“We” & “They”: Cross-Cultural Conversations on Identity

Program and Schedule

The Institute on Religion in an Age of Science

67th Annual Conference, June 26–July 3, 2022

Star Island, New Hampshire
“Who am I? How do I fit into the world around me? How am I different?” Questions like these are central to the elusive notion of identity—to how we establish and maintain perceptions of “self” and “other,” “we” and “they.” Identifying ourselves and others in categories defined by gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, economic status, physical and mental abilities, and other markers stimulate a sense of “we-consciousness.” They influence our choices about who we trust and consider part of our “tribe,” in biological, socio-cultural, and “ultimate” terms. How we perceive and enact our identities influences how we love, create, and discover, and whether we construct systems of oppression and war.

Through multi-religious and scientific frameworks including biological, psychological, sociological, and anthropological considerations, this conference will explore core concepts of identity. We invite you to engage in cross-cultural conversations and participate in envisioning a global cultural transformation in which the presence of diversity need not provoke disharmony.

Questions include:

- Are there prevailing scientific understandings of self and, if so, what are they?
- How do specific world religious traditions understand individual and social identities and otherness?
- In our dynamically interconnected global society, how can science and religion help us comprehend the limitations and purposes of identity?
- What cultural assumptions and historical, religious, political, and philosophical blind spots inhibit our understanding of our own and others’ identities?
- How can we engage in cross-cultural conversations that transcend the “allergy to the other,” increase respect and understanding, and contribute to justice and peacemaking?

We look forward to your joining us in the beautiful environs of Star Island for this rich exploration.

Anindita N. Balslev, Conference Cochair  
C. J. Love, Conference Cochair  
Jennifer Whitten, Conference Cochair  
Abigail Fuller Conference Cochair for Operations
Welcome to IRAS on Star Island!

In the wake of the mandated cancellation of our 2020 conference, I also had to skip last year’s conference. But I, like all Star veterans, know that as the ferry approaches and the outlines of the Island rise out of the ocean, it will feel like I never left, even with a three-year interregnum. I am confident that those of you who are new will understand that dynamic by the end of the week.

But, of course, the Island itself doesn’t account for the hold IRAS exerts. That lies in our mission and our relationships. Over years or decades, we have found IRAS conferences to deal responsibly and rigorously with matters of enormous moral, religious, scientific and practical importance. We come back because we’ve formed friendships, intellectual, emotional, and affinitive, that enliven us and have become part of our meaning. Our co-chairs have put together a program you will, I believe, find challenging and worthy of deep and stimulating debate. But there are many ways to experience an IRAS conference. Aside from the plenary lectures and other offerings and workshops, you are free to wander the Island, explore artistic engagement, get to know your fellow conferees, read some good books and sit on the porch admiring the view. However you decide to be with us, we look forward to continuing our friendships and getting to know you if you are new, and hope you will remain part of the IRAS community.

Ted Laurenson
President of IRAS

CONTENTS

PRESIDENT’S WELCOME .................................................................................................................. 1
THE STORY OF IRAS .......................................................................................................................... 2
PURPOSE OF IRAS ............................................................................................................................. 2
IRAS ON STAR ISLAND ..................................................................................................................... 3
GENERAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION ......................................................................................... 4
BELOVED COMMUNITY PROJECT ..................................................................................................... 6
COVID-RELATED HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION ................................................................. 7
ARCHIPELAGOS: CONFERENCE YOUTH PROGRAM ......................................................................... 8
CHILD ABUSE POLICY ..................................................................................................................... 11
HARASSMENT POLICY ..................................................................................................................... 13
IRAS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND ......................................................................................... 16
PROGRAM OVERVIEW: DAYS AND TIMES, ABSTRACTS, BIOSKETCHES .................................... 17
PEOPLE ........................................................................................................................................... 38
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ..................................................................................................................... 39
THE STORY 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 and subsequently formed the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science. Others involved in the establishment of IRAS included Brand Blanshard, Edwin Prince Booth, Dana McLean Greeley, Donald Szanto Harrington, Henry Murphy, Lyman Rutledge, and Malcolm Sutherland.

Since 1954 IRAS has held an annual conference on science, values, and religion, with 62 of those conferences held on Star Island. IRAS has also conducted—on its own or in collaboration with other groups—conferences 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. 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 multidisciplinary 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 worldwide 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 states, “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 IRAS Council, at its 2003 midwinter meeting, adopted the “Campion Statement,” so-called because it originated from discussions at the Campion Center in Massachusetts at the 2002 midwinter 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.

In 2015 at the Annual Meeting, the following Statement of Purpose, which emerged from the renewal work, was adopted by the members:

IRAS cultivates a community of informed and respectful inquiry and dialogue at the intersections of science with religion, spirituality, and philosophy in service of global, societal, and personal well-being.

IRAS is a nonprofit 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 is within the waters of N’dakinna, the traditional lands and waterways of the Abenaki, Pennacook and other related Wabanaki Peoples past and present. We acknowledge and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations.

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 lobstersmen 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 offshore 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 held 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, and no TVs. 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 and amateur astronomers (IRAS’s second president was astronomer Harlow Shapley). There are opportunities for swimming, kayaking, tennis, and board games. 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.

People who come to IRAS conferences from a variety of academic and professional fields, as well as many well-educated “lay persons.” 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

Announcements – Announcements will be made at the beginning of the morning plenary lecture and at the evening session. Look for announcements in the Star Beacon and on the chalkboard.

Appledore/Shoals Marine Laboratory Tour and Duck Island Cruise—Appledore Island is leased by the Star Island Corp. to Cornell University, which operates the Shoals Marine Laboratory jointly with the University of New Hampshire. The Vaughn Cottage Curator accompanies your group to the neighboring island to discuss Celia Thaxter & fishing village era history, visit Celia’s Garden, and tour some of the Lab facilities. Return trip includes a cruise around Duck Island. The cost is $25/adult, $12/youth. Appledore does not have paved roads and mobility-impaired individuals may have difficulties negotiating the terrain. Meet at the Well House on the front lawn, Tuesday at 2:15 P.M. (return at 4:30 P.M.). Sign up beforehand at the Writing Desk in the Oceanic lobby.

Art Barn—The Art Barn is open for use by conferees. Some supplies are available there.

Banquet—The banquet will be held Saturday evening. We will present IRAS awards that evening. Dress runs from casual to a bit formal.

Behind the Scenes Tour – This interactive tour with the Island manager takes conferees “behind the scenes” through the kitchens, laundry, staff dining areas, and other areas of the island operation. Ask questions and chat about how the island is run. Meet at the Well House on the front lawn, Wednesday at 2:00 P.M.

Bird Walk – Early mornings are a quiet time on Star, and a time of peak activity for many species of birds. After the walk, conferees may continue to birdwatch during the week with binoculars, bird guides, and birding checklists available for use. Meet the Island Naturalist at the Rutledge Marine Lab, Monday at 6:00 A.M.

Botany Walk – The Island Naturalist will conduct a tour of the vast island flora, including a discussion on edible and medicinal plants native to the Shoals. Meet at the Rutledge Marine Lab, Thursday at 4:00 P.M.

Candlelight Services – A long-standing Star Island tradition, the conference program day closes with a short service of reflection in the Chapel. Following the evening session, a procession carrying candle lanterns leaves in silence from the end of the porch. The lanterns illuminate the chapel, and those attending remain silent until they return to the porch. In inclement weather, the candlelight service is held in Elliott. For the list of this year’s presenters, see the “People” listings at the end of the Orange Book.

Chapels Services – The daily chapel services at 8:30 A.M. are an integral part of the week’s experience and tie in to the other intellectual activities taking place throughout the week. The Rev. Dr. Dorsey O. Blake has a thought-provoking week of services planned.

Conference Photo – This year’s photo is scheduled for 1:30 P.M. on Tuesday on the Oceanic front steps; rain date is Wednesday or as late in the week as needed. David Klotz is the photographer and, as in preceding years, he will email a Dropbox link for the (high-res) photo to everyone after we get home.

Farewell Party – An informal farewell party will be held Saturday night, an important part of which is to use up any refreshing substances left over from Social Hour. Newton West, after the Talent Show.

Geology Walk – Learn about the fascinating geological processes that have shaped the Isles of Shoals into the islands they are today. Meet at the Rutledge Marine Lab, Monday at 4:00 P.M.

Ghosts and Graveyards Tour – Take a spooky tour of the island’s cemeteries, led by the Vaughn Cottage curator. Meet at Vaughn Cottage, Tuesday at 7:30 P.M.
History Tour – This interactive tour provides an overview of the history of Star Island and the Isles of Shoals from the 1600s through the present. Learn also about the prehistoric era when Native Americans lived on the islands, as long ago as 4000 B.C.E. Meet on the Front Porch, Monday at 1:30 P.M.

Intergenerational Garden Fete and Ice Cream Social – On Thursday at 1:45 P.M., there will be an intergenerational fair and games on the front lawn. Bring your inner child.

Intergenerational Scavenger Hunt – On Tuesday at 4:00 P.M., meet on the front lawn.

IRAS Work – IRAS is a community with a life that extends throughout the year. We take the opportunity of being together on Star Island to catch up with one another, to undertake the business that must be done. In addition to the IRAS Annual Meeting and Council Meetings, there are five Working Groups: Member Engagement, Organizational Relationships, Summer Conferences, Administration, and Finance. All IRAS meetings are open to any interested person, whether or not you are a member of IRAS. We will welcome you. Meeting times will be announced and posted on the chalk board.

Island Systems and Sustainability Tour – Tour the water facilities, power plant, solar array, garden, wastewater systems, and resource recovery center. Meet at the west end of the Front Porch, Thursday at 2:00 P.M.

