

# IRAS

## **Varieties of Spiritual Transformation: Scientific and Religious Perspectives**

**Program and Schedule**

**The Institute on Religion in an Age of Science**

**52nd Annual Star Island Conference, July 30 to August 6, 2005**

# CONFERENCE STATEMENT

## *Varieties of Spiritual Transformation: Scientific and Religious Perspectives*

Spiritually transformative experiences are among the most compelling and powerful experiences human beings can have. They often deeply affect for good or ill an individual's spirituality, values, relationships, vocation, psychology, and life.

Because of the significance of these experiences, many scientists are engaging in ground-breaking studies of spiritual transformation from biological, psychological, and socio-cultural perspectives. The goal of this conference is to develop a multi-perspective analysis that includes the findings of contemporary sciences along with the understandings of world religions and the reflection of contemporary religious and philosophical thought. Such an analysis will provide guidance for further scientific research, enhance human self-understanding, and deepen religious living.

Among the questions to be considered are:

1. What is spiritual transformation? How is it different from other kinds of human transformation, from other forms of religious experience, and from biological, psychological, and sociological parameters?
2. What are the pathways of various forms of spiritual transformation-including their antecedent conditions, their reorganizing processes, and their cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes for individuals and communities?
3. What are the neurological correlates of spiritual transformation? Under what conditions and with the aid of what techniques and practices (religious and otherwise) do transformative changes in the human brain occur?
4. How are spiritual transformation and its conditions and outcomes understood from the perspectives of various world religions, including indigenous traditions? How do these understandings compare with scientific understandings?
5. How do events beyond a person's conscious control, such as the loss of loved ones, near-death experiences and sleep paralysis, shed light on spiritual transformation?
6. What psychological and behavioral changes result from spiritual transformation? What are the wider social implications? What are the benefits and/or costs of spiritual transformation experiences for individuals, groups, and societies?
7. How do transformative processes contribute to health?
8. What are the theological meanings and significance of experiences of spiritual transformation?

## WELCOME TO STAR ISLAND!

Friends old and yet to be,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you, on behalf of The Institute on Religion in an Age of Science, to the 52nd consecutive Star Island Conference. Our co-chairs seem to have done it again, putting together an awesome set of speakers to spark our thinking and nourish the dynamic conversations we will have on the porches and at the dining tables. The island is the same comfortable “spirit home” as always for many of us, and yet it is ever new – I cannot wait to see what the high-tech water purification plant is like, which has apparently ended the era of transporting water to this island. But as always, the island needs our help to continue on its path and to rejuvenate itself, and therefore it is by no means too early to ask you to keep alert to the fragility of the island, and to think about ways you can help it survive and prosper.

I plan on a relaxed week, because my work as president will end with Thursday’s Annual Meeting, which I think I am prepared for. Therefore, if you need anything, or if you want to talk about joining IRAS or working on one of its committees, I am readily available and would love the chance to get to know you if I don’t already, and to deepen our friendship if I do.

Yours in anticipation of a great week,

*Michael Cavanaugh*

President of IRAS

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## ORIGIN OF IRAS

In the late 1940s the American Academy of Arts and Sciences organized a Committee on Science and Values to address topics relating contemporary scientific knowledge to fundamental human concerns about life's morals and meanings. The Committee, which included astronomer Harlow Shapley, neurobiologist Hudson Hoagland, geologist Kirtley Fletcher Mather, biologist George Wald, and Ralph Wendell Burhoe, the executive secretary of the Academy, stated that "we believe that . . . the survival of human society depends on the reformulation of man's world view and ethics, by grounding them in the revelations of modern science as well as on tradition and intuition."

Several from this committee accepted an invitation to bring their views to an interfaith group at the Coming Great Church Conference on Star Island in the summer of 1954. Later in 1954 the group from the American Academy accepted an invitation of the Coming Great Church Conference to form the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science, a multidisciplinary society, which carried forward the work of both predecessor groups. Other leaders involved in the establishment of IRAS included Brand Blanshard, Edwin Prince Booth, Dana McLean Greeley, Donald Szanthe Harrington, Henry Murphy, Lyman Rutledge, and Malcolm Sutherland. Other early members included Ashley Montagu, B.F. Skinner, Theodosius Dobzhansky, and Ian Barbour.

Since 1954 IRAS has held an annual conference on science, values, and religion on Star Island, ten miles off the coast of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. IRAS has also conducted – on its own or in collaboration with other groups – conferences in other places: at universities and theological schools, and at meetings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the American Academy of Religion.

In 1965 IRAS joined with the Meadville Theological School of Lombard College (later Meadville/Lombard Theological School) to establish a journal: *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*. The first issue was published in March 1966 under founding editor Ralph Wendell Burhoe, director of the newly formed Center for Advanced Studies in Theology and the Sciences (CASTS) at Meadville/Lombard. In 1979, when Karl Peters succeeded Ralph Burhoe as editor, the editorial offices moved to Rollins College in Florida. IRAS, the Center for Advanced Study in Religion and Science (CASIRAS – successor to CASTS), and Rollins College became joint publishers. In 1989 the editorial offices moved back to Chicago under the editorship of Philip Hefner, director of the newly formed Chicago Center for Religion and Science (renamed the Zygon Center for Religion and Science in 1999). During the past quarter century, *Zygon* has been the chief international voice for the scholarly community in science and religion, and has greatly strengthened the influence of the IRAS-CASIRAS approach to relating religion and the sciences.

## PURPOSE OF IRAS

IRAS is a multi-disciplinary society of persons who seek to understand and reformulate the theory and practice of religion in the light of contemporary scientific knowledge, and to provide a forum for discussing issues relevant to that goal. The IRAS Constitution states the formal purpose as follows:

- (1) to promote creative efforts leading to the formulation, in the light of contemporary knowledge, of effective doctrines and practices for human welfare;
- (2) to formulate dynamic and positive relationships between the concepts developed by science and the goals and hopes of humanity expressed through religion; and
- (3) to state human values in such universal and valid terms that they may be understood by all peoples, whatever their cultural background or experience, in such a way as to provide a basis for world-wide cooperation.

Various other statements of the goals and purposes of IRAS have also been articulated over the years. For example there is one in the back of each Zygon which says “IRAS is an independent society of scientists, philosophers, religion scholars, theologians, and others who want to understand the role of religion in our dynamic scientific world.” The statement that appears as the lead-off paragraph in the Orange Book under “Purpose of IRAS” resulted from some discussions by the council before the 2002 Star Island Conference, and is intended to make it clear IRAS is open to all persons who share these goals, and is not some sort of “elitist” organization.

And most recently, the IRAS Council at its 2003 Mid-Winter Meeting adopted the “Campion Statement,” so-called because it originated from discussions at the Campion Center in Massachusetts at the 2002 Mid-Winter Meeting. The Campion Statement reads as follows:

*We at IRAS take the natural world seriously as a primary source of meaning. Our quest is informed and guided by the deepening and evolving understandings fostered by scientific inquiry.*

*From here, our quests for meaning take us in divergent directions. For some, the natural world and its emergent manifestations in human experience and creativity are the focus of exploration. For some, understandings of the natural world are interwoven with understandings inherent in various religious traditions, generating additional paths of exploration and encounter. As a result, we articulate our emerging orientations with many voices, voices that are harmonious in that we share a common sense of place and gratitude.*

*We acknowledge as well a shared set of values and concerns pertaining to peace, justice, dignity, cultural and ecological diversity and planetary sustainability. Although we may differ and hence debate on how these concerns are best addressed, we are committed to participating in their resolution.*

IRAS is a non-profit membership organization. Governance is by a volunteer Council whose members are elected from the entire membership. New IRAS members and tax-deductible contributions are always welcome.

## IRAS ON STAR ISLAND

Star Island, first settled by Captain John Smith in the early 1600s, is situated in what was known as the best fishing grounds in the Colonial world. Today one can still see the lobstermen setting their traps. A small museum and island tours allow one to recapture this early human history; and tours of the local flora and fauna, tide walks, and a marine biology lab help one appreciate the local environment.

Because it is ten miles off shore from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Star Island's temperature is usually ten degrees cooler than on the mainland. It thus became an ideal resort setting for one of the premier late-nineteenth century hotels on the east coast. Today the hotel, along with several cottages and motel-type units, is a conference center run by the Unitarian-Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ; these two religious organizations have formed the Star Island Corporation. Although IRAS is not affiliated with any particular religious organization, we have enjoyed the hospitality of the Star Island Corporation since our first IRAS conference in 1954.

The nineteenth century hotel and other facilities provide both the charm and the amenities of that period. Rooms are provided with wash basins and water buckets, and in most cases the toilet is down the hall. The Star Island management and its staff of mostly college students – called Pelicans – are first rate in meeting the various needs of guests from infants to octogenarians. A highlight of the week is the Pelican Talent show – a delightful “extra” from the hard-working staff. And in recent years IRAS conferees have returned the favor with their own talent show on the final night of the conference.

Star Island and other islands in the Isles of Shoals are excellent examples of the rocky New England coast. There are no roads, no cars, no bicycles, no TVs, and one public phone. (A cellular phone, 603-534-2190, is for emergencies only.) But there are rocks, bushes, grasses, nesting sea gulls, crashing ocean waves, sometimes fog horns, and sometimes crystal clear night skies to explore through telescopes with some of our professional astronomers (IRAS's first president was astronomer Harlow Shapley). There are opportunities for swimming, rowing, tennis, and ballroom dancing. And the Star Island Book Store and Gift Shop offer books related to the conference theme and other items to remember the week on the island.

Then there are the people who come to IRAS conferences – more than 200, from a variety of academic and professional fields as well as many well-educated “lay persons.” Many belong to IRAS, which has about 400 members. Others come because they are interested in how liberal religion relates to science and in the particular topic. There is active dialogue in lectures, discussion groups, conversation on the porch overlooking the harbor and on the rocks, and at the social hour before dinner. For those interested, there are opportunities to meditate and worship together in the stone chapel on a high point of the island, at the gazebo, or in the reflective evening candlelight services.

Those who have been coming for a long time to IRAS conferences believe that the natural setting, the island history, and the people provide a unique opportunity for rigorous meaningful dialogue regarding religion and values in relation to contemporary science.

## GENERAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

**Plenary session lectures and discussion** are scheduled in the *morning* (starting at 10 am) and *evening* (starting at 7:30 pm). The speakers will develop the theme of the conference as they address different issues and questions from their own disciplines and perspectives. The porch bell will be rung (a single stroke) five minutes before the beginning of the morning and evening sessions, at 9:55 am and 7:25 pm. We hope this advance warning will enable everyone to reach his/her seat in time to allow a prompt start at 10:00 am and 7:30 pm. A coffee/hot chocolate/bouillon break is scheduled for 10:55 - 11:15 each morning. When you hear the bell at the end of this break, please return quickly to the auditorium.

The **IRAS seminar** this year will be on the manuscript *BEAUTY: Connecting Science & Spirit* by Paul Carr. It will be on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 1:40 to 2:40 pm; the Monday session will be in Elliott, while the sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday will be in Marshman. Further information may be found on pages 13 – 14.

“**Free University**” sessions, from 1:40 to 2:40 pm each day except Thursday, provide conferees with an opportunity to present their ideas informally and discuss them with others. If you wish to organize such a session, you need to do two things: 1) Check with Nancy Anschuetz at least the day before for a room assignment, and 2) after doing so, give a written note to Jane Bengtson, editor of the *Star Beacon*, describing your offering and its time and location. The announcement will appear in the *Beacon* and will also be posted on the chalkboard.

**Workshops and Discussion Groups** will be offered during the afternoon from 2:50 to 3:50 and 4:00 to 5:00 pm. Leaders and workshop locations are listed in the schedule on the back page of this program booklet, and workshop descriptions are on pages 15 – 24, listed alphabetically by presenter. Other activities such as Small Group Sharing, Films, and Yoga can be found on pages 25 – 26.

“**Happy Hour**” takes place at the end of afternoon activities, from 5:30-6:30 pm. We gather informally in Newton Center for an hour of libations, snacks, socializing and, often, music. Contributions to cover the cost are both needed and appreciated.

**Recreation:** Afternoons are also opportunities for recreation: talking, thinking, napping, reading, walking, and playing. You can visit the Marine Laboratory of the University of New Hampshire on Appledore Island on Monday afternoon. (Please sign up at the front desk in advance – the boat capacity is limited.) Various tours by the Star Island staff will be announced.

**Swimming:** The hardy (or masochistic) enjoy a polar bear swim in the morning before breakfast. The rest of us can swim throughout the day when the lifeguard is on duty.

**Special meals:** There will be a lobster dinner on *Wednesday* (tickets *must* be purchased at the lobby desk by Monday noon). The traditional IRAS banquet will be on *Friday*.

**Shows:** The Pelican show (organized by the Pelicans, the young people who do all the work to make our stay on Star Island so delightful) will be on Thursday evening, and the IRAS Talent Show on Friday. If you would like to participate in the Talent Show, especially if you have

talent (this is an optional requirement – all hams are welcome), Joan Hunter, the talent show coordinator, will be happy to hear from you.

**Newspaper:** The *Star Beacon* is an IRAS tradition. This conference newspaper will appear at breakfast each morning and will give you up-to-date information on the conference and its participants. It provides opportunities for you to respond to lectures and conference theme, challenge ideas, publish poetry, commentary, and other forms of artistic expression, including humor — all at the discretion of the editor and as space is available.

**Candlelight services,** arranged by Betty Lau, allow time for quiet reflection at the close of each day in the chapel. Each service is ~30 minutes.

**Mass:** Catholic Mass will be celebrated on Sunday at 5pm in the Chapel. All are welcome.

**Memorial Service:** A memorial service for IRAS members who have died since last summer will be held in the Chapel on Friday at 1:40.

The **snack bar**, open until 11 pm, is a favorite place for congregating and socializing after the candlelight services.

An informal **farewell party** will be held on Friday night, an important activity being to use up any refreshing substances left over from Happy Hour.

