent in the political matters presented in the Bible, or, alternatively, in the use of the Bible in politics throughout history.
- ☛ **“Biblical Transference and Projection in the *Left Behind* series”**: The popularity and cultural impact of the *Left Behind* series in America can be understood as reflecting the psychological mechanisms of transference and projective identification, both of which are encouraged by the apocalyptic narratives of the New Testament (especially the Book of Revelation) and by the *Left Behind* series itself. Papers are invited that address the ways in which the *Left Behind* series draws on both Biblical scenarios and modern-day conflicts to allow readers to identify with and experience Biblical apocalypticism in the present time.

In addition, we invite any proposals for papers that address Biblical materials using the concepts and interpretive tools of any field of psychology to be considered.

See the Psybibs webpage (www.psybibs.org) for more information.

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: 510-528-7198; Fax 510-528-0226; E-mail: kellybulkeley@earthlink.net

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About that Red Spot

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!

INFORMATION FOR PCR NEWSLETTER VOL. 29 NO. 2

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
[PLEASE GIVE FULL CITATION IF KNOWN]

IV. INFORMATION OF GENERAL INTEREST [calls for papers, announcements, travel, promotions, job searches . . . anything you would like to share in the newsletter]

Your name and Address:

New Member Suggestion:

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email: kellybulkeley@earthlink.net