Late-night activities – Some folks head to bed early, others hang around the front porch or the snack bar in good conversation. Movies, dancing, games (board games are available from the Front Desk), and other activities often emerge throughout the week. Do what suits you best.

Lobstah – Wednesday evening you are invited to a special lobster dinner. You must sign up at the Front Desk to participate and an additional charge will be added to your bill.

Massage Therapy – Enjoy a massage from a professional therapist. The fee ($80/hour) can be added to your bill; a large portion of the proceeds goes to Star Island. Make a reservation at the Front Desk.

Memorial Service (Tentative) – A memorial service for IRAS members who have died during the past year will be held in the Chapel on Saturday at 4:00 P.M. Edmund Robinson will lead us in remembering and celebrating.

Pelican Show – This variety show put on by Pelicans for the conferees traditionally features a number of musical acts and skits. The Pel Show will be held outside on the Marshman stage, Thursday at 8:30 P.M.

Recreation – You may start your day early (6:00 A.M.) with coffee on the front porch or a Polar bear dip at 7:00 A.M. Star Island has many opportunities for recreation: talking, thinking, napping, reading, walking, and playing. Star Island’s inviting setting offers rich opportunities to renew, refresh, and nurture body, mind, and spirit. Recreational activities abound, including rowing and kayaking (reserve and rent at the Front Desk); tennis, frisbee, softball, board games (ask the Front Desk for equipment), swimming off the dock (9 A.M.–5 P.M. while lifeguards are on duty), arts and crafts, and various Island tours. Additional information is on the Star Island web site (choose “The Island,” then “Activities”). Be sure to check the chalkboard in the Oceanic lobby for daily activities.

Rutledge Marine Laboratory – The Marine Lab provides a home for numerous crabs, fish, and other sea creatures, offering a science education experience for all ages. Open 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. every day.

Shapley-Booth Lectures – Fellowships to honor the memory of the first two presidents of IRAS, Edwin Prince Booth and Harlow Shapley, are awarded to the best proposals in response to the conference call for papers. Proposals are evaluated blind by a three-person, anonymous jury. In addition to being recognized, Shapley-Booth Fellows receive financial assistance from the Shapley-Booth Fund for their room and board and for some travel expenses.

Showers – Showers are available beneath the lobby, by signing up at the Front Desk. Conferees are asked to limit showers to roughly every other day. Towels and soap are available outside the shower rooms. Accessible/gender-neutral restrooms with showers are located just off the lobby and in Cottage A, available for those who need them. There is also a rinse-off shower located at the end of the pier for use after a swim.

Silent Auction – Bid early and bid often at our IRAS Silent Auction, to benefit our Conference Grant Fund.
Social Hour – Join fellow conferees from 5:30–6:30 P.M. for an hour of libations, snacks, socializing, and, often, music. Alcohol is provided and depends upon your donations, so please donate generously. Volunteers are always needed for setup and serving; contact Jean Gest (Social Hour Coordinator).

Star Beacon – The Star Beacon is an IRAS tradition. This conference newspaper appears at breakfast each morning with up-to-date information on the conference and its participants. Your contributions are encouraged: respond to lectures and the 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. Contributions from our younger conferees often grace the pages. Send your contributions to starbeacon@gmail.com.

Star Gazing – The telescope comes out on clear nights after Candlelight. Check with Dave Klotz, Dan Solomon, or the announcement board to see if and where we’ll be observing.

Sunset Cruise—Enjoy a spectacular Star Island sunset aboard the Utopia during a 1-hour cruise around the Isles of Shoals. Cost is $30/adults, $15/youth. Meet at the dock at 7:45 P.M. on Monday. Sign up beforehand at the Writing Desk in the Oceanic lobby.

Talent Show – The Talent Show is on Saturday evening following the banquet. All are invited to participate (“talent” is an optional requirement; all hams are welcome). Sign up at the Writing Desk in the Oceanic Lobby.

Vaughn Cottage Museum & Library – You are welcome to explore the exhibits here, which focus on life on the Isles of Shoals starting from early history through the Grand Hotel Era and up to modern use as a religious and educational center. Open 12–3:00 P.M. every day.

If you have any concerns, questions, or suggestions about the conference, please bring them up with Conference Cochairs CJ Love and Jennifer Whitten or Conference Coordinator Abby Fuller.

**BELOVED COMMUNITY PROJECT**

The Star Island Beloved Community Project is a journey the Star Island Corporation has begun as an organization to create a more inclusive and intentional community, to help spread more empathy and understanding in the world, and to become a more welcoming place for all people. We recognize and affirm that many have been on this journey for a long time, and we are excited to listen and learn as we continue on this important journey.

The term “Beloved Community” was popularized by Martin Luther King Jr. It describes a society based on justice, equality and love for all people. According to the King Center: “Dr. King’s Beloved Community is a global vision in which all people can share in the wealth of the earth. … Racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry and prejudice will be replaced by an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood.”

How do we find our path toward King’s vision? This is a question that we will ask ourselves throughout this journey. We started with this question: How does our beloved Star Island community fall short of King’s vision? And perhaps more importantly, what could we do about it? Star Island has created a new position, Island Minister/Beloved Community Project Manager, to help shape Star as a place that welcomes all. A team of Shoaler musicians composed a new Grand March Song. Financial grants for conferees are now highlighted during the registration process. The Journey Toward the Beloved Community: A Guide for Conference Leaders, available to all, offers many suggestions for creating a culture where new people feel more at ease and for programming to hold conversations on equity, justice, and community (https://starisland.org/beloved-community-project/).
COVID-RELATED HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

While we look forward to a fun and meaningful week on Star Island, it is important to remember that the pandemic is still with us. As a community of care, we need to make every effort to keep ourselves and each other healthy and safe. In addition to the individual health risks posed by COVID-19, an outbreak on Star Island would have a drastic impact on Star’s ability to operate this summer. Together, by following important policies and procedures, we can mitigate this risk in order to function smoothly and bring the Star Island experience to our community.

VACCINATION, TESTING, AND COVID SYMPTOMS

All overnight visitors to Star Island who are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine are required to be fully vaccinated (and expected to be up to date on boosters)—currently, this is everyone age 5 and up. Those too young to receive the COVID-19 vaccine are required to have proof of a negative PCR test done within 3 days of arrival and to furnish proof thereof at the dock.

Star Island requires all overnight guests (and employees) to take a COVID-19 test before arrival on the island. This can be either a rapid antigen (“at home”) test done within 24 hours or a PCR test (preferred) done within 3 days. Testing is confirmed during check in at the dock. Those who test positive are refunded in full. Those who test negative but are in the same household with somebody who tests positive should either stay home or reach out to Anne Henry, the Island Nurse, at ahenry@starisland.org to discuss your situation.

Those who have tested positive for COVID-19 within 5 days of your conference start date should stay home. Those who test positive within 6–10 days should reach out to Anne Henry (above). Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms should not come to the island.

Indoor mask-wearing policies will be determined on a weekly basis depending on current circumstances.

Guests and staff will have to leave the island if they test positive for COVID-19. All overnight guests should plan for the possibility of leaving the island earlier than expected, either because they test positive for COVID-19, need to isolate or quarantine because of exposure, do not comply with Star’s health and safety policies, or for other reasons as deemed necessary by management. Those without easy access to off-island housing should have an Alternative Travel Plan in place. Star Island will provide boat transportation but is not able to provide travel assistance, lodging, or housing once off the island.

WHAT TO EXPECT ON STAR

Last year we had no known cases of COVID-19 during the conference season on Star Island, which is a testament to our community respecting and following our policies and procedures. For this reason, the same systems are in place to protect our community.

Outdoor and indoor dining options are both available. Housekeeping will continue to limit contact inside guest rooms and to continue our augmented cleaning services in bathrooms and public spaces. Outdoor programming is offered whenever possible. Luggage is delivered to drop-off locations, with the option for luggage delivered directly to rooms upon request, if needed.

Day visitors are welcome regardless of vaccination status but are not permitted inside buildings, except for the Brookfield bathrooms. Day visitors are permitted on designated porches but not on the front porch during mealtimes.
Archipelagos (formerly known as Archi Pelagos) is the IRAS youth program for children and youth from two years old through high school.

PROGRAM TIMES

On Monday Morning: All youth and their parents or guardians meet on the front lawn near the sundial at 9:20 (right after chapel) for a brief orientation and sign-in with their youth leaders.

Mornings: From 9:30–12:15 all youth will meet in their age-group programs. At 12:15 we will walk both the older and younger groups to the Oceanic porch. Please be sure to pick them up at 12:20.

All participants must be signed in and out of the group each day.

If your child will be coming late or leaving early on any day, please notify the youth staff, who will have a form for you to sign. When your child comes to group, please come with s/he/they to sign them in.

Afternoons: On Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, from 1:45–3:15 p.m., our staff will offer art projects on the porch. There may also be lawn games. Watch the youth announcement board to see what is happening on a given day. Adults may also wish to participate in the art activities, and are welcome to do so. Please check with the staff to see whether or not a parent or guardian should also be with your child (dependent on age and activity requirements). IRAS offers this time slot as a supplemental program but youth are not required to attend, nor to be signed in and out, and Archipelagos staff will not be responsible for keeping track of your child’s whereabouts during this time slot. On Tuesday from 4–5:30 and Thursday from 1:45–3:00 p.m., IRAS will hold Intergenerational Events instead of afternoon youth activities. (See description under “Intergenerational Events”).

Children and Youth Social Hour: From 5:30–6:30 Monday-Saturday, IRAS youth leaders and other adult conferees will host a youth social hour on the Dragon Playground. Youth must be signed in and signed out. There will be popcorn and lemonade. We will need one youth leader and two adult volunteers each day. Please sign up through Beth St. John. You do not have to have a child in the program in order to help with the youth social hour!