**Children** must participate in the children's program unless Nancy Anschuetz receives a signed waiver.

**Discrimination and abuse:** The Star Island Corporation has requested that all conferences formulate guidelines for the prevention of child and adult discrimination and abuse. The IRAS Council has adopted such guidelines. Information about the policy is available from IRAS President, Michael Cavanaugh.

If you have any **questions or suggestions** concerning the conference, please bring them up with Conference Coordinator Nancy Anschuetz, or with Co-Chairs Karl Peters and Andy Newberg.



## ARCHI PELAGOS: IRAS CONFERENCE YOUTH PROGRAM

While parents and grandparents cogitate, their children play, create, explore Star Island, and develop friendships under the guidance of professional teachers and counselors. Our goal is to enjoy together stimulating games, opportunities for creative expression, crafts, stories and song. Our hope is to deepen our connection with Star Island and each other. We explore marine biology and island flora and fauna directly out and about and in the science center with island staff. We row over to Smuttynose Island for a close-up of intertidal life and feast on fresh seaweed and mussels on the beach. We have access to the island historian and marine lab assistants.

We meet each morning at 9:00 am in age specific groups until 12:15 pm. The seniors meet at morning chapel and often again afternoons in Parker. The morning session is structured with both energetic and quiet activities. Older groups integrate conference themes. Many of these young adults have been attending the youth program for up to nine years. Afternoons are free and youth are under the supervision of parents and guardians until the social hour (5:15-6:15 pm). The one exception is Tuesday afternoon when we offer a program from 4:00 to 5:15 and parents take back responsibility from then on, allowing youth staff to socialize that afternoon. Several mid-afternoons we offer craft or game activities on the porch, and these activities are open to all.

Snacks are offered at 5:00 pm on the front porch of the Oceanic or the well house at the bottom of the stairs. Choices for the 5:15-6:15 social hour include playground, field games, island exploration, and preparation for the dance and talent show.

Following supper we offer a sunset program (7:30-8:30 pm) featuring bonfires with singing and s'mores on Saturday evening, music (including a Wednesday evening dance), storytelling, mysteries and games, and our own chapel service on Thursday (8:00-8:30 pm). Parents or guardians are expected to accompany those up to grade 4 and to remember they are responsible for all their children from 8:30 on, or when they are not in supervised activities. The activities are thoughtfully but not rigidly prepared and inspiration is appreciated in this vibrant place where we discover and nurture our collective being.

After nine years, many returning staff as well as children have found in Star Island a spirit home. We are grateful.

Sandra Woodworth, Coordinator

### Archi Pelagos Special Events

Saturday, 7:30-8:30 pm:	Bonfire, down on rocks left of summer gazebo (bring flashlight)
Sunday, 8:30 am:	Youth photo (time could change.)
Monday, 7:30-8:30 pm:	Bonfire, down on rocks left of summer gazebo (bring flashlight)
Tuesday, 4:00-5:15 pm:	Field games
Wednesday, 7:30-9:30 pm:	Dance in Brookfield — younger ones (under 6th grade, are asked to leave at 8:30.)
Thursday, 8:00-8:30 pm:	Candlelight Chapel Service by youth. (We gather at 7:40 outside Brookfield and begin the candlelight walk at 8:00.) Parents should meet us at the candle station.
Friday, 5:15-6:15 pm:	Talent Show in Elliot. Snack will be given out on the porch near the stage at 5:00.

Please check the bulletin board on the porch for daily details and notices of changes or additions.

**There will be a brief meeting for parents, children, and staff on Saturday in Elliott, immediately after the Star Island Orientation Meeting. All parents with children in the Archi Pelagos program are required to attend. This is your opportunity to meet the staff, find meeting places and ask questions. After introductions we will meet with your children until 6:15. Please make sure you know where to collect your children and be timely so staff can arrive to dinner on time.**

## LECTURE ABSTRACTS AND BIOSKETCHES

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### SATURDAY EVENING

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#### INTRODUCTION TO THE CONFERENCE THEME

**Andrew Newberg**

#### ABSTRACT

This introductory talk will be a brief review of spiritual transformation from both a religious and scientific perspective and will explain the conference schedule, what each of the individual talks will be covering and how they fit together. The goal will be to establish several common themes and ideas to consider as the conference unfolds. Additional ideas that expand the topic even beyond the conference talks will be raised with the hopes of enriching the notion of spiritual transformation. This will provide a basis for discussion throughout the week and a more global context within which to consider the topics of the various talks and workshops.

#### BIOSKETCH

Andrew B. Newberg, M.D. is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Radiology and Psychiatry at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and is a staff physician in Nuclear Medicine. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine in 1993. His primary area of research has focused on specific neuropsychiatric disorders and on various activation studies designed to explore how brain function is associated with various mental states.

Andy has been particularly involved in the study of mystical and religious experiences as well as the more general mind/body relationship in both the clinical and research aspects of his career. Much of his research has focused on the relationship between brain function and various mystical and religious experiences. His research also includes understanding the physiological correlates of acupuncture therapy, meditation, and other types of alternative therapies. He has taught medical students, undergraduate and graduate students, as well as medical residents about stress management, spirituality and health, and the neurophysiology of religious experience. He has published numerous articles and chapters on brain function, brain imaging, and the study of religious and mystical experiences. He has also co-authored two books entitled *Why God Won't Go Away: Brain Science and the Biology of Belief* and *The Mystical Mind: Probing the Biology of Religious Experience*, which explore the relationship between neuroscience and spiritual experience. The latter book received the 2000 award for Outstanding Books in Theology and the Natural Sciences presented by the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences.

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### SUNDAY MORNING

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#### SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION – AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE SACRED

**Philip Hefner**

#### ABSTRACT

My basic emphasis is that our experience of spiritual transformation is in its deepest dimension an encounter with the sacred. The sacred element expresses the unmanageable element in experience, that which defies our concepts and even evokes fear and dread. The sacred, as Rudolf Otto tells us, shakes us to our very depths while at the same time it is irresistibly fascinating. This experience gives rise to what I call a “double entendre” or a “surplus of meaning.” The double entendre arises because we experience the sacred as something very ordinary and palpable, but the ordinary also transcends itself in unexpected ways. The physical and the transcendent go together whenever we attach the labels of “spirit” or “spiritual” to our experience.

As a result, spirituality and spiritual transformation pose a specific challenge to both religion and science. Each in its own way tries to tame this unmanageable element – science through its empirical methods and need for reductionist analysis, religion through its inculcation of “spiritual practices.” These efforts to understand and manage the unmanageable in life are both necessary and valuable – it has provided knowledge and discipline. However, the sacred can never be tamed – it always bursts the boundaries of both science and religion. For this reason spirituality and spiritual transformation test our religious and scientific perspectives to take the measure of both that which can be reduced to empirical methods and that which transcends those methods. I will provide specific case histories to exemplify these points – mainly from the Christian tradition.

#### BIOSKETCH

My professional life before retirement focused on teaching theology to ministerial candidates at a Lutheran seminary in Chicago. Along the way I have devoted a lot of time to thinking about religion and science and have co-edited IRAS's journal, *Zygon*. More than two dozen of my summers have included a week at Star – mostly in the company of Neva and, in earlier years, our 3 daughters, Julia, Martha, and Sarah. Since this conference is devoted to spirituality, let me say that my own spirituality is hinted at in three images:

(1) Living on the boundary – about which Paul Tillich wrote: “to stand between alternative possibilities of existence, to be completely at home in neither and to take no definitive stand against either.”

(2) Landlessness – the sense that in turbulent times, the safety of a comfortable port is deceptive, about which Herman Melville wrote: “But as in landlessness alone resides the highest truth, shoreless, indefinite as God – so, better is it to perish in that howling infinite, than to be ingloriously dashed upon the lee, even if that were safety!”

(3) A tapestry is made up of many individual stitches – faithfully pursuing what we think is important, we in effect stitch together a life about which Jorie Graham writes:

“just as we  
stitch the earth,  
it seems to me, each time  
we die, going  
back under, coming back up. . . .”

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SUNDAY EVENING

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THE NEUROPSYCHOLOGY OF  
SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

**Andrew Newberg**

ABSTRACT

This talk will review the neuropsychology of spiritual transformation by considering the current state of neurophysiological investigations of spiritual transformation in terms of brain imaging, neurotransmitter studies, and hormone and immune function. There are currently a number of techniques for studying the brain and its related functions. Such techniques include single photon emission computed tomography (SPECT), positron emission tomography (PET), and functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). As will be discussed in this talk, these imaging techniques can observe the very broad function of different structures of the brain as well as detailed neurotransmitter systems with regard to spiritual transformation. Physiological studies of various hormone levels, autonomic activity, and immune function can also be integrated into a comprehensive model that can be utilized to enable future research and applications related to spiritual transformation and healing. This approach will provide the essential link between spiritual transformation and various health related responses. Further, this analysis can apply to both beneficial and potentially detrimental responses to spiritual transformation. The study of the neuropsychology of spiritual transformation will provide the necessary framework upon which to build a better understanding how human beings are affected by such phenomena.

BIOSKETCH

See Saturday Evening's lecture.

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MONDAY MORNING

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A UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR FOR  
SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

**Ashok Gangadean**

ABSTRACT

Our great spiritual and philosophical traditions through the ages, East, West and Other, have sought to tap and articulate the depth grammar or logic of the most fundamental unified field which is the common generative ground of our diverse worldviews, religions, cultures, ideologies, and disciplinary languages.

In this talk I suggest that we are in the midst of a profound dimensional shift in our rational capacity to process reality, and seek to articulate the implications of this evolutionary shift to global reason and awakened consciousness for all aspects of our human and rational enterprise. As we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> Century it is unmistakably clear that we are in the midst of an unprecedented shift in the human condition—a global renaissance that affects every aspect of our cultural lives, our self understanding, and, of course, our experience and world making.

This evolutionary transformation, when seen through the expanded and dilated global lens, has been emerging through the ages on a global scale. In my presentation I suggest that this advance in our technology of mind is of an order of magnitude that is so radical and comprehensive that the very concept of a person, of what it means to be human,

of our encounter with Reality and all our hermeneutical arts, including the sciences are likewise taken to a higher global dimension. I explore and present this latent and emergent grammar of spiritual transformation to global, dialogic, integral and holistic consciousness- the global awakening of reason, scientific knowing and the holistic worldview.

BIOSKETCH

Ashok Gangadean is Professor of Philosophy at Haverford College where he has taught for the past thirty seven years. Throughout his career he has focused on clarifying the fundamental common ground across widely diverse worldviews and seeking to expand philosophy and cultural life into a wider global context. In his two major volumes—*Meditative Reason: Toward Universal Grammar*; and *Between Worlds: The Emergence of Global Reason*—he attempts to demonstrate that there is a fundamental *Logos* or Primal Field out of which all worldviews arise. This opens the way for deeper connections between widely diverse worldviews and paradigms, including Spirituality and the Sciences.

Ashok is Co-Founder-Co-Director of the Global Dialogue Institute which has developed effective methods of *Deep Dialogue* for renovating cultural life. His new book, *The Awakening of the Global Mind*, will appear soon. He also hosts a weekly television show *GLOBAL LENS* on WYBE TV, Channel 35, in the Greater Philadelphia region, which interviews leading authors and thinkers opening a global perspective across worldviews. Ashok is also Co-Convenor of the *World Commission on Global Consciousness and Spirituality* which brings leading and emerging world leaders together in deep dialogue to help articulate global wisdom, vision and values in addressing the most pressing concerns and crises on a global scale. He presents Intensive Deep-Dialogue Workshops around the globe to help participants at all levels transform their lives through the dynamics and skills of deep dialogue.

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MONDAY EVENING

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RELEASING THE SELF: INTEGRATING  
SPIRITUALITY AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

**Richard Schwartz**

ABSTRACT

Nearly all mystical traditions agree that beneath our protective layers lies a Self, an untarnished essence from which flows healing, spiritual energy, and wisdom. Ironically, very few psychotherapies even believe in the existence of such a Self, much less know how to access it in clients. This is because much of western psychology has identified people with their most extreme parts and encouraged them to go to war against those parts of them. It is also ironic that, in trying to help people access this state of Self, many spiritual practices also pit people against their parts, viewing them as “the ego” that is to be silenced or transcended.

Having been trained in systems thinking as a family therapist, I began explorations of what might be called the natural multiplicity of the mind. That is, I studied clients' inner systems of subpersonalities (what I call parts) in the early 1980s and began applying systems thinking and family therapy technique to these inner worlds. In the process I found that all parts of clients, even highly destructive ones (suicidal, homicidal, self-critical, etc.), if approached with curiosity and then compassion, showed

that they weren't what they seemed – that they had been forced into destructive roles they didn't like to protect the clients – and that they would like to shift into valuable states. I also found that when clients could separate from these parts and others, clients would shift spontaneously and suddenly into a state of curiosity and compassion from which they seemed to know how to heal themselves. Over time the spiritual implications of these discoveries have become clearer and have led to further adventures.

#### BIOSKETCH

Richard Schwartz was an associate professor in the Department of Psychiatry of the University of Illinois at Chicago, and then at the Family Institute at Northwestern University when, in 2000, he left academia to found a training institute called the Center for Self Leadership. He has a Ph.D. in marriage and family therapy from Purdue University and used that background to bring a fresh perspective to clients' intrapsychic process. This resulted in an approach to psychotherapy called the Internal Family Systems model that, while originally a way to understand and change intrapsychic process, has also evolved into an approach for bringing harmony to polarized larger human systems like families, communities, and companies. More recently he has become interested in the connections between his model and different spiritual traditions. Like Emerson, he is finding that his best ideas were stolen by the ancients.