Evenings: From 7:30–8:45, Sunday–Friday, IRAS will offer evening activities for children and youth, who must be signed in and signed out. On Sunday night, the activity will be Candy Bingo, in the snack bar. Please check the youth announcement board for the activities and locations on subsequent evenings.

AGE GROUPS

Children under 8: This group will meet in one of the “barns” (Louisa’s Barn, Granny’s Annex). This area has Star’s “Dragon Playground” with a climbing dragon made of repurposed tires, swings, a sandbox, etc. There are bathrooms in the buildings, and toys and books in addition to the crafting supplies that our youth staff will bring. Expect stories, games, crafts, island explorations, and music, art, and Marine Lab offerings from Star Island staff, among other things. The week will include some age-level activities related to the conference theme.

The youth leaders for children under eight will be Sylvie Letendre and Hélène Gaudet. The mother-daughter team of Sylvie Letendre and Hélène Gaudet will bring their combined experience as a parent of kids on Star (Sylvie) and a young adult who attended Archipelagos from childhood (Hélène) to make our younger kids’ time on Star creative, consistent, and fun. Hélène and her sister previously assisted the youth program by leading afternoon activities; this is her first time working with the morning program. This will be Sylvie’s third year working with our youngest conferees.

Sylvie and Hélène live in Victoriaville, Quebec. Sylvie holds a BS in science teaching from the Université du Québec à Montréal and for the past 25 years, has taught math, physics, biology, and chemistry at all grade levels at École Secondaire (high school) Monique-Proulx, in Warwick, Québec. Sylvie plays piano and accordion, is married to fellow IRAS member Steven Gaudet, and is the mother of Hélène, Juliane, Félix, and Charles-Émile.

Hélène is a natural at organizing events, as well as an excellent, creative storyteller. She recently graduated from a college program at Cégep de Victoriaville, where she studied in the “Cinema and Litterature” Program. This fall, Hélène will begin cinematography studies at Université Laval in Quebec City.
Youth 8-17: We are aware that this is a broad age range, and we are planning thoughtfully and joyfully to create a program that will offer something for everybody. Expect to see cool art, hot music, inventive theater games, island exploring, gymnastics and American Sign Language, a trip to Smuttynose Island (we may hide the treasure there), discussions related to our conference theme, Marine Lab and Island Historian visits, lawn games, etc.

The youth leaders for older children will be Ella Hampson and SueLynne Ganbari, with assistance from Juliane Gaudet.

This will be Ella Hampson’s first year on Star Island, as well as her inaugural IRAS experience. Ella is a recent graduate of the University of Puget Sound, with degrees in Natural Science and Environmental Policy & Decision Making. She works as a naturalist and educator, and enjoys learning about plants and herbalism, writing, and climbing mountains in her free time. She has been traveling the American West in a van, and is currently located in Colorado. Some of her favorite places so far have been the stupas in Crestone, CO, visiting the Earthships in Taos, NM, and skiing in Utah. Ella has experience as a summer youth program counselor and gymnastics teacher. She looks forward to meeting new people, working with the kids and exploring all that the island and conference have to offer!

As a teenager, SueLynne Ganbari attended LRY/YRUU conferences on Star Island and elsewhere, where she taught theater improvisation courses to her peers. This will be her first time back on Star since then, and she looks forward to sharing theater improv with a new generation! She notes, “Improv informs my philosophy of life because its primary tenets are that you cannot negate anything that has already happened, and that every moment is a gift filled with myriad choices in how to respond creatively to what is.” After receiving a BA in Human Development, as well as K-8 teaching certification, SueLynne worked with abused and neglected youth. She returned to school to earn an AAS in an Interpreter Training Program, and has now been an American Sign Language Interpreter for thirty years. This is SueLynne’s inaugural year at IRAS. She is excited about this conference because she has dedicated her life to communication, and would love to share awareness about Deaf identity with any interested youth and adults. She also looks forward to teaching some ASL to youth in the Archipelagos program (and to adults, too, if they ask).

Afternoon and Evening Program Lead: Juliane Gaudet, with assistance from Steven Gaudet.

Juliane attended IRAS as a child, helped to lead afternoon activities a few years ago, and joins us this year to take the lead in our afternoon and evening programming. Juliane graduated from high school in 2020, and is now a college student in Natural Sciences at Cegep de Victoriaville. She is a talented ink and pencil artist who played basketball on her high school team and a bit in college. She will also be assisting with the older youth in the mornings. Juliane looks forward to bringing fun, interesting activities to our program, so everyone has something they like to do.

Juliane’s father, Steven, will be assisting her with evening and afternoon activities. Steven has worked as a youth staff leader in the past, but this year will primarily be in a supporting role. At present, Interpretation plays a big role in his life and career. He is a certified English-French Parliamentary interpreter for members of Parliament, the Senate of Canada, and the Supreme Court of Canada. He also works as a Political Affairs interpreter for CTV National News, and a simultaneous conference interpreter for IBM. In 2019, Steven added a Master’s degree in Translation and Terminology, from Université Laval in Quebec, to his other degrees.

SAFETY

All youth staff undergo SORI checks, and are required to sign an acknowledgement and agreement to abide by IRAS’ “Policy and Procedures Addressing Child Abuse” and “Recommended Goals for Youth and Youth Leader Safety.” All conferees can read a copy of the “Policy and Procedures Addressing Child Abuse” in this conference “Orange Book” (your guide to the week).

Our primary rules for youth—and for adults, of course!—are Be Safe and Be Kind.

Since our youth are human beings, occasionally conflicts may arise. Our staff help the kids address these to the best of our and their ability. We will come and get parents/guardians if we need your wisdom and authority. If your child is struggling with anything that could impact their week, please let us know ahead of time, as well as sharing ideas to help them have a wonderful time on Star Island. Please also make sure we know about any health issues or specific needs.

We expect youth to attend the morning and afternoon sessions. If they will not be attending a given session, we ask that you sign them out on our release form. If you do not sign them out and they aren’t in their group, we will send someone to find you, so we know they are well and safe.
INTERGENERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

This year there will be two intergenerational activities. These are specifically scheduled so there will be no other schedule conflicts. Please participate!

Jennifer Whitten will be heading up the first IRAS Intergenerational Scavenger Hunt from 4:00–5:30 P.M. on Tuesday. To make this a resounding success, we need widespread participation. Each team will consist of both youth and adults, who will be required to perform feats, solve puzzles, collect items found on Star, and glean information from other IRAS conferees with specialized knowledge about science, religion, and the conference theme. There will be prizes, but most of all, there will be the satisfaction of getting to know one another better.

Longtime shoaler, frequent youth staff contributor, and Auction Queen Susan Treleaven will be heading up our Garden Fete and Hat Parade from 1:45–3:00 P.M. on Thursday. This will occur in conjunction with our Ice Cream Social. On several afternoons prior to this day, Susan will offer hats that you may purchase for a small cost, plus many materials with which to decorate them. Use your imagination! Apply your engineering expertise! Express your field of knowledge! Have fun! There will be multiple prizewinner categories and ice cream for all!

Bring your best self and your creativity and come poised to play!

Best of Starlight,
Jennifer E. Whitten, Program Coordinator
CHILD ABUSE POLICY

STAR ISLAND
Letter to all Registered Conferees for the IRAS Conference

Dear Conferee,

The Star Island Corporation and conference staff work very hard to keep the island safe for all conferees, especially for our children. Attached, you will find a copy of our Policies and Procedures Addressing Child Abuse.

New Hampshire law mandates that you report any suspected child abuse/neglect. While on Star Island, you are to go directly to the Star Island Corporation’s Grievance Officer by asking for him at the front desk. The grievance officer is trained in how to determine the next steps.

It takes a community to keep our children safe. We appreciate your support!

Thank you,
Jennifer Whitten, Archipelago Youth Staff Coordinator
on behalf of the IRAS Conference

IRAS POLICY AND PROCEDURES ADDRESSING CHILD ABUSE 2022

Preface: The IRAS Conference shall maintain an environment in which all children are free from child abuse. All persons associated with the conferences are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide a safe and nurturing atmosphere for children and adolescents. Child abuse is unlawful and will not be tolerated. Any member of the IRAS community who engages in behaviors that are defined as child abuse by state and federal laws will be in violation of this policy. Further, retaliation against an individual for filing a complaint or assisting in the investigation pursuant to this policy is unlawful and will not be tolerated.

1. Child abuse is defined, in the New Hampshire Child Protection Act. [NH RSA 169-C: 3, II and XXVII]:

“‘Abused child’ means any child who has been:

(a) Sexually abused; or
(b) Intentionally physically injured; or
(c) Psychologically injured so that said child exhibits symptoms of emotional problems generally recognized to result from consistent mistreatment or neglect; or
(d) Physically injured by other than accidental means.”

“‘Sexual abuse’ means the following activities under circumstances which indicate that the child’s health or welfare is harmed or threatened with harm: the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or having a child assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or any simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing any visual depiction of such conduct; or the rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children. With respect to the definition of sexual abuse, the term ‘child’ or ‘children’ means any individual who is under the age of 18 years.”

1.1 NH law defines a child as any person who has not reached his or her eighteenth birthday [Chapter 169-C: 3]

Under NH law not only professional caregivers of children but also “…any other person having reason to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected shall report the same…” [Chapter 169-C: 29]

1.1.1 Responsibilities: As care providers and the host of care providers for children, the staff, volunteers, and conferees of the IRAS Conference have a very serious responsibility for the health and well-being of children

1.1.2 Reporting: If any staff member, volunteer, or conferee suspects that a child has been or is in danger of being abused while attending an IRAS conference, it is the responsibility of the staff member, volunteer, or conferee to immediately report his or her concerns to the Grievance Officer of the Star Island Corporation. The Grievance Officer is the Manager or his designee. This applies if the abuse appears to come from another child or from a parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the welfare of the child while on Star Island.
1.1.3 Discipline: No child shall ever be disciplined by the use of any physical method including shaking, spanking, and slapping by any staff member or volunteer. Verbal reprimands shall be calm, yet firm, and shall not include destructive criticism. If a child is disruptive, a parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the welfare of the child while on Star Island shall be informed immediately.