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#### TUESDAY MORNING

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##### RADICAL EMPATHY: THE DIVIDE BETWEEN RITUAL HEALING AND MEDICAL THERAPIES

**Joan Koss-Chioino**

##### ABSTRACT

This presentation describes one among many directions of the study of spiritual transformation, that of spiritual transformation as a foundational component of healing processes. I outline a model of the core components of ritual healing process that centers on spiritual transformation as both the initiatory event and basis for the continuing personal experience of spirit healers while carrying out their ritual healing work. The formulation I propose might also be applied to ritual healing processes in established religions, such as in Pentecostal churches and Catholic charismatic rituals. I leave the audience to suggest these connections during the discussion period.

The prototype for this model of healing process comes from observations of hundreds of healing sessions carried out by Spiritist healers in Puerto Rico. (It is further referenced by numerous descriptions in the ethnographic literature.) Spiritism (*Espiritismo*) is only one among many similar groups found throughout Latin America, Europe, and the Philippines. Based on folk Catholicism and innovative 19<sup>th</sup> century notions about spirits and therapeutics, the cult originated in France, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and has been infused with local cultural content – in Latin America with Afro-Caribbean, Native American beliefs as well as beliefs about popular saints.

The core components of a ritual healing process are: 1) spiritual transformation in healers (and often in clients); 2) the “wounded healer;” 3) communion with the sacred; and 4) a capacity for radical empathy. This model will be explained and some implications discussed. One implication is that a focus on radical empathy in the healer-

client relationship leads to a special type of altruistic stance lacking in most medical encounters. Psychotherapy research into therapeutic relationships highlights relational and attitudinal aspects; very few schools include empathy as important. Some medical doctors are also now discussing the importance of being empathic towards patients but this is a recent phenomenon. However, shamans and spirit healers go beyond empathy as defined and discussed by medical doctors and psychotherapists. They commonly sacrifice aspects of their selves (i.e., endure pain, deprivation, discomfort, lend or lose their souls, etc.) to come into contact and communicate with a sacred realm as the principal means to bring about healing in the client.

#### BIOSKETCH

Joan D. Koss-Chioino, Ph.D. is Professor Emerita of the Anthropology Department at Arizona State University. In 2001 she was appointed Research Professor in Psychology at George Washington University, and directed the Washington Program for Ethnographic Research Training in HIV/AIDS, substance abuse and violence, a NIDA-funded, postdoctoral training grant until 2004.

Joan developed a Program in Medical Anthropology at A.S.U. and continues to work at the interface between anthropology, psychiatry and psychology. Her primary research interests are the treatment of illness and emotional disorders, and the maintenance of well-being, both of which include a focus on spirituality and spiritual transformation. Her research includes traditional, alternative and psychotherapeutic treatments in Latino cultures in the U.S., Latin America, Spain and Thailand. Currently she is completing analyses of a family and group treatment outcome study with Mexican American youths and families in Arizona, and also of a study of emotion regulation among women in Andalusia, Spain. Among her 150 publications are: *Women as Healers, Women as Patients: Mental Health Care and Traditional Healing in Puerto Rico* (Westview Press, 1992), *Working With Culture: Psychotherapeutic Interventions with Ethnic Minority Children and Adolescents*, editor, with Luis A. Vargas (Jossey Bass, 1992) and *Working With Latino Youth: Culture, Development and Context* (1999), with Luis A. Vargas as coauthor. With Philip Hefner as co-editor, she had just completed the manuscript for a book, *Spiritual Transformation and Healing*, to be published by Altamira Press in the spring of 2006.

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#### TUESDAY EVENING

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##### VARIETIES OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE AND HEALTH EFFECTS

**Jean Kristeller**

##### ABSTRACT

Spiritual engagement, transformation, and religious involvement are multi-faceted, yet universal human experiences. How people may engage different aspects of these core experiences at different points in their lives, or for different reasons, presents a challenge to understanding human nature that psychological research is beginning to embrace. In the last 15 years questions relating to understanding spiritual and religious well-being have gone from a marginalized and methodologically limited framework to an almost overwhelming choice of approaches to measurement and increasing conceptual breadth. And the questions continue to expand. The arena of health care is a particularly fruitful one within which to

explore these issues due to the challenge of personal vulnerability. In our work we have identified six dimensions of religious and spiritual engagement, and are exploring how these affect life challenges as different as alcohol abuse and coping with cancer. This presentation will draw on our active lines of research on spiritual engagement and transformation to frame some of the questions we now are answering and some of the future directions for exploration.

#### BIOSKETCH

Jean Kristeller received her doctorate in clinical and health psychology from Yale University in 1983, her M.S. from the University of Wisconsin in psychophysiology and clinical psychology in 1978, and her undergraduate degree from Swarthmore College. She is currently Professor of Psychology at Indiana State University, and Director for the Center for the Study of Health, Religion, and Spirituality at ISU. Previous appointments have been at the Univ. of Massachusetts Medical School and Harvard University Medical School. Her work has been informed by personal journeys in Japan and elsewhere in Asia; by many years of clinical work in medical and psychotherapy settings; by attempting to teach the psychology of meditation (from secular to sacred) to undergraduates; and by attempting to teach the psychology of spirituality to physicians. She has published on Buddhism and psychology, and is currently working on a book on spiritual intelligence. She has been investigating the role of spiritual engagement in coping with cancer for several years, with a focus on understanding how these issues can be addressed within the health care setting. She is a co-investigator on a recently completed NIH-funded study examining ways in which spirituality is experienced and expressed by undergraduates, and how it may serve as a protective mechanism in alcohol intake. She currently has funding through the NIH Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine for studies on the use of mindfulness meditation in treating binge eating disorder and obesity.

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#### WEDNESDAY MORNING

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#### TERRIFYING TRANSFORMATIONS

**David Hufford**

#### ABSTRACT

Sleep paralysis (SP) is a limp paralysis, usually brief, that occurs either just prior to or immediately following sleep. The paralysis has a well known neurophysiological basis in central nervous system mechanisms of REM sleep. But until recently sleep researchers were not aware that this event includes a remarkably complex and terrifying experience that is perceived as spiritual by most subjects. The pattern of SP has now been shown to be independent of culture, a finding that challenges the prevalent psycho-social explanations of such experiences. Descriptions of sleep paralysis by contemporary experiencers, as well as throughout history and in the anthropological records of other cultures show the robustness of its subjective pattern and its spiritual interpretation.

Case examples will be presented in which sleep paralysis has resulted in spiritual transformation by convincing the subject that she/he had been assaulted by an evil spiritual presence. The example of sleep paralysis offers an opportunity to examine in detail the interaction of physiological factors, culture and personal interpretation in powerful *numinous* events. In particular it clarifies issues

regarding the extent to which neurophysiological understanding can claim to replace spiritual interpretations.

Understanding SP as a *spiritual* event, one that is specifically characterized as spiritual by those who experience it, calls attention to the core meaning of *spiritual* in English: having to do with spirit(s). It also serves to broaden the discussion of spiritual experience to include terrifying varieties that are not typically a part of scholarly discussions of modern spirituality.

#### BIOSKETCH

David Hufford is University Professor and Chair of Humanities, and Professor of Family & Community Medicine, and Professor of Neural & Behavioral Sciences, at Penn State College of Medicine, and Adjunct Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. He has used the research he reported in *The Terror That Comes in the Night: An Experience-Centered Study of Supernatural Assault Traditions* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), a cross-cultural study of sleep paralysis as a transcendent experience, to develop an experience-centered theory of spiritual belief. This year he co-edited a special issue of *Transcultural Psychiatry* devoted to sleep paralysis in cultural context, marking the growing recognition of this complex topic in the psychiatric community.

SP is just one aspect of David's research focusing on experiential roots and rational inference in the development of spiritual belief and in traditional approaches to healing. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in Folklore, and has devoted his career to the study of the beliefs of ordinary people and the tense dynamics relating such beliefs to the views of "experts." This includes his work in the field of complementary and alternative medicine, and religious and spiritual healing.

David is accompanied at Star Island by his wife and collaborator in the study of spiritual experience, Mary Ann Bucklin, and three of their children, Moses, Annamarie and David.

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#### WEDNESDAY EVENING

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#### TRANSFORMATIVE ELEMENTS OF NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCES

**Bruce Greyson**

#### ABSTRACT

Some individuals when they come close to death report having experiences that they interpret as spiritual or religious. These so-called near-death experiences (NDEs) often include a sense of separation from the physical body, cosmic unity, and divine revelation, and encounters with religious figures and a mystical or divine presence. Although there is no relationship between NDEs and religious belief *prior to the experience*, there are strong associations between depth of NDE and religious change *after* the experience.

NDEs often change experiencers' values, decreasing their fear of death, and giving their lives new meaning. NDEs lead to a shift from ego-centered to other-centered consciousness, disposition to love unconditionally, heightened empathy, decreased interest in status symbols and material possessions, reduced fear of death, and deepened spiritual consciousness. Many experiencers return with a love of the divine light that transformed their

own lives, and a mission to bring that love to others. They become more empathic and spiritually oriented, and express the beliefs that death is not fearsome, that life continues beyond, that love is more important than material possessions, and that everything happens for a reason.

These changes that often follow NDEs meet Arthur Schwartz's definition of spiritual transformation as "a dramatic change in religious belief, attitude, and behavior that occurs over a relatively short period of time." With increasing resuscitation technology enabling more and more individuals to return from the brink of death, the cumulative impact of NDE testimonies may foster the spiritual evolution of humanity's collective consciousness.

#### BIOSKETCH

Bruce Greyson is the Carlson Professor of Psychiatry and Director of the Division of Personality Studies at the University of Virginia Medical School. He studied psychology at Cornell University (A.B., 1968) and medicine at the SUNY Upstate Medical College (M.D., 1973), and completed his psychiatric residency at the University of Virginia. He practiced and taught psychiatry at the University of Michigan and the University of Connecticut, where he was Clinical Chief of Psychiatry, before returning to the University of Virginia 10 years ago.

Bruce was one of the founding members of the International Association for Near-Death Studies, and served on its Board of Directors and as its President and Director of Research. For the past 24 years he has edited the *Journal of Near-Death Studies*, and he was the senior editor of *The Near-Death Experience: Problems, Prospects, Perspectives* (Charles C Thomas, 1984). His near-death research for the past three decades has focused on the aftereffects of the experience, and have resulted in 70 presentations to national scientific conferences, 100 publications in academic medical and psychological journals, and several research grants and awards.

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#### THURSDAY MORNING

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##### A NEW MODEL FOR THE EVOLUTIONARY ORIGINS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

**Solomon Katz**

##### ABSTRACT

Recent studies of the natural history and experimental modeling of a wide range of features underlying the processes of spiritual transformation are leading to a broader synthesis of its universal importance in humanity. New advances in our understanding about the antecedent conditions of spiritual transformation at psychosocial and neurobiological levels as well as a broader understanding of its significance and consequences for individuals and communities together raise important questions about its human evolutionary origins. Current archeological evidence about the early occurrence of transcendent spiritual experience comes from the comparative burial practices of both Neanderthals and Cro-Magnons who appeared to live in close proximity during a brief period in the middle Paleolithic (about 30-34 KBP) when *Homo sapiens* first reoccupied the northern and eastern circum-Mediterranean region. However, the cultural/behavioral distinctions between these two populations demonstrate that by the time of this re-inhabitation of the region by *Homo sapiens*, the southern *Homo sapiens* had undergone significant

evolutionary change toward most of the general neurobiological and cognitive capacities that underlie the deep experiences that we associate with full spirituality and presumably with spiritual transformation.

This presentation reviews the current cross cultural and religious literature about spiritual transformation and the neurobiology of spiritual experience and then integrates it with our contemporary understanding of both the neurogenomics and the paleontological and archeological evidence in order to develop a general evolutionary model about the origins and significance of spiritual transformation in the human species. This model will help organize our current understanding and provide suggestions for the direction of future research and reflection.

#### BIOSKETCH

Sol Katz is Professor of Anthropology, and Director of the Krogman Growth Center, University of Pennsylvania. The Center specializes in the study of chronic diseases that have a significant nutritional component that influences child growth, development of obesity, and early sexual maturation among US urban children.

Sol is a leading expert on the anthropology of food, specializing in the biocultural evolution of cuisine and has published over two hundred professional books, papers and articles, many of which deal with food and nutritional topics, and is editor-in-chief of the *Encyclopedia of Foods*. He is widely recognized for a new theory about how cooking and food processing techniques evolved along with the rise of agricultural productivity.

Sol first came to Star Island in the mid 1970s, and his work in the field of science and religion spans 35 years. He has served as President of IRAS and currently is the Vice President for Science. He also is Co-chair of the Joint Publication Board of *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*, was President of the Center for the Advanced Study of Religion and Science from 1989-2002, and is a member of the Board of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

One of his most recent undertakings is as the Director of the Spiritual Transformation Project of the Metanexus Institute on Religion and Science. For the past three years he has led an interdisciplinary team that has studied the various biological, psychosocial and cultural conditions and factors that underlie spiritual transformations of individuals and groups. Participants in this project are among the speakers at this Star Island Conference.

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#### THURSDAY EVENING

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##### SPEAKERS' PANEL

Speakers are asked to identify and discuss major issues that have emerged in the course of the conference.

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#### FRIDAY MORNING

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##### IN-THE-ROUND CONVERSATION

Conferees are invited to suggest and refine important themes that have emerged from our week's presentations and conversations, and to say how the week impacted your life and ideas.

## IRAS SEMINAR

In the IRAS Seminar, seminar leaders comment on a manuscript or recent book by a member (or members) of IRAS, followed by open discussion by all who would like to participate.

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The manuscript being reviewed is **BEAUTY: Connecting Science & Spirit** by Paul H. Carr. The first session will be held in Elliot on Monday from 1:40-2:40. Tuesday and Wednesday sessions will be held in Marshman in the same time slot. Jeanie Graustein will moderate; invited responders are Roger Brown, Paul Ulbrich and Katy Baucke.

### DESCRIPTION

This book traces the emergence of the mathematical beauty of modern science from the mystical beauty of ancient stories. The beauty of nature lured ancient people to explain the world with myths, illuminated by art. Today Einstein's beautiful mathematics frames the entire universe, from the bending of starlight to black holes.

Was there not a certain mystic beauty when the Divine Spirit moved over the face of the waters creating order out of chaos (Genesis 1 & Haydn's "Creation Oratorio")? In 1859, Darwin proposed the evolution of "forms most beautiful" by variations and the law of natural selection. Mathematician Benoit Mandelbrot discovered that fractal geometry characterizes the beauty of nature, from snowflakes to the branching of plants and lungs. Randomness and deterministic laws characterize both fractals and evolution. Thus, the mystical beauty of Genesis 1 has evolved into the mathematical beauty of fractals, characterized by the interplay of both chance and necessity.

How might these insights help us decide whether or not God "plays dice" (Einstein) or is an "Intelligent Designer?" How can nature's beauty inspire new connections between science and spirit to meet the challenges of our day?

### PROCEDURE

On **Monday**, Paul Carr will give a powerpoint presentation overview of his manuscript and Roger Brown will comment, with response by Paul. On **Tuesday**, Paul Ulbrich will comment, and on **Wednesday** Katy Baucke will comment, with responses from Paul Carr. Each session will be open to discussion among all present.

### BIOSKETCHES

**Paul H. Carr** has presented workshops at Star Island since 1998 and won a John Templeton Foundation Grant for his philosophy course "Science and Religion: Cosmos to Consciousness" at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. He organized the Science and Religion Session of the International Paul Tillich Society Conference in Indiana, and presented the paper "Science and Religion: Original

Unity and the Courage to Create," published in the June 2001 ZYGON. His paper "Does God Play Dice? Insights from the Fractal Geometry of Nature" was published in the December 2004 issue. He presented "Technology Touches Theology and Vice Versa" at the ESSSAT Conference in Barcelona in April 2004. He has won prizes for his nature photography

In his former life, Paul led the Component Technology Branch of the Air Force Research Laboratory, which did research and development on microwave ultrasound, surface acoustic waves, and superconductors. He is a life fellow of the IEEE and a life member of the American Physical Society. He earned his Ph.D. in physics from Brandeis University and his M.S. and B.S. from MIT. [paulcarr@alum.mit.edu](mailto:paulcarr@alum.mit.edu), <http://MirrorOfNature.org>

**Roger Brown** is a United Church of Christ minister, working in Vermont, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. He serves as an intentional interim minister, helping churches with the transition process between permanent ministers. Rev. Brown considers building community and facilitating spiritual support as a primary task in his work in parish ministry, and he consults on matters of congregational health and long-term planning. He has attended Star Island conferences since 1991. He presented a paper at ESSSAT Barcelona, 2004. His academic background includes a BSEE and MS degrees from the University of Vermont, and a Master of Divinity and doctoral studies from Andover Newton Theological School.

**Paul Ulbrich** is a retired emergency physician who spent most of his career practicing and teaching emergency medicine on the south side of Chicago. He has had long interest in science and religion and how they relate to human decisions. He lives in Davis, California, studying crafts at UC Davis and machine technology at Napa Community College. Present projects include: creating 3-dimensional Cartesian children's blocks for studying spatial relationships; applications of Venn Diagrams to explain literacy using logical, anatomical and language relationships; and writings directed at using the implications of modern scientific and technical understandings of reality as a basis for religious concepts.

**Katherine A. Baucke**, artist, received her MA from Central Washington University and her MFA from the University of California, Davis. Awards include the New Hampshire Woman Artists' Award, 1995, and a New Hampshire Individual Artists Fellowship in 1983. Her works are included in the Permanent Collections of the State of New Hampshire and of Colleen Campbell, Calgary, Alberta. Exhibits include the 1994 "Out of Sight"

2-person installation at the New England College Gallery, Henniker, NH; and the 2001 Ogunquit Art Association Showcase Exhibition. Katy has offered enthusiastically attended art classes for youth and adults at several IRAS conferences.

**Jeanie Graustein**, M.Div., serves as Environmental Justice Ministry Coordinator at the Office of Urban Affairs of the Archdiocese of Hartford. She works to educate parishioners on the connections between care of creation and care of neighbor. She speaks on watershed protection and environmental issues for the CenterEdge Project, a statewide dialogue on the impact of sprawl on people and the environment. She was a co-chair for the 2004 IRAS Star Island conference, "Earth's Waters in Crisis: a Scientific, Spiritual and Moral Challenge."



## IRAS WORKSHOPS

In IRAS Workshops, topics related to the conference or of continuing general interest are explored and discussed in small groups. Workshops are listed alphabetically by presenter.

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### THE DANGERS OF SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

Monday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Marshman

**Stacey E. Ake**

#### ABSTRACT

Spirituality is not inherently beneficent. Like every other aspect of human experience, its expression is at the mercy of the moral nature of its practitioner. In this session, we will examine the ways in which spiritual transformation can go wrong. One of the most obvious is the role that the weight of spiritual power has played in some of the more ghastly events in human history. For instance, one example would be the religious wars that surrounded the Enlightenment and Reformation — probably the two grandest examples of large scale “spiritual transformation” in the history of the west.

See also the presentation of Mark Crispin Miller’s one act play, *A Patriot Act*, on Monday evening at 10:15pm (after the Candlelight Service) in Elliot. More information may be found at the end of the workshop listings.

#### BIOSKETCH

Stacey Ake is an auxiliary professor of philosophy at Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA. When not tackling the unanswerable questions of existence, she can be found painting, wood-working and debating the merits of serving jasmine rice as opposed to basmati rice with chickpea and potato chole.

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### MANDALAS

Wednesday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Sandpiper

**Joseph Preston Baratta**

#### ABSTRACT

Mandalas, which Carl Jung saw as archetypes of the human psyche, represent the soul, the progress of the soul to enlightenment, and the Universe. Rose windows in medieval cathedrals were usually made with an image of the Virgin or Virgin and Child within the central pane, and hence they were images of love.

Circular in form, mandalas draw in the eye and invite the viewer to wonder. They help us to “center”. They were created originally in Hinduism and Tantric Buddhism; now they are used ecumenically all over the globe in spiritual, mathematical, psychological, and artistic endeavors to guide people to self-consciousness. “The more science progresses,” wrote Sir James Jeans of relativity and quantum mechanics, “the less the Universe looks like a clock, and the more it looks like a thought.” (*The Mysterious Universe*, 1930) A mandala is a thought of the whole, in the shape of the orb of the Sun or Moon, a circular form with a spiritual content.

The series of mandalas used in this workshop aims to exhibit the unity of religion and of science. I made them on my new Macintosh computer, partly to learn to use its graphics capabilities, partly to comfort my heart. May they comfort yours!

#### BIOSKETCH

Joseph Preston Baratta is a historian of the world federalist movement and of efforts to strengthen the United Nations. He was educated at St. John’s College in Annapolis, MD, and received his PhD in history from Boston University in 1982. His dissertation was on the origins of the world government movement, 1937–1947. He has worked in the United Nations community in New York in 1985–88, directing the UN office of the World Federalists. His publications include: *The United Nations System: Meeting the World Constitutional Crisis* (Oxford: ABC-Clio, 1995); monographs funded by the US Institute of Peace on international verification, peacekeeping, arbitration, and human rights; articles on the Baruch plan, Grenville Clark, the Kellogg-Briand pact, and “Toward Global Governance” in *Peace and Change* (July 1999). His new book, *The Politics of World Federation*, was published by Praeger Press in 2004. Prof. Baratta teaches world history, English history, international relations, and history of science at Worcester State College, MA.

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### TEACHING FOR SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

Sunday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Newton Front

**Muriel L. Blaisdell**

#### ABSTRACT

This workshop will consider questions from the description of this year’s conference: “What are the neurological correlates of spiritual transformation? Under what conditions and with the aid of what techniques and practices (religious and otherwise) do transformative changes in the human brain occur?”

Using a brief presentation of Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence Theory as a springboard we will discuss the concept of “existential or spiritual intelligence.” We will address the questions: Can we cultivate this human potential through teaching in secular situations? Can learning (directed at the brain) result in spiritual transformation? How do interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences interact with the hypothesis of a spiritual intelligence? As a group we will identify examples of existential/spiritual intelligence and consider various teaching and learning situations that may cultivate this intelligence.

#### BIOSKETCH

Muriel Blaisdell is Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies at Miami University in Oxford, OH, where she has taught several courses related to the theme of this year’s IRAS conference. She has taught “What is Human Nature?”,

“Medicine and Society: Cases and Concepts”, “Religion and Science”. She has a PhD from Harvard University in the History of Science, an MS from Oregon State University in General Science, and a BS in Biological Science from DePaul University.

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### THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY FOR SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

Monday and Thursday, 4:00pm–5:00pm, Newton Front

**Rev. Roger Brown**

#### ABSTRACT

This workshop will explore the premise that community is critically important to spiritual transformation especially in institutional religions such as Christianity and Judaism. Furthermore, this workshop will explore the power of community to sustain spiritual development throughout a person’s entire life. We will consider the ways in which a faith community plays a key role at different stages in spiritual development, including stages of learning, faith crisis, community participation and in seeking clarity of calling.

The workshop will be given in two parts. Part one will explore the nature of community, especially as it is found in religious institutions such as Christianity and Judaism. Important factors to be explored here include the nature of belonging, the importance of community-held values and beliefs, and the connection with history.

Part two of the workshop will explore the connection between community and spiritual transformation.

Participants will have an opportunity to share their personal stories of the ways in which belonging to a religious community has furthered the development of their spiritual path. We will examine the role of rituals and rites of passage as part of the spiritual transformation process. Participants who have found transforming spiritual encouragement in community settings outside of traditional religious communities are welcome to share their experiences as well.

#### BIOSKETCH

Roger Brown is a minister in the United Church of Christ. His ministry has been in Vermont, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. He serves as an intentional interim minister helping churches with the transition process between permanent ministers. As such he has a special interest in the leadership transition process. Rev. Brown considers building community and facilitating spiritual support as a primary task in his work in parish ministry. He also serves as a church consultant on matters of congregational health and long-term planning. He has been attending the Star Island conferences since 1991. He presented a paper at the European Conference on Science and Theology in Barcelona in 2004. Rev. Brown’s academic background includes BSEE and MS degrees from the University of Vermont, and a Master of Divinity and doctoral studies from Andover Newton Theological School. He makes his home in Brattleboro, VT.

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### IS THERE A RELIGIOUS NATURALIST PERSPECTIVE ON SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION?

Wednesday, 4:00pm–5:00pm, Sandpiper

**Michael Cavanaugh**

#### ABSTRACT

This workshop will feature discussion as to how one could (or could not) address the same issues our speakers have been addressing this week, as a religious naturalist. The questions we explore will be inspired largely by what speakers have said up to the moment of the workshop, sometimes affirming, sometimes challenging, and sometimes re-interpreting their approaches. Michael Cavanaugh will be the facilitator, and his goal will be to devise questions that stimulate conversation. Both persons who self-identify as religious naturalists and those who don’t are welcome, though the perspective explored will be one of affirming religious naturalism.

#### BIOSKETCH

Michael Cavanaugh is the president of IRAS, a retired lawyer, and an inveterate reader. He and his wife, Carolyn, are leaving from Star Island after the conference to go on a Canadian train trip to celebrate their fortieth anniversary.

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### PULLING TOGETHER A COUPLE OF STRANDS

Thursday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Newton Front

**Jeff Dahms**

#### ABSTRACT

Religious naturalism is the sinew of soul, the pulse of connection with the Earth and the stars. It is infinitely various, old as humanity, and rarely named. It is a “way” in the great fullness of that idea. Some of us in IRAS feel that it could become our “way”. Approaching such a large idea demands directness and simplicity. So this is a conversation, and a suggestion, about first questions and one possible response.

Modern mind comes to the universal question, “What am I and how can I be in my life?”, in the medium of thought and ideas. By deep cultural habit, self-sense is thought, language, speech. We are “narrative selves” in the parlance, and searching for our roots and human possibility is taken as an idea. So we begin with what we are, with ideas about religious naturalism, but with the journey, this habitual approach, our functional centre of gravity, the very framework of self may come into question.

So here are a few first questions: Why naturalism, and does it matter? In the outer search, precious science tells us about life and the Universe but where is the “fire in the equations” and what else informs us? Science has a little to say about the nature of our inner life but not much. Can anything be done with the frail tool of direct inner observing. What can be discovered arm-chaired in still quiet reflection or full-bloodedly engaged? How should we act? Is this a question worth asking or a question worth losing?

#### BIOSKETCH

Jeff Dahms, is an Australian and US resident physician-surgeon-scientist who works intermittently in the developing world. His scientific interests are in mind/brain evolution and the philosophy of science, particularly in the fundamental areas of physics and biology, and in relational areas such as the science—religion discussion.

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EARTH PARABLES: AN IGNATIAN REFLECTION

Monday, 4:00pm–5:00pm, Marshman

**George Fisher**

ABSTRACT

The Hebrew Bible can fruitfully be read as a reflection on the relationship of the Israelite people to land, a connection that emerges both from the larger narrative and from the very language itself; in Hebrew, אֶרֶץ ('erets), Earth or land, refers simultaneously to the physical land which the Israelites worked, to land as a symbol of YHWH's covenant, and to land as the content of that covenant — the source of the gifts essential for life. The Israelites knew in their bones that they were totally dependent upon the Earth's fertility, and in that awareness of utter dependency they sensed sacredness in the Earth. The importance of agricultural images in Mark's gospel narrative suggests that Earth and land were full of meaning to the earliest Christian communities as well. This workshop will use a contemporary understanding of soil development to reflect on the complex interplay between nature, culture and sacredness. We will reflect on Mark's agricultural parables, building on ways that people living close to the land might have responded to these parables, and exploring new depths revealed by a scientific understanding of soil development and rejuvenation.