2. The Grievance Officer: According to the policy of the Star Island Community, the Manager will annually designate him/herself or appoint a senior staff person of the Star Island Corporation as the Child Abuse Grievance Officer who will be vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all child abuse complaints. In the event the complaint is against the manager who is also the Grievance Officer, the alternate Grievance Officer will hear the complaint. In the event the complaint is against the Grievance Officer when not the Manager, the complaint will be heard by the Manager.

2.1 The Grievance Officer working with the Youth Coordinator, Current Chairs or their designees will ensure that the matter is investigated through the following process:

2.1.1 The Grievance Officer along with the Youth Coordinator and/or the Current Chairs or their designees will guide the charging party through the process of making an oral report of the child abuse or the Grievance Officer working with the Youth Coordinator and/or Current Chairs or their designees will him/herself/themselves make such report to the Bureau of Children, Division for Children, Youth, and Families. Department of Health and Human Services in accordance with NHRSA 169-C:29 which states “any...person having reason to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected shall report the same...” and NHRSA 169-C:30 states “An oral report shall be made immediately by telephone or otherwise, and followed within 48 hours by a report in writing, if so requested, to the bureau.”

2.1.2 The Grievance Officer working with the Youth Coordinator and Current Chairs or their designees will take whatever action is necessary to ensure the child’s safety and they will guard against subjecting the child to multiple interviews.

2.1.3 Privacy and confidentiality: In the course of taking any action, the greatest degree of privacy and confidentiality possible shall be maintained.

2.2 The Grievance Officer along with the Youth Coordinator and Current Chairs or their designees may gather additional information as deemed necessary to protect the welfare of the child and ensure his or her safety and that of other children and adults. The Grievance Officer along with the Youth Coordinator, Current Chairs, or their designees may impose any sanctions deemed appropriate, including expulsion from the conference and/or denial of the right to attend future IRAS Conferences.

3. Protection of the Parties: Retaliation against any person who has filed a complaint of child abuse or cooperated in an investigation regarding a complaint of child abuse is unlawful and will not be tolerated.

4. To be eligible to serve as a Youth Leader a SORI check must be completed.

5. Policy Dissemination: In accordance with the law, this policy shall be given by the Chairs or their designated Youth Coordinator to all Youth Staff when they apply.

6. Every registered family or individual shall receive a letter before the conference explaining that we have a child abuse policy and that copies will be available on Island during the Conferences to anyone requesting them.

7. The name of the Child Abuse Grievance Officer for the Star Island Corporation can be learned by asking at the front desk on island or by contacting the Star Island Corporation Office at 603-430-6272 or by mail at 30 Middle St., Portsmouth, NH 03801.

LEGAL REFS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revised November 3, 2001</td>
<td>Revised July 7 &amp; 19, 2004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revised November 2, 2002</td>
<td>Revised July 16, 2006</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HARASSMENT POLICY

POLICY AND PROCEDURE ADDRESSING DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL AND OTHER HARASSMENT 2022

Preface: The IRAS Conference shall maintain an environment in which all persons are free from sexual or other harassment. All persons associated with the Conference are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from discrimination and harassment. Discrimination and sexual and other harassment will not be tolerated. Any member of the IRAS community who engages in these behaviors will be in violation of this policy. Further, retaliation against an individual for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation pursuant to this policy is unlawful and will not be tolerated.

1. Harassment refers to unreasonable conduct or behavior, which is personally offensive or threatening, impairs morale, or interferes with the work effectiveness of members of the IRAS community and relates to race, color, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, physical or mental disability, national origin, or ancestry or other protected category. Examples of harassment include conduct or comments that threaten physical violence; offensive, unsolicited remarks; unwelcome gestures or physical contact, display or circulation of written materials, items or pictures degrading to any members of the above-mentioned groups; and/or verbal abuse or insults about or directed at any individual because of their relationship in any of the groups listed above which has the purpose or effect of unnecessarily interfering with an individual's participation in the IRAS conference or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, where:

1.1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's participation in IRAS conference activities.

1.2. Submission to, or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions affecting participation in IRAS conference activities.

1.3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or participation in IRAS conference activities or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

1.4. The following unwelcome conduct may also constitute sexual harassment, whether intended or not:

1.4.1. use of sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's own or another's sex life, comments on an individual's body, comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies or prowess;

1.4.2. displaying and/or circulating sexually suggestive objects, printed or electronic materials (including social media, direct messages, etc.), pictures or cartoons;

1.4.3. unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;

1.4.4. inquiries into one's sexual experience; and

1.4.5. discussion of one's sexual activities.

2. The Grievance Officer: The Chief Executive Officer of the Star Island Corporation will annually designate themselves or appoint a senior staff person as the Grievance Officer who will be vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all discrimination and harassment complaints. Alternate Grievance Officer(s) may also be designated. [Note: The current Grievance Officer is the Island Manager, John Bynum, jbynum@starisland.org.] In the event the complaint is against the Grievance Officer when not the Chief Executive Officer, the complaint will be heard by the Chief Executive Officer. In the event the complaint is against the Chief Executive Officer, the complaint shall be heard by the President of the SIC Board of Directors or their designee.

2.1. Any member of the IRAS community who believes that they have been subjected to discrimination or harassment should report the incident(s) to the Grievance Officer.* A parent, guardian or any person who believes that a child has been subjected to harassment of any kind may file a complaint
on behalf of the child. Anyone (employees, conferees, etc.) can raise concerns and make reports of discrimination or harassment without fear of reprisal.

Any member of the IRAS community who becomes aware of possible discrimination or harassment must promptly advise the Grievance Officer who will handle the matter in a timely and confidential manner, to the greatest extent possible.

2.2. When a complaint is made, the following process will be used to reach a disposition which balances the interests of all parties with the primary goal of protecting the safety of all in the IRAS community. If the Grievance Officer or the Chief Executive Officer believes the circumstances require investigation by an independent outside investigator, they may delegate the responsibility for investigation to such an individual, provided they inform the Board President or, when they are unavailable, the Board Vice President of their intention to do so.

The Grievance Officer will investigate the matter through the following process:

2.2.1. When the aggrieved is a minor and there is an allegation of child abuse, the Grievance Officer will guide the reporting party through the process of making an oral report of the child abuse or the Grievance Officer will themselves make such report to the Bureau of Children, Division for Children, Youth, and Families, Department of Health and Human Services in accordance with NHRSA 169-C:29 which states “any...person having reason to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected shall report the same...” and NHRSA 169-C:30 which states “An oral report shall be made immediately by telephone or otherwise, and followed within 48 hours by a report in writing, if so requested, to the bureau.”

2.2.2. When the aggrieved is an adult, the Grievance Officer will confer with the affected party in order to obtain a clear understanding of that party's statement of the facts.

2.2.3. The Grievance officer will also meet with the accused party in order to obtain their response to the complaint.

2.2.4. The Grievance Officer will use their discretion in determining whether there are other witnesses who should be interviewed, the order in which such interviews should occur, and to conduct said interviews for the purpose of gathering facts and reaching factual conclusions.

2.2.5. Privacy and confidentiality: In the course of taking any action, the Grievance Officer shall maintain the highest degree of privacy and confidentiality as possible under the circumstances. Under no circumstances will the Grievance Officer promise confidentiality.

2.2.6. The Grievance Officer will keep a written record of information gathered throughout the process of investigating the complaint, and shall complete a written record of their findings.

2.2.7. The Grievance Officer, if someone other than the Chief Executive Officer, shall provide a written record of findings to the Chief Executive Officer, or, if appropriate, the President of the Board of Directors.

2.3. After reviewing the record, the Grievance Officer will decide the next appropriate action. The Grievance Officer may gather additional information as deemed necessary to resolve the matter formally or informally. With the consent of the reporting party, the Grievance Officer may mediate a resolution between or among the parties.

Thereafter the Grievance Officer, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer, shall impose any sanctions deemed appropriate. If a staff member is found to have violated this policy, the Grievance Officer may, without limitation, impose a warning, suspension or termination.

If a volunteer or guest is found to have engaged in conduct or activities contrary to this policy, the Grievance Officer may, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer, impose any sanctions deemed appropriate, including but not limited to, barring that person from further involvement with the Star Island Corporation and/or being present on the island, either permanently or for a period of time.

3. Retaliation: Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a person who reports discrimination or harassment or provides information during an investigation of such behavior, or witnesses or has reliable information about such behavior.

4. Retaliation against any person who has filed a complaint of discrimination or harassment or cooperated in an investigation regarding a complaint for discrimination or harassment is unlawful and will not be
tolerated. Complaints of retaliation will be separately investigated, and appropriate remedial action will be taken.

5. Policy Dissemination: This policy shall be given to all new staff upon appointment via the Personnel Handbook and shall be distributed annually to all staff and conference chairs/leaders for communication to conferees.

6. Annual Review: This policy shall be reviewed annually by the SIC Board of Directors.

7. Copies of this policy shall be referenced on our website, in our Program Catalog, and in Better Living on Star Island; included in the Personnel Handbook; and promoted through conference leadership.

* The CEO has appointed the Island Manager as the Sexual Harassment Grievance Officer and the Backup Island Manager as the Alternate Grievance Officer. The Grievance Officer or Alternates may be reached through SiC’s Portsmouth Office (telephone: 603-430-6272; email: office@starisland.org; mail: 30 Middle Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801)
IRAS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The IRAS Memorial Scholarship Fund honors deceased IRAS members, conferees, and members of their families. The income from the fund supports full room and board for up to two student scholars each year. Donations to this endowed fund are appreciated. Names of those remembered are added to a memorial list.