BIOSKETCH

George Fisher is Professor Emeritus of geology at Johns Hopkins University, where he taught geology and Earth system science 1966 to 2005 and served as Dean of Arts and Sciences from 1983 to 1987. He now teaches on Earth sciences and religious thought at the Ecumenical Institute of Theology of St. Mary's Seminary and the University in Baltimore. His early research centered on the geology of the Appalachian Mountain system. During the last decade his interests have shifted to questions of how an understanding of the limits imposed by the Earth system and insights from philosophical and religious thought can help decide how we can live on the Earth in ways that are genuinely fulfilling. George studied geology at Dartmouth College (BA, 1959) and Johns Hopkins University (PhD, 1963), and theology at St. Mary's Seminary and University (MA, 2002).

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OLD SCIENCE, NEW SCIENCE: RUBBING SHOULDERS WITH RELIGION AND LITERATURE

Sunday, 4:00pm–5:00pm, Newton Front

**Herbert Fried**

ABSTRACT

Some examples of how modern ideas in physics, and astrophysical observations touch on concepts in religion and literature.

REFLECTIONS ON CURRENT ASTROPHYSICAL PUZZLES

Tuesday, 4:00pm–5:00pm, Newton Front

**Herbert Fried**

ABSTRACT

Four puzzles from modern astrophysics, with two Star Island solutions, one old and one new.

BIOSKETCH

I've already given — during two previous IRAS weeks, I think — afternoon workshops, on the intersection of science and religion (mostly science, since I'm a professor of theoretical physics, specializing in high-energy particle physics and quantum field theory). I've been a professor of physics at Brown University since 1964, retiring about five years ago, but still keeping up a hefty research program with colleagues in France. I'm also a trustee of the American University of Paris.

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EXPLORING THE CONCEPT OF RELIGIOUS NATURALISM

Monday, 4:00pm–5:00pm, Elliot

**Ursula Goodenough**

ABSTRACT

During the past several years I have given talks of this title in numerous venues — universities, seminaries, church basement discussion groups — and would like to try it out with interested Star Islanders. I first offer my understandings of “naturalism”, then of “religious”, and then the various ways that these can be put together as “religious naturalism”. Along the way I lift up the concept of emergence as a particularly fertile way to think both about nature and about those facets of being human that we most cherish.

WALKING BACK THROUGH BIOLOGICAL EVOLUTION

Wednesday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Elliot

**Ursula Goodenough**

ABSTRACT

Richard Dawkins has written a wonderful book, *The Ancestor's Tale*, in which we walk back through evolutionary time, meeting up with the common ancestors we share with other living creatures at increasingly ancient rendezvous points, until we arrive at the single-celled ancestor common to all life. I have adapted Dawkins' graphics into a PowerPoint presentation, adding images of the continental-plate configurations at the various meeting times, and will accompany these with a narrative.

BIOSKETCH

My day-job is professor of biology at Washington University, where I teach cell biology and evolution and conduct research on the molecular evolution of sex in a green alga. The rest of the time I explore the concept of religious naturalism, starting with a 1998 book, *The Sacred Depths of Nature*, and continuing with a series of *Zygon* articles and lots of lecturing and group discussion. I have been an IRAS member since 1989 and currently serve as vice-president for development; recently, Philip Hefner and I co-convened the IRAS Religious Naturalism Interest Group. I live in St. Louis, MO, and Chilmark, MA, and have five children, three grandchildren, three cats and many wonderful friends and colleagues.

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HOW CAN WE EXPRESS THE RELIGION  
IN RELIGIOUS NATURALISM?

Wednesday, 4:00pm–5:00pm, Marshman

**Joan Goodwin**

ABSTRACT

Characteristically, religion makes use of various kinds of ritual. Yet, for a number of reasons, many of us who identify with religious naturalism shy away from any whiff of ritual. Let's examine the idea: What constitutes ritual? What about it makes us squirm? What about it lifts our hearts? What rituals are we already unconsciously performing? Bring your squirms, delights, ideas and examples!

BIOSKETCH

A retired Unitarian Universalist religious educator, Joan Goodwin has been coming to IRAS Star Island conferences since 1993. She serves on the Council, was secretary for five years, and is now engaged in writing a fifty-year history of IRAS.

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THE RELEVANCE OF EINSTEIN

Tuesday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Newton Front

**Edward E. Gross**

ABSTRACT

The year 2005 has been declared the "International Year of Physics" in honor of the hundredth anniversary of Einstein's "annus mirabilis", 1905. In that miracle year he published five outstanding papers on three subjects: a paper on the photo-electric effect which introduced the idea of particle/wave duality for light; two papers on the size, number density and motion of atoms; and two papers that introduced the special theory of relativity. I will review these contributions in the light of a biographical account of Einstein.

BIOSKETCH

Prior to retirement, Ed Gross worked as an experimental nuclear physicist for five years at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory followed by thirty-five years at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. He is a Fellow of the American Physical Society and is currently a Visiting Scientist at the Triangle University Nuclear Laboratory (TUNL) on the Duke campus and a lecturer at the Duke Institute for Learning in Retirement.

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EARLY IRAS VOICES:  
INSIGHTS FROM RALPH BURHOE

Sunday, 1:40pm–2:40pm, Elliot

**Philip Hefner**

ABSTRACT

This workshop will focus on two short writings of Ralph Wendell Burhoe, one of the founders of IRAS. The first writing is a basic statement of his perspectives on the goals of the religion-and-science dialogue. The second deals with

"true spirituality in the light of the sciences." Copies of these statements are available from Philip Hefner.

BIOSKETCH

See lecture descriptions.

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HOLY LISTENING / WHOLLY LISTENING:  
A PATH TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

Sunday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Writing Room

**Katharine J. Houk**

ABSTRACT

Each of us holds within us a deep need to be listened to and acknowledged. Each of us also has the capacity to listen deeply and carefully to others. Both practices can be transformative.

This workshop draws on my experience listening to a wide variety of people — young and old, theist and non-theist, those involved in faith communities and people who are not, those who walk in off the street as well as people who have arranged a meeting. This "listening ministry" is similar to the centuries-old practice of spiritual direction in that it provides a process which helps others to listen for, see, and respond to spiritual truths in their lives. When we have been truly heard, we feel more authentic, more alive, more free, more loving. Both being listened to and heightening our own awareness of opportunities for attentiveness to the words of others can be transformative spiritual practices, leading to deeper relationships and spiritual growth.

This workshop launches a series of daily sessions for small group sharing and listening; a detailed description may be found at the end of the workshop listings.

BIOSKETCH

The shingle outside Katharine Houk's workspace reads, "Art & Soul". She is engaged in interfaith ministry in her community and with the Women's Interfaith Institute in the Berkshires, and also serves as a guide for those who wish to examine their lives from a spiritual perspective. In balance with this work, Katharine indulges her passion for visual and tactile beauty through creating vestments, unusual garments, cloth books, and other textile art. Her degree in textile design is from the State University College at Buffalo, NY. Katharine is a graduate of both Hartford Seminary and One Spirit Interfaith Seminary, and she was trained in spiritual direction and pastoral care at St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry. Star Island has been her spirit's home since she began attending Star conferences as a teenager. In her precious free time, she enjoys her growing family (a new grand-daughter!), walks in the woods, dancing, and shape-shifting.

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"FEAR OF LOSS TO THE DARK SIDE LEADS."  
SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION AND  
THE WISDOM OF YODA

Wednesday, 4:00pm–5:00pm, Newton Front

**Katharine J. Houk and John A. Teske**

ABSTRACT

Symbol, allegory and myth are often our central, if not only, sources of religion and spiritual truth. Is a poem true? Can

drama, film and literature have something valid to say about spiritual transformation even though its content is symbolic and fictional? The Greek statesman Solon once said that myth “is not about something that never happened. It is about something that happens over and over again.” As in Shakespeare, when it comes to matters of the human heart and the human spirit, there are sublime truths, where as Tim O’Brien put it, “story truth can be truer sometimes than happening truth.” Joseph Campbell taught that the power of religious myths is not to entertain but to bring about a change in consciousness in each of us, when we take these stories in terms of their personal significance, as being about the inner meaning of our own lives. Contemporary culture, in the guise of the emotionally gripping medium of film, has rendered a number of mythic cycles whose power may reside not only in their entertainment value, but in their appeal to powerful archetypes and mythic themes, attention to which has often been quite deliberate by their writers and directors. We will summarize the *Star Wars* saga, central to which is the Jedi path of Anakin Skywalker, his “fall” in becoming the Sith lord, Darth Vader, and his redemption by his son, who believes “there is good in him”. Since the central metaphor for spiritual transformation is the training of a Jedi knight, we will focus on the lessons taught by the character representing the oldest and wisest teacher of the Jedi, Master Yoda. We will present a selection of these lessons, including: attention to the inner path; the virtue ethics of patience, discipline and persistence; ideas of balance, control and justice; the importance of facing one’s deepest fears, of the value of forgiveness and compassion, of loyalty, honor and nobility, and of the transformative power of faith and love. We will provide our interpretations of the meaning and transformative power of these lessons, and invite response and discussion by participants.

#### BIOSKETCHES

See separate biosketches for Katharine Houk and John Teske under their individual workshops.

#### A COURSE IN MIRACLES

Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday,  
4:00pm–5:00pm, Lawrance

**Christina G. Jonker**

#### ABSTRACT

Enlightenment is but recognition, not a change at all. In that the conceptual mind of a human being is a transitional point in space/time, all true learning is a form of conversion or revelation. A Course in Miracles is a self-realization through total responsibility and acceptance of one’s thoughts.

This does not depend on time but on willingness to change one’s mind. All this takes note of time and place as if they were discrete, for while you think that part of you is separate, the concept of a oneness joined as one is meaningless. It is apparent that a mind so split could never be the teacher of a Oneness which unites all things within Itself. And so what is within this mind, and does unite all things together, must be its teacher. Yet must It use the language that this mind can understand, in the condition in which it thinks it is. And It must use all learning to transfer illusions to the truth, taking all false ideas of what you are, and leading you beyond them to the truth that is beyond them.

Problems are not specific but they take specific forms, and these specific shapes make up the world. And no one

understands the nature of his problem. If he did, it would be there no more for him to see. Its very nature is that it is not. And thus, while he perceives it he can not perceive it as it is. But healing is apparent in specific instances, and generalizes to include them all. This is because they really are the same, despite their different forms. All learning aims at transfer, which becomes complete within two situations that are seen as one, for only common elements are there. Yet this can only be attained by One who does not see the differences you see. Forgiveness is the final goal of the curriculum. It paves the way for what goes far beyond all learning. The curriculum makes no effort to exceed its legitimate goal. Forgiveness is its single aim, at which all learning ultimately converges. It is indeed enough.

#### BIOSKETCH

I was born in Amsterdam in the Netherlands and studied developmental psychology at the University of Amsterdam, graduating with honors in 1959. I migrated with my husband to Australia in 1965 and became an Australian in 1977. After taking care of my family I worked from 1983–1992 as a psychologist from my own office practice in Brisbane, Australia. In 1992, I experienced a near-death — or better expressed, a near-life — experience; this changed my life dramatically, intellectually, physically and emotionally. I moved to the United States in 1993, to the Endeavor Academy that presented a program of transformation/awakening through the curriculum of “A Course in Miracles” and the New Testament of the Bible for a period of seven years, being ordained in 2002.

It is now my purpose and function to extend this certainty of awakening, as a rise of consciousness, to all those that are searching for peace, happiness and freedom from fear. I have for the last eight years traveled with this teaching experience to many European countries, including Italy, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, Poland, England, as well as to countries such as South Africa, Swaziland, New Zealand and Australia. This message of transformation of the mind is active in many countries through individuals who have also began to see differently often through a change of mind.

#### SIGNALS OF TRANSFORMATION IN THE LIVES OF THREE SCIENTISTS

Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday,  
4:00pm–5:00pm, Pink Parlor

**Albert H. Keller**

#### ABSTRACT

These workshops display a process of theological inquiry that has three basic steps.

(1) The process begins with an extensive biographical conversation between a pastor/theologian and a person of science in which we explore a full range of personal experience and action, including his/her “practice” of science (according to Alasdair MacIntyre’s definition of practice). This is a journey of intensification for both the scientist and the theologian.

(2) Having transcribed the conversations, we then draw the whole life together in narrative coherence — yet preserving the bipolar tension between socialization and transformation, the horizontal and vertical axes of personal narrative. One scientist’s narrative, the final negotiated

agreement between the scientist and the theologian/writer, will be presented in each of the three workshops.

(3) Last, based on critical examination of this qualitative research, we develop a theory concerning transformation, seen broadly as re-centering and personal/professional unfolding along a new axis for growth and development. Seen theologically, we are seeking to understand the creative work of the Spirit.

The first workshop (Sunday) is entitled “Freeman Dyson: *Wonderful at Details*”. The second (Tuesday) is “Drew: *A Leaping of Faith*”. The third (Thursday) is “John: *The Playground of Imagination*”.

#### BIOSKETCH

Bert was born in Birmingham, AL, attended Davidson College and Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, earned an STM from Yale Divinity School and much later a DMin from Princeton Theological Seminary. He taught New Testament and Greek in a theological school in the Congo, returned to work in campus ministry, and since 1975 has been (part-time) Pastor of Circular Congregational Church, UCC, in Charleston, SC, and (full-time) Associate Professor of Family Medicine (Bioethics) at the Medical University of South Carolina. He is married to Lucille; they have three sons and live in an old house in Charleston.

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#### SPIRITUALITY AND POPULAR HEALING AMONG LATINOS: AN ILLUSTRATED PRESENTATION

Sunday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Elliot

**Joan Koss-Chiino**

#### ABSTRACT

Spirituality is central to almost all Latinos’ life-ways. Although this is also true for many persons in other cultures, among Latinos spiritual practices are widespread as part of daily interactions. When saying “goodbye”, for example, and the response is “until later”, a frequent reply is “If God wills it.” Even if the reply is missing most Latinos think that the future depends on a power greater than their own. There are two major avenues to spirituality: (1) formal and informal religious practices through established churches; and (2) individual home and family centered practices, often referred to as “popular religion”. Here I will describe the most common practices, what they mean and how they work. To introduce them I need to first explain that Latino popular, religious and spiritual practices are carried out by individuals, by families and by groups within communities. In general they serve to sustain hope in the face of illness and problems, to alleviate anxieties and to enhance well-being. These practices also offer spiritual solutions to life’s problems. They are the basis for widely utilized, community based, folk healing systems that differ in each of the Latino cultures in the United States as they also differ in the mother countries.

This workshop will explore how spirituality is part of daily life, and how it is changed in the United States. Films that illustrate spirit healing systems among Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans in the United States and Puerto Rico will be reviewed and discussed.

#### BIOSKETCH

See lecture descriptions.

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#### MINDFUL EATING: FINDING WISDOM IN THE EVERYDAY

Wednesday, 4:00pm–5:00pm, Elliot

**Jean Kristeller**

#### ABSTRACT

Meditation practice can be applied to finding balance and wisdom in all aspects of our lives. This workshop will provide an introduction to the Mindfulness-Based Eating Awareness Training (MB-EAT) program, which uses mindfulness meditation practices to help create a more satisfying and balanced relationship to eating and food. It will present an attentional multi-domain theory of meditation as a way to cultivate self-regulation in all areas of life, from physical balance through spiritual balance, and introduce both basic mindfulness meditation practice and mindful eating practice. Jean Kristeller has been developing the MB-EAT program for a number of years, and is currently conducting NIH-funded research on the clinical application of the program for eating disorders and weight management, as well as completing a book on meditation and psychotherapy.

#### THE CONCEPT OF SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE: SENSE OR NONSENSE?

Thursday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Elliot

**Jean Kristeller**

#### ABSTRACT

In contrast to a single type of IQ, the idea of multiple intelligences (such as “emotional intelligence”) has both popular and academic appeal. Spiritual intelligence appears to fit Gardner’s criteria for a separate intelligence, and may be valuable for understanding the range of spiritual engagement people experience, the value of education in cultivating spirituality, and the universality of certain spiritual experiences. Yet it has been controversial whether there is value in identifying spiritual intelligence as one of these multiple intelligences. This workshop will briefly review the concept of multiple intelligences, present Gardner’s criteria for defining a separate “intelligence”, and provide open discussion regarding the value and/or problems related to the concept of spiritual intelligence. Jean Kristeller is currently working on research in spirituality and cancer, and is editing a book on the topic of spiritual intelligence.

#### BIOSKETCH

See lecture descriptions.

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#### THOUGHTS ON EVOLUTION

Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday,  
2:50pm–3:50pm, Pink Parlor

**Louis C. Martin**

#### ABSTRACT

Overview: The overarching “discovery” of modern times is our evolution from the backdrop of the Universe. The primary problem is how to understand this; the ultimate problem is what to do with this knowledge. It is rather difficult to cover this in three hours — but we’ll try! We

realize that our distant ancestors left a fossil record of their passing, and that our own history and biological status are capable of being understood only in light of our antecedents. This awareness of our evolution rests uncomfortably on top of our spiritual history and convictions about life's meaning. So, we need to get this all straight. Right?

Session I: The fossil record — from Lucy to Hawking in just a few million years. The story of our evolution is pre-eminently the story of the evolution of our brains. The size of our brains increased by a factor of four: its capacities by near infinity. Darwin pried open the door to the realization that evolution “made this happen.” But natural selection is just the beginning, not the whole ball of wax. Our brains are incomplete at birth. They are molded by experience — and Lamarck may not have been all wrong.

Session II: Animals communicate. Humanity is the progress from woofs to words. Lucy couldn't talk a lot. Homo erectus had a million years to hammer out the system. “Homo linguisticus” developed in the matrix of experience. The characteristics of modern humans emerged: bipedality, hands free to work, opposable thumbs, skull atop the spinal column, smaller face, larger brain. The inescapable conclusion: the development of language was critical, and, surprisingly, was as much a cause of evolution as it was the effect.

Session III: Intelligence having developed, the critical path of evolution was no longer biological, but cultural. Language was the ladder, but, to preserve and extend the process, we learned to write. All of science and philosophy via twenty-six arbitrary squiggles. Culture exploded. We developed first the world-view of Christendom (Cosmos I), with the individual creation of humanity, plus sin, redemption, eternal life. Ah, but then! The post-Renaissance world (Cosmos II), with the Big Bang, evolution, and the emergence of consciousness in a comprehensible Universe. And now?

#### BIOSKETCH

Louis C. Martin, MD calls Omaha his home. A graduate of Saint Louis University, for the last fifteen years he has worked as a forensic psychiatrist for the State of Nebraska. But, at this time of his life, that is only to provide the bucks for the important stuff of Science and Religion. Philosophically, his clearest forebear is Aquinas, but we've come a long way from medieval Paris! Darwin, Hawking, and beyond! Dr. Martin is married to Jane with two remarkable children, Matt and Julia. His recent publication is *God and Atom*, and he is trying to tie a few ends together about a puzzling universe.

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#### THE IMPORTANCE OF MAGICAL REALISM IN ANAYA'S *BLESS ME, ULTIMA*

Monday, 2:50pm–5:00pm, Sandpiper

**Katherine McFarland**

#### ABSTRACT

While growing up, did you ever have a person in your life that made a great impact upon your character? Did you ever have a member of your family or community who told the family stories? Did you ever know someone who you thought held magical powers? Have your dreams ever helped you to shape your life? Do you believe that we each need to find our unique destiny? Are our culture's collective images and symbols found in our dreams? What

is the role of these images? Come and join us in discussing a powerful story by Anaya (the father of Chicano literature), a story about a young boy who must find his own rites-of-passage and understanding of his role in society.

#### BIOSKETCH

Katie McFarland has been teaching for thirty years, nationally as well as abroad in Madrid, Spain. She currently lives in Carlisle, PA, and trains the next generation of English teachers at Shippensburg University. Within the university, she chairs the Secondary Education Committee that is part of the Teacher Education Council, and she serves as Vice-President of the Pennsylvania Council of Teachers of English Language Arts (PCTELA / NCTE), and recently chaired the PCTELA State Conference at Shippensburg. Katie received her PhD in Educational Curriculum and Instruction from Texas A&M University, her MA in Expository Writing from Towson State University, and her BA in English and Secondary Education from North Carolina Wesleyan College.

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#### THE HEART OF CHRISTIANITY: AN EMERGING VIEW

Wednesday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Marshman

**Robert Place**

#### ABSTRACT

This workshop will explore the very important book, *The Heart of Christianity* by Marcus Borg. I will touch on the most crucial concepts of the book and involve you in discussing issues from your experience that are related to the book. I taught an eleven-week class on this book in our local Presbyterian Church adult education program during the winter of 2005 and have prepared a 27-page handout that will be available to participants. Borg's books helped me find words for many issues in Christianity that I had been confused by and bothered by, helping me to accept and value the Bible from his new (to me!) perspectives. Borg shares that there are two poles from which people view the Bible: the earlier view taking the Bible literally, and the emerging view seeing the Bible metaphorically as a document written for the ancient Hebrew Community and the early Christian Community by people who had genuine spiritual experiences with God and who were trying to communicate and clarify their visions to their communities. I will share some of the high points of the book's views on God, Jesus, the Bible, faith, pluralism, sin, being born again, the Kingdom of God, thin places (where we can experience God directly) and salvation. This book, along with other good books, offers us the opportunity to reclaim the Bible and Christianity rather than abdicate it to fundamentalists and literalists by favoring secularism separated from religion. To reclaim the basic values of our democracy, I believe we must provide a new perspective on Christianity that focuses on the Bible's challenge to us to show mercy and do justice (far more common in the Bible) rather than to keep a too-limited picture of Jesus as an infant (virgin birth) and dying on the cross for our sins. The handout is excellent and can stand alone until you get home and have a chance to buy the book; then you can experience its power more completely than we can do in an hour.

#### BIOSKETCH

Robert Place is a Chemistry faculty member at Otterbein College in Westerville, OH. He obtained his PhD degree in Physical Chemistry from the University of California,

Berkeley, in 1967, after receiving his bachelor's from Albion College. He has researched zeolite chemistry, acid rain deposition and techniques in teaching chemistry, some publications resulting from these endeavors. His primary teaching responsibilities have been physical chemistry, general chemistry (majors and non-majors) and liberal arts chemistry. Bob was elected by the faculty to the Otterbein Board of Trustees for nine years and has served as chairperson of Faculty Council for the last twenty years while also being a member of various campus committees for many years. He is a member of the American Chemical Society and its Division of Chemical Education. Bob has been a member of IRAS for four years. He was married in 1964 to Mary (a psychiatric social worker who also is an IRAS member), and their two children are Michelle (1968, deceased) and Melissa (1971, chiropractic school in Atlanta). He has been active for many years in the Presbyterian Church (in music, adult education and youth programming), and has worked to clarify his basic Christian beliefs and assumptions through much reading and many group experiences.

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THE I IN THE STORM: BRINGING SELF-LEADERSHIP TO EVERYDAY LIFE

Tuesday, 4:00pm–5:00pm, Marshman

**Richard Schwartz**

ABSTRACT

Through discussion and experiential exercises, this workshop will explore the concept of Self-leadership, and how it is affected by different kinds of inner dialogue and by different spiritual practices and beliefs. In other words, we will address questions like: How can we relate to ourselves internally such that we can remain curious, calm and compassionate in the face of strong provocation or stress? How can we bring this kind of Self-leadership to our relationships?

AS ABOVE, SO BELOW

Thursday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Marshman

**Richard Schwartz**

ABSTRACT

This workshop will further introduce the basic concepts of the internal family systems model with an emphasis on its implications for larger systems and for spirituality. We will examine the parallels among different levels of human systems (including the intrapsychic level) with an eye toward the way internal neglect, isolation and polarization manifest externally, and how harmony can be brought to each level. An experiential exercise will be included.

BIOSKETCH

See lecture descriptions.

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CHARACTERISTICS, BENEFITS AND/OR LIABILITIES OF SPIRITUALLY TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES IN NATURE

Tuesday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Marshman

**Terry Terhaar**

ABSTRACT

For thousands of years, people have recorded transformative experiences of the spiritual in nature. Epic tales about a oneness with nature or shamanic journeys to an eternal and timeless land appear in myth, folklore, poetry, and narratives from around the globe. All of the world's religions offer stories about individuals who have undergone transformative experiences in nature including the Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed and Moses. Many of the most compelling nature authors including Henry David Thoreau and John Muir write about spiritually transformative experiences in nature. Yet, despite the importance of spiritual experiences in nature, it has rarely been systematically and empirically studied. Using the mystical experience in nature as the focus of analysis, this presentation explores the characteristics, benefits and/or liabilities of intensely positively and negatively transformative experiences in nature; and examines their effect on peoples' relationships with nature, the self, and the cosmos.

BIOSKETCH

During mid-life, Terry Terhaar left her work as an advocate for environmental non-profits to attend graduate school. Her PhD is from Yale University, where she held an appointment as part-time acting instructor at the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. Her work focuses on peoples' spiritual relationship with nature, and her research interests include environmental spiritual values; nature's role on human psychological and spiritual well-being; and methodological issues related to the scientific study of the spiritual. When she is not looking out her studio window at ancient redwood trees, she can be found digging up weeds in her garden or conducting research and writing. Current projects include two books on human experiences in nature and a literature review of the biophilic aspects of sacred and healing architecture.

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THAT'S NOT WHY GOD WON'T GO AWAY: THE LIMITS OF NEUROTHEOLOGY IN A NEUROPSYCHOLOGY OF SPIRIT

Monday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Newton Front  
Wednesday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Newton Front

**John A. Teske**

ABSTRACT

Must we believe in the supernatural to understand the human spirit? Are our brains "hardwired" to experience god? Is our biological individuality sufficient to account for our souls? This two-part workshop will answer these questions with a resounding "NO." We will address many of the characteristics of the human spirit which need neither be supernatural nor have any existence separable from our biologically incarnate, socially interdependent, finite and mortal lives. This may not be a problem but an advantage for an authentic spiritual life. The first part (Monday) will include an orienting position, and a sampler of contemporary neuroscience, in colorful PowerPoint. The second part (Wednesday), also well-illustrated, will provide a critique of several varieties of religious experience, and present a view that the human spirit is embodied, contextual and profoundly relational. Such a view does not reduce the human spirit to our neuropsychologies, but it does argue that it cannot exist without them. This suggests a spiritual, even theological, project which is not about the preservation of



individual identity, but the healing of our relationships with each other and with the natural world.

#### BIOSKETCH

John Teske's academic specialty is in personality and social psychology, and he has published empirical research on non-verbal behavior, environmental psychology, cognitive development and close relationships. His scholarly interests over the last decade have shifted to evolutionary psychology, philosophical psychology and the science-religion dialogue, particularly in the neuropsychology of spirit. He has published regularly in *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* and in *Studies in Science and Theology*, and contributed several entries to the *Encyclopedia of Religions and Science*. John is a member of IRAS and serves on the Council, is a member of the European Society for the Study of Science and Theology, and is a founding member of the Elizabethtown College Center for Science and Religion. His teaching interests include social and personality psychology, the history of psychology, and interdisciplinary courses such as "Mind and Brain", "Narrative and Identity", "Brain, Mind, and Spirit", "Psychology through Shakespeare", "Psyche and Film", and a newly proposed course on "Neuromythology". John is a second-generation contributor to the science/religion dialogue and believes that this is likely to be a multi-generational project with no less an impact than the Reformation.

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#### RE-ENCHANTING THE EARTH: FESTIVALS AND CEREMONIES

Tuesday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Sandpiper

**Ethel Theriault**

#### ABSTRACT

We will explore some ancient folklore connecting us to the Earth and the seasons. We will look at the power of myth generally, and specifically we will meet the Green Man, the Wildman, the Buso, Saint George and the Dragon, Enkidu, and the cherub that Yahweh set to guard the Tree of Life. With lots of pictures this will provide inspiration for having fun back home.