Scholarship applications are made to the chair of the scholarship committee, presently Jane Bengtson. Consideration is given to students who are currently pursuing a degree, with preference given to those who are first-time attendees at an IRAS conference, and whose interests are congruent with the purposes of IRAS.

It is expected that scholars will benefit from the intellectual experiences gained by attending sessions and interacting with conference speakers and IRAS leaders. Scholars are also asked to provide some assistance to those running the conference under the guidance of the Conference Cochair for Operations.

This year IRAS is again pleased to be able to support two student scholarship recipients, funded by the IRAS Memorial Scholarship Fund. This year’s scholars are Timofej Murašov and Lili Almási-Szabó.

Timofej Murašov earned both BA and MA degrees in philosophy at Vilnius University and is currently in the doctoral program there. His PhD thesis is “The Problem of the Return to the Origins of Thinking in Lev Shestov’s Philosophy.” He has published several articles on Shestov’s philosophy and presented his work at international conferences. In 2021, he was awarded an Internship at the Pontificia Facoltà Teologica della Sardegna. His work focuses on questions of freedom, unity, and free will.

Lili Almási-Szabó is a Hungarian anthropologist living in Chile. While completing her MA degree in Cultural Anthropology at ELTE University (Budapest), Lili conducted an extensive ethnographic fieldwork in Chile about the local ethnic-religious tradition of roadside shrines (animitas). This work made her deeply interested in the most recent religious changes in the country and the Southern Cone. Lili is currently working on her PhD thesis in Sociology at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (PUC), which aims to understand the complex reasons behind the decreasing Catholic affiliation, as well as the increasing number of religious “nones,” through both quantitative and qualitative methods. Unfortunately, due to the slow visa process, Lili could not procure a visa in time to join us in person for this year’s conference. Nevertheless, Lili will be presenting her paper virtually.

To date, contributions to the Memorial Scholarship Fund have been received in memory of the following people:

- James Ashbrook
- Carl Bildorff
- Ralph Burhoe
- Beth Davis
- Tom Fangman
- Ken Gjemre
- Dana Greeley
- Hudson Hoagland
- Bernard Loomer
- Frances Nesbitt
- Carol Peters
- Sally Schlegel
- Mary Skipp
- George Volckhausen
- Lily White
- Dana Woodbury
- Barbara Avakian
- Edwin Prince Booth
- Warren Busse
- Marj Davis
- John Fryer
- Ward Goodenough
- Dorothy Griswold
- Leslie Kawamura
- Nicole Lopresti
- Ton Olson
- George Riggin
- Karl Schmitz-Moorman
- Bob Sorensen
- Paul Walsh
- Georgia Wilson
- Marjorie Young
- Ian Barbour
- Mike Brewer
- Esther Cox
- Henry Everett
- Scout Fuller
- Joan Goodwin
- Harlan Griswold
- Betty Lau
- Leslie Lowry
- Bill Orme-Johnson
- Kenneth Roberts
- Harlow Shapley
- Philemon Sturges
- Ruth Wathen-Dunn
- H. van Renssalaer Wilson
- Myra Zinke
- Luther Bengtson
- Sanborn Brown
- Eugene d’Aquili
- Larry Fagg
- Roger Gillette
- Jeanie Graustein
- Norman Hall
- Normand Laurentneau
- Roy Morrison III
- Lyman Page
- Richard Schlegel
- Harold K. Shilling
- Winnie Tomm
- Weiant Wathen-Dunn
- Willie Winternitz
IRAS Conferences include several different kinds of presentations and activities as described in the General Conference Information section on page 4. What follows below is a detailed schedule for each day, broken out for morning, afternoon, and evening. See also the weekly schedule on the separate handout.

LIVE-STREAMING INFORMATION

Chapel services, the plenary sessions, and some paper presentations will be live streamed, so you can watch them online on your personal electronic device from anywhere on the island that receives adequate wifi reception.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM SCHEDULE

---

**CHAPEL SERVICES**

**Dr. Dorsey Odell Blake** was officially installed as Presiding Minister of The Church for The Fellowship of All Peoples in October, 1994. Fellowship Church was founded October 1944, as the nation’s first intentionally interracial, interfaith congregation. Co-founding minister, Dr. Howard Thurman, is considered by many as one of the most extraordinary religious figures of the Twentieth Century. During Dr. Blake’s installation service, Mrs. Sue Bailey (Howard) Thurman presented Dr. Thurman’s robe—which had not been worn since his death—to Dr. Blake as a symbol of her trust in his leading the congregation “so that there will be no past greater than our future.”

He is presently Faculty Associate at Pacific School of Religion. Dr. Blake served as Dean of Faculty, Visiting Professor of Spirituality and Prophetic Justice at Starr King School for the Ministry for nine years.

He has extensive field ministry experience with interfaith groups addressing justice and peace issues, including the California People of Faith Against the Death Penalty, The Interfaith Alliance for Prison Reform, Genesis, and The San Francisco Interfaith Council. He served as a member of the steering committee of Religious Witness with Homeless People and has been in the forefront of peace and justice activities, speaking to small audiences and rallies that have drawn over 200,000 people. In May–June, 2000, he traveled to Morocco with an interfaith delegation of Muslims, Jews, and Christians in a quest to promote interfaith respect and cooperation. In October 2010 he met His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and served on an interfaith panel responding to his teachings.

Currently, he serves on the Coordinating Committee of the National Council of Elders.

---

**CHAPEL TALKS**

The focus of the chapel messages will be engaging cosmic intimacy to create the world that is not yet but must be. This includes our being present, authentic, responsible, open, centered, imaginative, and trusting the All-Pervading Presence that sheds light on our paths, light luminous enough to unveil the next essential steps. We will explore the inner and outer aspects of our shared journey. And are invited into good, necessary, creative trouble as we seek to “find the grain in our own wood” and come home to our true selves and the kinship of all that exists.

---

**SUNDAY EVENING**

**WELCOME**

*Anindita Balslev, Carolyn (C.J.) Love, and Jennifer Whitten, Conference Co-chairs*

We will introduce the speakers and the program of the conference, followed by an introductory lecture.

---

**MONDAY MORNING**

**COMPLEX IDENTITY**

*C.J. Love*

Elliott, 9:30 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

**ABSTRACT**

Unravelling the complex notion of “self” and “other” necessitates a layered approach that explores biology, namely genetics, philosophy, namely event phenomenology, and culture, namely religion. This talk examines 1) the latest paradigm shift occurring in the genetic sciences due to the
increased knowledge of epigenetic effects on gene expression and how our DNA functions in concert with the cellular apparatus, the body, and the environment; 2) the incorporation of relationality into a philosophical understanding of self; and 3) finally, what if anything can religion add to this exploration of self. Thus, providing a glimpse at how these different approaches to identity help us understand “self.”

Please read the following:

BIOSKETCH

Dr. Carolyn “C. J.” Love serves as the V.P. of Summer Conferences and the website technician for IRAS. She obtained her B.S. in Genetics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, M.A. in Religious Studies at Edgewood College, Madison, and Ph.D. in Constructive Theology at Loyola University, Chicago. Her interest in science and theology arose after “retiring” from a career in clinical human genetics to full-time parent her three children, now in their twenties. C.J. developed an interest in theology after taking a moral theology class for fun, earned her Ph.D. from Loyola University Chicago while raising her three children, and defended her dissertation, “Re-thinking Anthropocentrism Through a Genetic-Event Philosophy of Time,” with distinction. She teaches ethics and philosophy of religion at Elmhurst University and Bible for the Diocese of Joliet Diaconate Program.

Dr. Love is currently co-editing a book that examines how philosophical, theological, and social scientific principles can be applied to our social institutions such as education, social welfare, criminal justice, government, and the economy. Invited talks include a panel on “Person and Evolution” at Loyola University Chicago, “Life as Advent: Rethinking God, Rethinking the Human,” the IRAS webinar, “God, Genetics, and Event Phenomenology,” and “Genes and Maps as text of the Human,” Groningen, Netherlands. Dr. Love’s publications include God, Genetics and Event Phenomenology: Rethinking Common Human Experience of Temporality in Theology and its Usefulness in Science, Theology, and Contemporary Culture. Her greatest joy is her family!

FROM THE POROUS TO THE BUFFERED SELF

Dylan Belton

Elliott, 11:30 A.M.–12:15 P.M.

ABSTRACT

In his influential works on the emergence of secularism and modern individualism, Charles Taylor famously defined the modern Western individual as a “buffered self,” which he contrasted with the pre-modern understanding of the self as “porous.” While wide-ranging in its source material, Taylor’s treatment of the buffered self is, however, largely concerned with the Western theological and philosophical “canon.” My aim is to draw from cross-cultural anthropological material to develop further Taylor’s account of the transition from the porous to the buffered self.

Drawing from ethnographic material on non-Western “traditional” communities, I suggest that the trajectory toward the buffered self as tracked by Taylor can also be framed as one of anthropological simplification. What we find in much of the ethnographic literature on traditional non-Western communities is a proliferation of anthropological categories or component “parts” of the individual, both material and immaterial. Indeed, in comparison to our own anthropological categories—body and soul (or mind)—these anthropologies appear highly “baroque.” I argue that this “component-complexity” and “porosity” are not accidentally related. The porous self tends to be constituted by multiple material and non-material component parts that intertwine it with a wider ecological, social-cultural, ancestral, and spiritual context from which the self receives its identity. Moreover, the agency of this porous and component-complex self is constantly vulnerable in relation to a vast array of material, social, and spiritual forces operative within this wider context. Complexity, porosity, and vulnerability therefore form a “structural” unity.