#### MASK-MAKING

Wednesday, 2:50pm–5:00pm, Lawrance

**Ethel Theriault and Beth Strum**

#### ABSTRACT

This workshop will complement the festivals and celebrations workshop, described above. We shall use a variety of art materials to produce masks for decoration or for use in festivals and celebrations. We will have materials for making a Green Man mask or a Wildman mask. Once invoked, these nature spirits tend to hang around, appearing suddenly in unlikely places.

#### BIOSKETCHES

Ethel Theriault has a background in English literature, church programming, theater, puppetry and mask-making. All these have given her opportunities to discover the resources in folklore and celebrations.

Beth Strum is an artist and art historian. She is a calligrapher and illuminator. Her work with her own

children and with programming for public schools and for the Society for Creative Anachronisms has given her lots of experience with celebrations and festivals. She will bring inspiration and helping hands to the mask-making workshop.

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#### TAKING TIME TO CREATE MY DAY: A CONVERSATION ABOUT THE FILM *WHAT THE BLEEP DO WE KNOW!?*

Sunday, 4:00pm–5:00pm, Elliot  
repeats Monday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Elliot

**Frank Thoms**

#### ABSTRACT

I intend to facilitate a conversation about this seminal movie. We will examine the principles expressed in the film through the events involving the characters, especially Amanda, and through the comments of scientists/mystics. Our purpose will be to discover how the teachings in the film can become manifest in our lives — and whether they should.

*What the Bleep Do We Know!?* will be shown on Wednesday evening at 10:15pm (after the Candlelight Service) in Elliot. More information may be found at the end of the workshop listings.

#### BIOSKETCH

As for me, I am a life-long teacher for more than forty years who now has the challenge and privilege to teach teachers. Since reading Freeman Dyson's *Disturbing the Universe*, and later Itzhak Bentov's *Stalking the Wild Pendulum* and Ken Wilber's *A Brief History of Everything* (among other books), I have been on a mission to understand our purpose on the planet and in the Universe (or perhaps multiverse). I have long considered teaching to be a spiritual practice. Rumi, Jesus, Hafiz, Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, the Buddha, and my students, family, church and friends have been my teachers.

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#### THE SCIENCE AND MORALITY OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

Tuesday, 2:50pm–5:00pm, Elliot

**Chad Tolman**

#### ABSTRACT

The workshop will consist of a fifty minute talk with overheads and a thirty-five minute video, "We Are All Smith Islanders", produced by the Chesapeake Climate Action Network, followed by a discussion of the issues raised. The workshop will address: the evidence for global climate change; the science behind why it is occurring; the consequences for human societies and natural ecosystems; the moral and ethical issues involved; what our response should be. Chad will provide an extensive list of references and Web resources for further reading, and an opportunity to sign up for his monthly electronic newsletter, *Climate Change News*.

#### BIOSKETCH

Chad Tolman received his BS in chemistry at MIT and his PhD in physical chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley, followed by a year of post-doctoral work in

vibrational spectroscopy at MIT. He moved to Wilmington, DE, in 1965 to work for DuPont's Central Research at the Experimental Station, reaching the level of Research Fellow. After retiring from DuPont in 1996, he taught for a year at Delaware Technical and Community College and at the University of Delaware, including a course in environmental chemistry. He then went to Washington to spend three years in the Chemistry Division at the National Science Foundation and two years in the Division of Earth and Life Sciences at the National Research Council, part of the National Academy of Science. His work there involved studies of air pollution, air quality management and chemical terrorism.

Chad has followed the area of global warming and climate change for over fifteen years, and has written and spoken extensively on the subject, including sermons at a number of Unitarian Universalist churches in the Joseph Priestly District. He is currently leading an interdenominational group, the Coalition for Climate Change Study and Action, which meets at the First Unitarian Church in Wilmington, and publishes a monthly electronic newsletter, *Climate Change News*. The work of his group was featured in the May/June issue of *UU World*.

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YOGA AND SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION:  
AN INTRODUCTION TO PHOENIX RISING  
YOGA THERAPY

Monday, 2:50pm–5:00pm, Brookfield  
repeats Thursday, 2:50pm–5:00pm, Brookfield

**Bob Vaccaro**

ABSTRACT

Often it is our thoughts about what is happening in our lives that creates stress. In this workshop, we will observe our thoughts without judgment during a short gentle yoga class and a focused meditation. We will reflect on and journal about the noteworthy thoughts and discover ways in which these thoughts can be transformed. No yoga experience is required for this workshop, but do bring paper and pen for journaling.

As in previous years, Bob also offers morning and evening yoga sessions. More information may be found at the end of the workshop listings.

BIOSKETCH

Bob Vaccaro RYT has been practicing Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy and teaching yoga for over ten years in the Seacoast, NH. area and has taught yoga at IRAS for four years. He is also certified as a Spiritual Psychology Counselor, Integral Yoga Teacher, Kripalu Holistic Lifestyle Teacher and Yogassage Practitioner.

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WHENCE COMETH MEANING: LIFE OF MEANING

Sunday, 4:00pm–5:00pm, Sandpiper

**Mildred M. Weiner**

ABSTRACT

“The theme of meaning transcends the nature and history of science and human knowledge, and dives into something more fundamental.” (participant of [L-M])

Current work in biology and paleontology continues to verify many aspects of Darwin's Theory of Evolution. We now easily question what intermediate states, between transcendent and immanent, were needed to develop a structure of meaningful interpretations in terms of which we live. We constantly look for answers only to be faced with further questions, some of which we would like to define at Star in 2005.

Was there an Original Oneness, prior to the Big Bang? How can we trace the creative process, in ways that reaffirm both science and our sensed desire to feel religious? What common ground is there, in our inner nature, which relates to: symbolization and language; feelings and intentions; origins and morality; purpose and methods?

We will reflect upon our internal nature, which is intrinsic with material nature, yet seems to contain a power capable of communication with a transcendent reality.

BIOSKETCH

Ms. Weiner, once a “Pre-Vet”, is a graduate of Cornell University, Class of 1950. Her current interests, aside from following the growth of her extended family, include practice in Tai Chi Chuan and Reiki. Her volunteer activities include singing with a choir and as a Layspeaker at the Allens Hill UMC in Bloomfield, NY, patrols on Seneca Lake as crew member with the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, and a caregiver at the Serenity House hospice. Relatively new to the Star Island family, she first attended the conference in 2002 entitled “Is Nature Enough: the Thirst for Transcendence”.

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THE POWER OF NOW

Sunday, 2:50pm–3:50pm, Marshman

**Sandra Woodworth**

ABSTRACT

We will be using Eckhart Tolle's *Power of Now* materials. The Power of Now shows us how to go beyond the endless stream of thoughts and simply allow what is, using principles of Buddhist thought — no form, no time, no name — and meditation to shift thought patterns and to find the peace that exists independent of conditions, “a place within us that is and ever will be beyond the turmoil of life, a world of calm beyond words, of joy that knows no opposite.”

BIOSKETCH

Sandra Woodworth is a teacher and student of alternative mind-patterning for spiritual transformation. She has served as coordinator for the youth program for IRAS on Star Island for nine years.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

### SMALL GROUP SHARING AND LISTENING: SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

every day from Sunday through Thursday,  
4:00pm–5:00pm, Writing Room

**Sally Bowden-Schaible, Katharine Houk,  
Andrew Millard, Edmund Robinson,  
and Barbara Whittaker-Johns**

#### DESCRIPTION

Get to know other IRASians and Star Islanders better while discussing spiritual topics openly and in depth. Share insights you have gained and concerns with which you've been struggling, and explore the spiritual dimensions of your life in a non-judgmental atmosphere. Connect in a deeper way with our island community!

These facilitated sessions are intended for participants to share and reflect on their personal experiences with spiritual transformation. Each session will have a particular topic, such as "grace", "loss", "calling" or "story", which will be advertised in advance, using an appropriate reading and a few questions to guide the participants.

This series of daily sessions will be launched by Katharine Houk's workshop, "Holy Listening / Wholly Listening: a Path to Spiritual Transformation" on Sunday at 2:50pm–3:50pm in the Writing Room.

#### BIOSKETCHES

Sally Bowden-Schaible is a psychotherapist in private practice in Portland, ME. She is an adjunct faculty member at the University of Southern Maine and co-teaches *Mind/Body Issues in Counseling* and *Religion and Spirituality in Counseling*. She has been attending IRAS conferences with her husband, Bob, for twelve years.

Katharine Houk: see separate biosketch under her workshops.

Andrew Millard lives in West Hartford, CT, works at the University of Connecticut Health Center, studies at Hartford Seminary and worships at the Unitarian Society of Hartford.

Edmund Robinson is the minister of First Church (UU) in Belmont, MA. He is a banjo picker and a former lawyer, and lives in Arlington, MA, and is married to Jacqueline Schwab.

Barbara Whittaker-Johns is Senior Minister of First Parish UU Church in Arlington, MA. She has been in parish ministry and active in IRAS for twenty years and was in education for many years prior to that. She comes to the IRAS conference each year with her spouse and son, Frank and Isaac Toppa.

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### *RIVERS AND TIDES: WORKING WITH TIME*

Wednesday, 10:15pm (after Candlelight), in Elliot

#### DESCRIPTION

"In the timeless tradition of *Winged Migration* (to be shown on Tuesday evening) and *Koyaanisqatsi*, the theatrical phenomenon *Rivers and Tides* depicts the magical relationship between art and nature while painting a visually intoxicating portrait of famed artist, Andy Goldsworthy. Gorgeously shot and masterfully edited, the film follows the bohemian free spirit Goldsworthy all over the world as he demonstrates and opens up about his unique creative process. From his long-winding rock walls and icicle sculptures to his interlocking leaf chains and multicolored pools of flowers, Goldsworthy's painstakingly intricate masterpieces are made entirely of materials found in Mother Nature — who threatens and often succeeds in destroying his art, sometimes before it is even finished. With over ten four-star reviews from the nation's top critics, *Rivers and Tides* serenely captures Goldsworthy in the midst of constructing his trademark ephemera on-camera, creating a mesmerizing cinematic experience that helps us to appreciate nature in new and enchanting ways."

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### *A PATRIOT ACT*

Monday, 10:15pm (after Candlelight), Elliot

#### DESCRIPTION

"Brilliant. Funny. And scathing.

"You might think you already know how bad the Bush administration is. But it's not just the money. It's not just the oil. It's much, much worse.

"*A Patriot Act* is a chilling indictment of their stealth movement to subvert the Constitution and replace American democracy with religious values. Using news clips and other media sources, renowned media critic Mark Crispin Miller reveals meaning behind Bush's mistakes, and uncovers the influence of fundamentalist ideology in every nook and cranny of the Bush administration. The difference between this President's goals for the United States and its citizens and the intentions of the Founding Fathers is starkly clear. If you care about the Constitution, you may be shocked to learn how successful the Bush administration has been at undermining it. And you will be even more horrified at what they have planned for America's future."

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### *WINGED MIGRATION*

Tuesday, 10:15pm (after Candlelight), Elliot

#### DESCRIPTION

"This awe-inspiring, critically acclaimed documentary of migrating birds through forty countries and every continent was captured using planes, gliders, helicopters and balloons, allowing the filmmakers a spectacularly intimate look at their subjects. From Academy Award-nominated Director Jacques Perrin (*Z*, *Black and White in Color*). 2002 Academy Award® Nominee for Best Documentary."

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WHAT THE BLEEP DO WE KNOW!?

Sunday, 10:15pm (after Candlelight), Elliot

DESCRIPTION

“*What the Bleep Do We Know!?* is a new type of film. It is part documentary, part story and part elaborate and inspiring visual effects and animations. The protagonist, Amanda, finds herself in a fantastic *Alice in Wonderland* experience when her daily, uninspired life literally begins to unravel, revealing the uncertain world of the quantum field hidden behind what we consider to be our normal, waking reality. She is literally plunged into a swirl of chaotic occurrences, while the characters she encounters on this odyssey reveal the deeper, hidden knowledge she doesn’t even realize she has asked for. Like every hero, Amanda is thrown into crisis, questioning the fundamental premises of her life — that the reality she has believed in about how men are, how relationships with others should be, and how her emotions are affecting her work isn’t reality at all!”

This film is not suggested for children under thirteen.

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MULTI-LEVEL FLOW YOGA

every day from Sunday through Friday,  
6:30am–7:45am and 5:15pm–6:15pm,  
all in Brookfield

**Bob Vaccaro RYT**

DESCRIPTION

Slow and long inhales and exhales weave together an uninterrupted sequence of forty to fifty simple postures drawn from several yoga traditions. Each participant is encouraged to work the edge in each posture where tensions are releasing from the muscles being stretched. This requires intense focus and can be challenging but should not threaten even out-of-shape beginners. As tensions leave your body, anxieties and confusions will leave your mind and your connection to your inner spirit will grow.

BIOSKETCH

Bob Vaccaro has been practicing yoga for over twenty years and has been teaching yoga for over ten years. He holds certifications as a Psychosynthesis (spiritual psychology) Counselor, a Holistic Lifestyle Teacher, an Advanced Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy Practitioner, an Integral Yoga Teacher, and a Yogassage Practitioner.

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## CHAPEL AND CANDLELIGHT SERVICES AND CHOIR

Activities of the day begin right after breakfast each morning with chapel.  
Scheduled activities of the day end with a candlelight service.

### CHAPEL SERVICES

9 - 9:45 am

**Karl E. Peters** will be the chapel speaker on “Varieties of Spiritual Transformations in Human Living.”

**Rev. William Falla** will serve as minister of the week.

### DESCRIPTION

The morning chapel talks will draw on ideas from world religions and my own experience to reflect on some of the spiritual transformations that are possible in our lives.

Sunday. In **Crossings** I wonder about the relationship between our crossing to Star Island and spiritual transformation. I also talk about two crossings of communal and individual spiritual transformation—the Hebrew Exodus from Egypt and the Buddhist metaphor of the Ferryboat.

Monday. In **Rebirths** I briefly recall how religious rituals are often related to annual earth and human life-cycle transformations. Then I develop an idea of a basic transformation of human beings from “closed” to “open hearts,” using Christian biblical ideas.

Tuesday. **Callings** offers three interpretations of how my “most embarrassing” spiritual transformation came about. It concludes with wondering about the role of spiritual beings and serendipitous creativity in spiritual transformation.

Wednesday. **Calamitous Convergence** uses an example from the novel *The Horse Whisperer* to look at how, in contrast to serendipitous creativity, events can come together to “do us in.” I then reflect about some evolved qualities of human character that can be cultivated to help us respond effectively.

Thursday. In **Death and Spiritual Transformation I** suggest that during times of dying—our own or that of others—we may be more open than usual to spiritual transformation. To illustrate this I’ll share my observations on how some people seemed to be transformed as they cared for my mother in the last days of her life.

Friday. **Bliss Bestowing Hands** sets the spiritual transformations of humans in the transformative history of the universe. Then, using the six oxherding pictures from Zen Buddhism, I suggest some positive consequences of spiritual transformation for human flourishing on a flourishing planet.

**Karl Peters** is Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and Religion at Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida. He has enjoyed attending IRAS Star Island Conferences since 1972, is a Past President of IRAS, and is coeditor of *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*. Currently Karl is IRAS’s Vice President for Conferences.

Beginning with his Ph.D. studies at Columbia University in 1966, Karl has focused on issues in science and religion. He is especially interested in understanding how religion and science can be related to everyday living. Over the years he has shared his ideas with Unitarian Universalist Congregations in Florida, North Carolina, and Connecticut,

and with the University Unitarian Universalist Society of Central Florida, of which he was the founder and first president. Many of his reflections are in his book *Dancing with the Sacred: Evolution, Ecology, and God* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002) and his articles in *Zygon*.

Since his marriage to Marj Davis in 1999, Karl has been enjoying a rich family life with new step children and grandchildren. Marj and Karl are here with three of their six grandchildren—Matthew, Sarah, and David Pickart.

**Rev. William Falla** is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. Bill currently serves as Pastor at St. John’s United Church of Christ- Mickleys in Whitehall, PA. He earned his M. Div. at United Theological Seminary in Dayton and his Th.M. and Th.D. degrees from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. In addition to his duties as Pastor, Bill also serves as an Adjunct Instructor in the Philosophy Dept. at Moravian College. He has been attending IRAS since 1975, has served on the IRAS Council, and currently is chair of the IRAS Scholarship Committee.

### CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

9:40 - 10:10 pm

Saturday: **Philip Hefner** – “The Spirit of Something More”

Sunday: **Ted Laurenson** – “Breaking Open Without Conclusions”

Monday: **Marjorie Ann Young** – “A Path to Transformation”

Tuesday: **Chris Corbally** – “How Albert and Pierre Transformed our Worldview”

Wednesday: **Jennifer Whitten and Friends** – “Smoke, Wind, and the Moth”

Thursday: **Andrew Newberg** – “Transformations Throughout Life”

Friday: **Ursula Goodenough** – “Transformations and Emergence”

**Coordinator:** Betty Lau

### THE IRAS CHOIR

The IRAS Choir meets to rehearse Sunday through Friday immediately after lunch in the Pink Parlor [off the main lobby] and as otherwise announced. The choir is a lively and enthusiastic group of conferees, and looks forward to preparing music for the closing banquet, the talent show, and a chapel service. All singers are warmly encouraged! Accomplished instrumentalists are welcomed with open arms! Speak to Jane Penfield if you are interested but have doubts, and she will persuade you that they are misplaced.

# PEOPLE

## Conference Planning Committee

Andrew Newberg	Co-chair
Karl Peters	Co-chair
Marjorie Davis	Andrew Millard
Jeanie Graustein	Neil Wollman (Publicity)
Sol Katz	

Karl Peters	Vice President, Conferences
Ursula Goodenough	Vice President, Development
Edwin C. Laurenson	Secretary
Marion Griswold	Treasurer

## Conference Administrators

Conference Coordinator	Nancy Anschuetz
Registrar	Bonnie Falla

## Conference Facilitators

Announcements	Nancy Anschuetz
Book Table	Joan Goodwin
Bookstore Order	Karl Peters
Candlelight Coordinator	Betty Lau
Children's Program Coordinator	

	Sandra Woodworth
IRAS Seminar	Jeanie Graustein
Memorial Service	Ursula Goodenough
Music Director	Jane Penfield
Other Music	Frank Toppa
Program Book (Orange Book)	Doug Burton
Social Hour Coordinator	Veronique Blanchard
<i>Star Beacon</i> Editor	Jane Bengtson
<i>Star Beacon</i> Production Manager	Andrew Millard
Talent Show	Joan Hunter
Workshop Coordinator	Andrew Millard

Many other facilitators are recruited on the Island. A more complete list of facilitators will be prepared for the banquet program pamphlet after we know who they are.

The successful functioning of the conference is utterly dependent on the facilitators. If you would like to become actively involved in the functioning of the conference and meet and work with new and old friends, the conference chairpersons and coordinator, choir director, and *Star Beacon* editor and production manager would like to hear from you.

## IRAS Scholars

Christina Fales, Jun Yeon Lee, Terry Terhaar  
Griswold Scholar: Julie Lapham

## IRAS Officers

Michael Cavanaugh	Acting President
Barbara Whittaker-Johns	Immediate Past President
Carol Albright	Vice President, Religion
Solomon Katz	Vice President, Science
Willem Drees	Vice President, Interdisciplinary Affairs

## Elected Council Members

Stacey Ake	Sol Katz
Carol Albright	Andrew Millard
Elizabeth Bjorkman	V.V. Raman
Jack Dennis	Edmund Robinson
Willem Drees	John Teske
George Fisher	Mary Evelyn Tucker
Joan Goodwin	Barry Werner
Jeanie Graustein	Elizabeth White

## Other Council Members (Ex Officio)

Philip Hefner	Zygon Editor
Karl Peters	CASIRAS Representative
Nancy Anschuetz	Conference Coordinator

## Others with Official Responsibilities

Marjorie Davis	Historian/Parliamentarian
David Klotz	Membership Coordinator
Jack Dennis	Newsletter Editor
David Klotz	Newsletter Production Manager
Doug Burton	Webmaster
V.V. Raman	Discussion Groups Coordinator

## Honorary Officers

Donald Harrington	Honorary Vice President
Philip Hefner	Honorary Vice President
Karl Peters	Honorary Vice President
Solomon Katz	Honorary Vice President

## Committee Chairs

Archives	Marjorie Davis
Awards	Gwen Griswold
Development	Ursula Goodenough
Finance	Norman Richardson
Interest Group	John Teske
Internet	Doug Burton
Long-Range Conf. Planning	Karl Peters
Membership	David Klotz
Newsletter	Ted Laurenson
Nominating	Chris Corbally
Publicity	Neal Wollman
Scholarship	William Falla

## READING LIST

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- Bruce Greyson** and Mitchell B. Liester. "Auditory Hallucinations Following Near-Death Experiences..." *The Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 44 (Summer 2004): 320-336
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- Andrew Newberg**, Eugene d'Aquili, and Vince Rause. *Why God Won't Go Away: Brain Science and the Biology of Belief*. Ballantine Books, 2001.
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- \_\_\_\_\_. *Introduction to the Internal Family Systems Model*. Trailheads Press, 2002. (available on website [www.selfleadership.org](http://www.selfleadership.org))
- Spiritual Transformation Project—Metanexus Institute.  
<http://www.metanexus.net/spiritual%5Ftransformation/index.html>.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to our speakers and workshop leaders, and to those who said "yes" when we asked them to be coordinators and facilitators. They have shared our enthusiasm for this conference and have generously contributed their time and talents without pay as they carry out the planning and innumerable tasks necessary for a successful conference.

We are also thankful for our conferees, those who coordinate and volunteer for particular activities, and all who participate in so many ways. We appreciate all the wonderful ideas and suggestions that have been contributed, those we incorporated into the conference and those we could not.

We are grateful to the Isles of Shoals Association, Unitarian Universalist, for their grant. This has helped fund our Griswold scholarship program.

We express our appreciation to the Star Island staff for the competent, courteous, and efficient way they take care of our needs and help make our week on the Island so rewarding. Special thanks to Paul and Lisa Jennings for their dedication and their service to Star Island and all its conferees. They will be greatly missed but gratefully remembered.



# Annual IRAS Conference

## Saturday, July 30, thru Friday, August 5, 2005

PERIOD	ACTIVITY	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
<b>Morning Activities: Chapel and Plenary Lectures</b>									
8:00 -9:00 am	<b>Breakfast</b> <sup>10</sup>								
9:00-9:45 am	<b>Chapel</b>	Karl Peters							
10:00-10:55 am	<b>Lectures (El)</b>	WELCOME TO STAR ISLAND	Philip Hefner	Ashok Gangadean	Joan Koss-Chioino	David Hufford	Solomon Katz	In-the-round Discussion	
10:55-11:15 am	<b>Break</b>								
11:15-12:15 pm	<b>Discussion</b>								
12:30-1:30 pm	<b>Lunch</b>								
<b>Afternoon Activities<sup>1</sup>: Recreation<sup>2</sup>, Seminar, Workshops, Free University<sup>3</sup>, and Socializing</b>									
1:40-2:40 pm	Free University IRAS Seminar Annual Meeting	ARRIVING, GETTING SETTLED,  GREETING FRIENDS, EXPLORING	Hefner (El)	IRAS Seminar (El)	IRAS Seminar (Ma)	IRAS Seminar (Ma)	Annual Meeting (El)		
2:50-3:50 pm	<b>Session I</b> Workshops		Koss-Chioino (El) Woodworth (Ma) Blaisdell (Nf) Martin (PP) Houk (WR)	Vaccaro (Br) Thoms (El) Ake (Ma) Teske (Nf) McFarland (Sp)	Tolman (El) Terhaar (Ma) Gross (Nf) Martin (PP) Theriault (Sp)	Goodenough (El) Theriault/Strum (Lw) Place (Ma) Teske (Nf) Baratta (Sp)	Council Meeting (Sp) Vaccaro (Br) Kristeller (El) Schwartz (Ma) Dahms (Nf) Martin (PP)		
4:00-5:00 pm	<b>Session II</b> Workshops	<b>MANDATORY STAR ISLAND ORIENTATION-4:30<sup>4</sup> PARENTS MEETING-5:15<sup>5</sup></b>	Thoms (El) Jonker (Lw) Fried (Nf) Keller (PP) Weiner (Sp) Group Sharing (WR)	Vaccaro (Br) Goodenough (El) Fisher (Ma) Brown (Nf) McFarland (Sp) Group Sharing (WR)	Tolman (El) Jonker (Lw) Schwartz (Ma) Keller (PP) Fried (Nf) Group Sharing (WR)	Kristeller (El) Theriault/Strum (Lw) Goodwin (Ma) Houk/Teske (Nf) Cavanaugh (Sp) Group Sharing (WR)	Council Meeting (Sp) Vaccaro(Br) Jonker (Lw) Brown (Nf) Keller (PP) Group Sharing (WR)		
5:30-6:30 pm	<b>Happy Hour</b> <sup>10</sup> (Newton)								
6:30-7:30 pm	<b>Dinner</b>					Lobster Dinner <sup>6</sup>		Banquet	
<b>Evening Activities: Plenary Lectures, Candlelight Services, and Late Evening Activities</b>									
7:30-9:30 pm	<b>Lectures and Discussion</b>	Andrew Newberg	Andrew Newberg	Richard Schwartz	Jean Kristeller	Bruce Greyson	Speaker Panel Pelican Show <sup>7</sup>	Talent Show	
9:40-10:10 pm	<b>Candlelight<sup>8</sup> Services (Ch)</b>	Philip Hefner	Ted Laurenson	Marjorie Ann Young	Chris Corbally	Jennifer Whitten And Friends	Andrew Newberg	Ursula Goodenough	
10:10 p - ?		<b>Musical Postludes, Movies, Snacks, Conversations, Dancing, and Socializing<sup>9</sup></b>						Farewell Party (Newton)	

<sup>1</sup>Room abbreviations are: **Br** = Brookfield; **Ch** = Chapel; **El** = Elliott; **Lw** = Lawrance; **Ma** = Marshman; **Nb** = Newton back; **Nf** = Newton front; **Pk** = Parker; **PP** = Pink Parlor; **Sp** = Sandpiper; **WR** = Writing Room.

<sup>2</sup>There will be an excursion to Appledore Island on Monday afternoon. Please sign up on Sunday

<sup>3</sup>"Free University" and other activities organized by conferees will be announced on the Island and scheduled for the 1:40 to 2:40 pm period.

<sup>4</sup>The Star Island Orientation, conducted by the Star Island staff starting at 4:30 pm, is the one and only scheduled activity that is mandatory for all conferees.

<sup>5</sup> All parents with children in the Archi Pelagos program, and their children, are required to attend a brief meeting at 5:15 pm in Elliott.

<sup>6</sup>There will be a lobster dinner on Wednesday. Tickets are \$5.50 per person and must be purchased by Monday noon. **Lobster diners should be seated by 6:15 pm.**

<sup>7</sup>On Thursday evening the plenary session discussion ends at 8:55 pm, the Pelican show starts at 9:05 pm, and the Candlelight Service begins as soon as the Pelican Show is over.

<sup>8</sup>The Candlelight Services will be immediately followed by a half hour Musical Postlude (also in the chapel) on every night except Friday.

<sup>9</sup>Movies will be shown in Elliot. The snack bar closes at 11 pm. Socializing and informal discussions can continue until dawn.

<sup>10</sup>Yoga will take place Sunday-Friday 6:30-7:45am and 5:15-6:15pm in Brookfield