I suggest in conclusion that the transition from a porous to buffered self is not accidentally related to the process of anthropological simplification. The buffered self is constituted by, at most, two components: soul/mind and body. Mind becomes an increasingly “privatized/interiorized” reality and source of both identity and agency, buffered against external forces and its wider ecological, social-cultural, ancestral, and spiritual context. Correlatively, the body becomes increasingly seen as one’s own project and the site for the expression of one’s own inner identity or personality. In brief, anthropological simplification is necessary to sustain a buffered identity.

BIOSKETCH

Dylan Belton completed his B.A. in Philosophy and Theology, and his MTS and Ph.D. in Systematic Theology at the University of Notre Dame. He has received research funding awards from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) as well as the Research Center for International and Interdisciplinary Theology in Heidelberg, Germany. Dylan is currently a Mendel Postdoctoral Fellow at Villanova University.
Belton’s research concentrates on the notion of the “Umwelt” that is currently gaining attention from Anglo-American scholars within anthropology, biosemiotics, cognitive science, religious studies, and philosophy of mind. The Umwelt is the world of meaning or significance that surrounds a living organism, and its species-specific form is tightly correlated with the organism’s sensorimotor and affective capacities. An analysis of an organism’s Umwelt is therefore simultaneously an analysis of its body. Dylan will be exploring interdisciplinary research on the Umwelt as well as its significance for scholarship in theological anthropology focused on human embodiment.

Keywords: Charles Taylor, porous self, buffered self, anthropology, mind and body, identity

MONDAY AFTERNOON

REDESCRIBING THE MIDDLE-SELF: IRONY, THE INTERSTITIAL, AND CATEGORIZATION

Tinu Ruparell
Elliott, 1:45–2:30 P.M.

ABSTRACT

Hybridity is, in scientific contexts, a relatively well defined and uncontroversial idea. In social and humanistic contexts, however, it often takes on a problematic, contentious, and complex valence. Along with the related concept of liminality, the idea of hybrid identities has been used to analyze political, social, religious, post-colonial, and cross-cultural discourses. Both concepts seek to nuance and problematize a phenomenon with which many, if not most, people are very familiar: the shifting, perspectival, and contextually-dependent roles and personae we take, with various degrees of willingness and comfort, as we negotiate our understanding of our selves and our lives with others. However, when identities consciously stretch across boundaries, be they religious, cultural, social, disciplinary, or discursive, questions about liminality/hybridity can arise which have, of late, been rather fraught. In this context, charges of syncretism, illegitimacy, appropriation, and identity-politics may be levied to cast suspicion or opprobrium on these instances of ‘inappropriate’ mixing. Moreover, stronger claims of incommensurability may be raised as a firewall to protect the putative integrity and consistency of the categories ‘threatened’ by the miscegenation.

I argue that the basis for many of these complaints and charges depends on both fetishizing dichotomous categorizations as well as the inherent ambiguities within the concepts of hybridity/liminality. In response, I propose a model of identities-across-boundaries based on two pillars: (A) a multi-modal (i.e. paraconsistent) logic derived from the Jain concept of epistemological perspectivalism (anekanta-vada); and (B) a theory of the ironic-interstitial which forms the basis of a narrative model of the self more amenable to our common experience of multiple, social personae. Through engagement with the Jain commentarial tradition, Charles Taylor, Paul Ricoeur, and Richard Rorty as interlocutors, I argue that these pillars allow a redescription of both categorization and the narrative self to better respond to the complex, multilayered, and dynamic nature of our continuing cross-cultural negotiation of identities. Lessons from these redescriptions may be useful in coming to a richer understanding of the relationships and boundaries between traditions of science and religion.

Keywords: cross-cultural hermeneutics, categorization, interstitial, hybridity, irony, pragmatism, jainism, perspectivalist epistemologies, para-consistent logic

BIOSKETCH

Dr. Tinu Ruparell is an associate professor in the comparative philosophy of religion at the University of Calgary. After his first degree in microbiology and graduate research in physiology, he move to philosophy, eventually earning his doctorate in cross-cultural hermeneutics. Philosophising across boundaries remains a focus of his research, be that boundaries between scientific and religious cultures, or between European and Indian traditions. Before coming to the University of Calgary, he taught at Liverpool Hope University, where he was inaugural co-chair of their Centre for the Study of Science and Religion, and the University of Cambridge. He publishes in the areas of comparative and interreligious philosophy, Indian philosophy, and medical humanities.

PERSONAL IDENTITY: NAMING THE OTHERNESS

E. Maynard Moore
Elliott, 2:45–3:15 P.M.

ABSTRACT

Personal identity has been a subject of debate within the scholarly community and “on the street” for centuries, and the debate continues into the modern era. I will address the issue with reference to (a) religion, (b) biology, (c) psychology, and (d) culture of the family.
(a) We look at the fluctuation and variety of identity in the early Jesus movement over the first two centuries. Contrary to common belief, the word "Christian" was virtually non-existent in the first two centuries. The Jewish roots of the emerging movement were a critical factor in the self-identity of persons in this emerging religion.

(b) Here we look at identity within the emergence of "natural man" in the concept of John Locke and the evolutionary theory of Charles Darwin. Reacting to criticism of the first edition of his Essay on Human Understanding, Locke added a new section in Book 2 of subsequent editions (Chapter 27) called "Of Identity and Diversity." It has never satisfied critics, but it has become foundational for subsequent debate concerning "human nature" ever since. Darwin, of course, with the publication of On the Origin of Species in 1859, raised an entirely new dimension in the debate, and with the addition of genetics to the original theory of Natural Selection, we have the structure of emergent naturalism in the new synthesis.

(c) We look at psychological approaches to the issue with particular reference to the work of Freud, Jung, and Marya Schechtman. Once again, an entirely new approach to understanding identity came center/front with Freud's treatment of the unconscious. And Jung takes things even further with the "collective unconscious" and his notion of archetypes. Schechtman turns to recent developments in the psychological study of memory to update all these theories to "capture some of their crucial insights and to show why memory is so relevant and influential."

(d) Finally, we look at the sociological options of treating individual identity through the traditional structure of the Jewish and Chinese families. In both ancient cultures, the bestowal of a name on the infant provides a solid foundation for the individual to answer the question, "Who am I?" Finally, we close with the question: what happens when none of these options have much purchase within the rootlessness of the modern era?

Keywords: identity, Christianity, animalism, naturalism, tribalism, evolution, psychology, Judaism, Chinese, belonging

BIOSKETCH

Maynard Moore, Ph.D. has been involved in the science and religion dialogue for over 20 years, through the Dialogue on Science, Ethics, and Religion program sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and also in an on-going dialogue group in the Washington Theological Union. He currently serves as Vice President on the IRAS Council. During 2001-2002, he coordinated a series of sixteen formal sessions at the National United Methodist Church in Washington, DC that involved prominent scientists, including seven Nobel Laureates. Maynard maintains active memberships in the Center for Process Theology at Claremont Graduate Seminary in Oregon, the Wesleyan Theological Society, the Churches’ Center for Theology and Public Policy at Wesley Seminary, and serves as President of WesleyNexus, Inc. the primary science and religion organization in the United Methodist Church (UMC). He is a fifty-year ordained member (retired) of the Baltimore-Washington UMC Annual Conference and teaches a regular adult education class in Science, Religion and Society at Metropolitan Memorial UMC in Washington.

Maynard earned two graduate degrees from Southern Methodist University, an MA from the University of Chicago Divinity School, and the PhD in Adult Education at the Union Graduate Institute and University in Cincinnati. He participated in several science and religion symposia through past involvement with the John Templeton Foundation and the Metanexus Institute in Philadelphia. Through the International Consortium on Religion and Ecology, Maynard served on the Board of Directors for the InterFaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington, DC, one of the nation’s oldest such organizations, now embracing eleven different faith traditions. He lives in Bethesda, Maryland with his wife Paula who is founder and Principal Conductor of the interPLAY Orchestra at Strathmore Center for Music and the Arts.

RECONCILING LIBERTY AND LAW, SCIENCE AND RELIGION

Paul Carr

Newton West, Monday 2:45 – 3:30 P.M.

ABSTRACT

How can we reconcile liberty with law, and autonomy with authority? The 2009 IRAS conference "The Mythic Reality of the Autonomous Individual" debunked the worldview that privileges individual liberty over authority, as encoded in laws. The hymn "America the Beautiful" enjoins us to "confirm thy soul with self-control and liberty with law." Our reconciliation of liberty with law, or individual with community, is helped by answering "Who am I?" Philosopher Rene Descartes, in trying to answer the question, found himself doubting each possible answer. However, he could not doubt the fact that he was thinking about doubting. This led him to the answer "Cogito, ergo sum." This is often translated from Latin as "I think, therefore I am." "Sum" is the Latin word for "I am." Might he be the emergent sum of the trillion cells in his body, experiences, and relationships?

We all experience ourselves as being part of a community of family, friends, town, nation, Earth,
and universe. Theologian C.J. Love understands God as that which is greater than herself. Individuals are part of the beautiful creation and of God. We are made of stardust. Religions bind people with similar beliefs together. Yet, many religious biblical-literalist conservatives reject the evolutionary science that liberals believe. Increasing income inequality accelerates such polarization. For example, better educated, richer Unitarian Universalists tend to be more liberal than Southern Baptists.

How can we revive the stronger-together spirit of Paul’s Letter to the Galatians 3:38? “There is neither…slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Former Baptist, Secular-Humanist-biologist E. O. Wilson wrote a letter to a Baptist pastor asking him to set aside their religious differences to save the Creation. The beauty of both the created world and of religious music can help to reconcile scientific and religious differences. Both religious conservatives and liberals share the beautiful natural world. Singing inspiring music like the Messiah brings us together. Francis Collins wrote, “Scientific discoveries are an opportunity to worship.” A. N. Whitehead believed that the purpose of the universe was the production of beauty.

BIOSKETCH

Paul H. Carr, BS, MS, MIT; Ph.D. Brandeis, IEEE Life Fellow, led a branch of the AF Research Laboratory that developed the low-cost Surface Acoustic Wave (SAW) filters used in cell phones and radar. The Templeton Foundation awarded him grants for the science and religion courses he taught in the philosophy department at U Mass Lowell. This inspired his book, Beauty in Science and Spirit (2006). He championed the 2017 IRAS Climate Change conference and received the 2018 IRAS Academic Fellow Award. He has published over 90 papers in scientific journals and in Zygon. His web page: www.MirrorOfNature.org.

IDENTITY FORMATION, DOMAINS, OUTCOMES, PROCESSES, AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Calvin Chatlos

Elliott, 4:00–4:45 P.M.

ABSTRACT

An introduction to identity formation will begin with the most universally accepted stages of human development described by Erik Erikson. His description of the stage of “Identity vs Role Confusion” during adolescence and young adulthood will be reviewed. This will be expanded into research categorizing important aspects of identity formation — domains, processes, and outcomes. Domains will include important aspects of personal identity (gender, ethnic, family, religious, (dis)ability), and social identity (vocational, cultural, SES, national, political). Processes will describe the processes with which identity develops including commitment, exploration, and reconsideration. Outcomes will describe identified outcomes of Achievement / Diffusion / Moratorium / Foreclosure. A segment will focus on Identity and spiritual development and include ideas of the role of self-worth and dignity as a prelude to the presentation/workshop to be led on how identities block openness to spirituality.

BIOSKETCH

John “Calvin” Chatlos, MD is Professor of Psychiatry at Rutgers-RWJ Medical School and Medical Director of the Specialized Addiction Treatment Services in New Brunswick, NJ. He received his BS in psychology from Washington U St Louis, returned to his home in Maryland to attend the U of Maryland School of Medicine, then to NYC as a pediatric resident at Montefiore Medical Center, psychiatry resident at NYU-Bellevue, and a child & adolescent psychiatry Fellow at Columbia University. He has come from a Humanist background with Ethical Culture at its founding New York Society, and faculty member and graduate of the first class of the Humanist Institute. He is currently a member of the Monmouth Center for World Religions and Ethical Thought in NJ. His work with addiction programs and Ethical Culture has led to exploring the nature of spiritual experience and has identified key experiences to open to a spiritual core that is within everyone. He lives in NJ with his children ages 21 and 23.

MONDAY EVENING

A KALEIDOSCOPE OF PLACES: IDENTITY IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

Jennifer Whitten

Elliott, 7:45–9:00 P.M.

ABSTRACT

Since the 1970s, when an international emphasis on environmental education increased in response to a growing awareness of industrialization’s environmental impact, children have been taught they are future stewards of the “natural world.” Environmental education’s iterations have maintained an anthropocentric, binary view of nature that fails to account for the complex phenomena of the Anthropocene epoch. Now the environmental theories and predictions of the 1970s
are reaching distressing, ongoing fruition, in an ongoing series of climate change-induced natural disasters which displace communities and raze or drown vegetation. To say we are stewards of the natural world does not account for the complexity of our place within it.

Identity is closely connected to the meanings of and attachments to a sense of place, including elements such as public space, culture, norms, architecture, history, storytelling, and heritage. However, an individual’s sense of place can no longer be understood as rooted in a static locale: landscapes change overnight, and countless people lack the luxury to conceive of themselves as inhabitants of clearly definable, locally situated ecological and human communities. Place is ever-changing, layered, and linked across time and space through economic transactions, and it interacts with human identity in ways that are difficult to grasp.

This presentation posits that people now live with a Kaleidoscope of Places which expand and contract from the local bioregion to unseen locations across the biosphere. It explores how we might integrate a dynamic place theory into a place-based pedagogy that is intended to encourage children’s agency as co-constructors with and for our interdependent planet. It asserts that the ability to create innovative solutions for mutual survival requires cultivating specific skill sets of adaptability, feeling, and agency, as we explore our socioecological contexts from a transdisciplinary perspective. It also takes note of the relationship between our evolving conceptualization of identity in the Anthropocene, Alfred North Whitehead’s Process Philosophy, and subsequent Process Theology scholarship on the nature of God.

BIOSKETCH

Jennifer E. Whitten is a writer, educator, and theologian who has worked as a hospice chaplain, English and communications faculty, college academic support center director, pulpit supply preacher, and writing consultant with 30 years of experience in technical, expository, narrative, persuasive, and transactional writing and editing. Most recently, she worked at a cGMP pharma company conducting deviation investigations, served as instructional design consultant for a course addressing implicit bias, and began development on a YouTube project which explores the “Allergy to the Other” through theology, visual art, music, theater, and writing.

Jennifer holds an MA in literature and writing from the University of Colorado (1994), an MFA with a dual focus in fiction and poetry from the Iowa Writers’ Workshop (2000), and an MDiv from the Graduate Theological Union (2013). At the GTU, Jennifer’s emphases included family ministry; Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Unitarian Universalism; pastoral care in grief and dying; restorative justice and conflict transformation; diversity, equity, and inclusion; and arts in ministry. She has a particular affinity for process theology, mystic traditions, elements of religious naturalism, social justice, and Howard Thurman.

Jennifer’s interest in science-religion dialogue began in 1995 when she arrived on Star Island to work with IRAS’ Archipelagos youth program. She has continued to serve in that capacity ever since. Jennifer also has served as IRAS Council member (since 2013), Communication and Cultures Group co-chair, VP for Membership Engagement, Executive committee member, year-round Beacon editor, Star Beacon Editor, website manager, marketing team member, financial assistance fund/auction founder and coordinator, and enthusiastic champion of intergenerational community in IRAS and beyond.

TUESDAY MORNING

IDENTITY AND THE BRAIN: THE BIOLOGICAL BASIS OF OUR SELF

Andrew Newberg

Elliott, 9:30 A.M.—11:00 A.M.

ABSTRACT

This presentation will cover the current neuroscientific understanding of the self and personal identity, focusing on religious and spiritual perspectives. We will consider how the brain helps us to construct and maintain our representation of the self and what happens when we have self-transcendent experiences. This information will be helpful from both the psychological and spiritual perspective for understanding human identity.

BIOSKETCH

Dr. Andrew Newberg is the director of research at the Marcus Institute of Integrative Health and a physician at Jefferson University Hospital. He is board certified in internal medicine and nuclear medicine. Andrew has been asking questions about reality, truth, and God since he was very young, and he has long been fascinated by the human mind and its complex workings. While a medical student, he met Dr. Eugene d’Aquili, who was studying religious experiences. Combining their interests with Andrew’s background in neuroscience and brain imaging, they were able to break new theoretical and empirical ground on the relationship between the brain and religion.

Andrew’s research now largely focuses on how brain function is associated with various mental states—in particular, religious and mystical
experiences. His research has included brain scans of people in prayer, meditation, rituals, and trance states, as well as surveys of people’s spiritual experiences and attitudes. He has also evaluated the relationship between religious or spiritual phenomena and health, and the effect of meditation on memory. He believes that it is important to keep science rigorous and religion religious. Andrew has also used neuroimaging research projects to study aging and dementia, Parkinson’s disease, epilepsy, depression, and other neurological and psychiatric disorders.

BOOK TALK – CROSS-CULTURAL CONVERSATIONS: A NEW WAY OF LEARNING

Anindita Balslev, Rabbi David Rosen, Swami Sarvapriyanada

Elliott, Tuesday 11:30 A.M.—12:15 P.M.

ABSTRACT

Anindita Balslev, author of the book Cross-cultural Conversation: A New Way of Learning, Routledge, 2000 (available at the Book Store, Star Island), will briefly discuss some of the main issues covered in her book, such as how to remove impediments for meeting of cultures and world-religions, the nature of existing tensions between nationalism and globalism, and the quest for a larger identity today. She will also share with the audience some glimpses from her intellectual journey that led her to the idea of CCC and how in that process she discovered IRAS. This will be followed by comments from two principal discussants—Rabbi David Rosen and Swami Sarvapriyananda.

BIOSKETCH

Dr. Anindita N. Balslev is engaged in research in consciousness-studies and is the founder of the Forum CCC (Cross-cultural Conversation). She directs the CCC program that focuses especially on dialogue between science and religion, the meeting of cultures, and encounters between world-religions. The international CCC conferences that she has organized in association with national organizations and institutes in India and abroad have led to thought-provoking discussions.

Dr. Balslev has worked at the Department of Philosophy, University of Copenhagen and the Aarhus University and received scholarship from the French government, fellowships from the Danish Council for the Humanities, Freja Project, and government of Denmark, and a Nehru Fellowship from Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, New Delhi, India. She is a founding member of ISSR. Her publications include Cross-cultural Conversation: A New Way of Learning (2020), Reflections on Indian Thought: Fourteen Essays (2019), The Enigma of I-consciousness (2013), A Study of Time in Indian Philosophy (Germany 1983/India 2019); Cultural Otherness: Correspondence with Richard Rorty (2000); and many articles. Dr. Balslev has served as co-editor of Religion and Time (1993) and Compassion in World’s Religions (2010) as well as the organizer of the session on Religious Identity: Its Uses and Abuses at the Parliament of World’s Religions in 2015. She is also the editor of Cross-Cultural Conversation: Initiation (1996), Toward Greater Human Solidarity (2006), On India: Self Image and Counter Image (2013), and On World Religions: Diversity, Not Dissension (Sage 2014).

Rabbi David Rosen, former Chief Rabbi of Ireland, is the International Director of Interreligious Affairs at the American Jewish Committee and Director of its Heilbrunn Institute for International Interreligious Understanding. He is a past chairman of the IJCIC, the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, the broad-based coalition of Jewish organizations representing World Jewry to other religions. Rabbi Rosen is an Honorary Advisor on Interfaith Relations to the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, serves on its Commission for Interreligious Dialogue, and represents the Chief Rabbinate on the Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land. He is Honorary President of the International Council of Christians and Jews and serves on the Board of Directors of the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue.

Rabbi Rosen was a member of the Permanent Bilateral Commission of the State of Israel and the Holy See that negotiated the establishment of full diplomatic normalization of relations between the two. He has served as a member of the Advisory Committee of the World Congress of Imams and Rabbis and of the World Economic Forum’s C-100, a council of 100 leaders formed for the purpose of improving relations and cooperation between the Muslim and non-Muslim worlds. In 2005, he was made a papal Knight Commander of the Order of St Gregory the Great for his contribution to promoting Catholic-Jewish reconciliation and in 2010 was made a Commander of the British Empire by H.M. Queen Elizabeth II for his contribution to interfaith relations. In addition to honorary doctorates, Rabbi Rosen is the recipient of various awards including the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Hubert Walter Award for Reconciliation and Dialogue Cooperation, the Raphael Lemkin Award for Human Rights, the Search for Common Ground Award for Interfaith Dialogue, and the Festival of Faiths’ Lifetime Achievement Award.

Swami Sarvapriyananda is the Minister and spiritual leader of the Vedanta Society of New York since January 2017. He joined the Ramakrishna Math in 1994 and received Sannyasa (final monastic vows).
in 2004. He has served as an acharya (teacher) of the monastic probationers’ training center at Belur Math, India. He has also served in various capacities in different educational institutes of the Ramakrishna Mission in India and as the Assistant Minister of the Vedanta Society of Southern California. He was a Nagal Fellow at the Harvard Divinity School in 2019–20.

Swami Sarvapriyananda is a well-known speaker on Vedanta and his talks are popular with the internet audience. He has been a speaker on various prestigious forums such as TEDx, SAND and has given a Google Talk. He has also been invited to speak at several universities across the world, including Harvard University. The swami has engaged in dialogues with eminent thinkers like Deepak Chopra, Rupert Spira and Rick Archer. He has played a prominent role in organizing and participating in various interfaith panels and seminars, including speaking at the World Parliament of Religions in Toronto in 2018, and at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. His popular talks have been compiled into a collection of e-books. “Who am I?,” “What is Vedanta?” and “Dissolve into Infinity” are the titles currently available on Amazon Kindle.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON

THE CELL BIOLOGY OF WE/THEY

Stephen W. Ragsdale
Elliott, Tuesday 1:45–2:30 P.M.

ABSTRACT

This presentation relates to the basic biology of self and other. The separation of “we” from “they” is woven into the tapestry of life, even into the prebiotic events that led to Earth’s earliest living cells. Even the term “cell” implies a discrete entity, separated from others by a membrane boundary. These membranes allow cells to concentrate biomolecules, segregate cellular functions, and control development of specialized organelles, cells, and organs. Membranes also bring cells together promoting cooperation and blurring the boundaries between self and other.

Separation: Life emerged soon after the Earth cooled to “livable” temperatures. This emergence required a mix of biological building blocks present in Earth’s atmosphere, waters, and crust. But a sparse distribution of molecules is not sufficient for life. Another prebiotic stage was required—the spontaneous formation of a membranous boundary both stable enough to compartmentalize and concentrate the prebiotic molecules and dynamic and semi-permeable enough to facilitate entry and exit of ions and other molecules of life. Eukaryotic cells containing discrete membrane-bounded organelles emerged about 1.5 billion years. This property allowed greater specialization of cellular functions than their bacterial ancestors. A new concept of self was required as organisms emerged that contain different types of cells with discrete functions. This principle of multicellularity emerged about 500 million years ago, initiating an explosion of new life forms in which different cell types compartmentalized into discrete organs.

Integration: While it is reasonable to consider my organs to be part of my self, how do we conceive of the rich network of bacteria, archaea, fungi, phages, and viruses that make up the human microbiome? Not only do bacteria and viruses in our body outnumber our human cells, they cooperate in many essential human processes and produce beneficial compounds that support our health, and avert disease. Is our microbiome a “they” or “we”? This cooperative behavior is even seen in consortia of single-celled microorganisms. Diverse bacterial cells assemble to make complicated molecules (like vitamin B12) by sharing different parts of the synthesis. These associations can achieve many difficult metabolic reactions that is not feasible for a single type of organism. Thus, the cellular boundaries that define self can also integrate different organisms/organelles/organs (others) into networks blurring the borders between we and they.

BIOSKETCH

Stephen W. Ragsdale grew up in Rome, Georgia and received his B.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Biochemistry at The University of Georgia. He now resides in Ann Arbor, Michigan where he is father of two grown children and a Professor of Biological Chemistry at the University of Michigan. Having authored over 250 publications, his scientific research focuses on the microbial metabolism of greenhouse gases and the role of metals in biology. Besides teaching within his discipline, he developed a course on “Creativity in the Sciences and Arts” and has authored a book titled “Science, Spirituality and Creativity”, which advocates a path of heart that unifies science and religion. He is a Yoga practitioner and a guitarist, often performing with his partner, jazz vocalist Dr. Marlena Studer.

“We” & “They”: Does the Ingroup/Outgroup Distinction Help Us to Understand Prejudice?

Michael Ruse
Elliott, 2:45–3:45 P.M.

ABSTRACT

This talk is inspired – if that is the right word – by nigh unbelievable prejudice shown by the Florida
Legislature and our governor, Ron DeSantis, already this year alone, towards people other than themselves. Immigrants: A new law “punishes transportation companies that transport migrant children to shelters in the state, among other provisions.” African-Americans: Redistricting has eliminated two of the four districts held by Black congressional representatives. Don’t even ask about critical race theory. It is probable that this talk would be illegal in publicly funded state universities. Women: New restrictions on abortion and more to come as soon as Roe v. Wade is struck down. Gays: New laws restricting what can be taught in schools and at what age. My question is simply, does new thinking about paleoanthropology help us to understand prejudice and offer clues to how it might be ended?

BIOSKETCH

Michael Ruse, born (in 1940) in England, taught philosophy for 35 years at the University of Guelph, in Ontario, Canada, and then for 20 years at Florida State University. He is an expert on the history and philosophy of evolutionary biology and has written or edited over sixty books. He is particularly interested in the relationship between science and religion, and was a witness for the ACLU in 1981 in its successful attempt to overturn a law mandating the compulsory teaching of Creationism in Arkansas. He has been awarded a Guggenheim fellowship (USA) and a Killam fellowship (Canada). A Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, he has been a Gifford Lecturer and is the recipient of four honorary degrees. He is known for his modesty.

INTERGENERATIONAL SCAVENGER HUNT

Front Lawn, 4:00 P.M.

For a description of this event see the Archipelagos section beginning on page 8.

TUESDAY EVENING

IDENTITY’S SHADOW: SUFFERING AND THE DELUSION OF SEPARATENESS

Sally Bowden-Schaible

Elliott, 7:45–9:00 P.M.

ABSTRACT

Informed by core teachings of Buddhism and my experiences as a psychotherapist and as a human rights/social justice activist, I will talk about what I see as a need to reexamine our perspective on “identity” as it is understood and promoted in our culture. As we know, personal identity formation within the context of one’s culture is important to the development of a healthy human psyche. So, too, is social identity formation—affiliation to a group (or groups) of people—if one is to experience a sense of meaning and belonging, feel less alone and safer in the world and be socially and politically empowered (e.g., the women’s movement, BLM, LBGTQ, among others).

In my presentation, I will talk about both individual and group identity—but as a step, a way station, an attachment ultimately needing to be relinquished so that we can peacefully, justly and in a sustainable way live with each other and with the earth and all its creatures. Negotiating relationship with identity is a developmental process collective humanity needs to go through—just as individuals need to go through their own separate processes—to become healthy and whole. And because “by-passing,” whether developmental or spiritual, is not an option for the deep healing we need as a species interdependent with the earth and all sentient beings, what possibilities can we imagine to avoid a dystopia of ever-hardening identities? I suggest that the Buddha’s core teachings from some 2600 years ago offer a framework for understanding and working through this perplexing problem. And as related to social justice activism, these teachings also offer a complementary perspective to other wisdom/spiritual/religious traditions. I hope to stimulate thoughtful discussion about how to negotiate identity once we leave Star Island and return to our individual and social lives imperiled by the “delusion of separateness.”

BIOSKETCH

Sally Bowden-Schaible, MS, LCPC, CCMHC is a psychotherapist in part-time private practice with 35 years of counseling experience. In 2008, she founded LivingWell, a center for cultivating mind-body health and spiritual growth in Westbrook, ME and was its director until 2018 when she retired. For many years, Sally was an adjunct faculty member in the Counselor Education program at the University of Southern Maine, co-teaching Religion and Spirituality in Counseling and Mind/body in Counseling, and in the Social Work department at the University of New England, teaching Mindfulness and Meditation in Social Work. She has developed and taught many continuing education programs related to Buddhist psychology/philosophy as complementary to counseling practice. She also offers workshops on the use of poetry in psychotherapy and caregiving.

In 1996, Sally began her study of Nikaya Buddhism at the Barre Center for Buddhist Studies and the InsightMeditation Society in Barre, MA. Her primary teacher was Pali scholar, Andrew Olendzki, PhD. In 2006, she founded the Insight Community of Southern Maine, a secular-leaning, unaffiliated
sangha and was Dhamma leader until its closing in 2018.

Sally views social justice activism as an integral part of her spiritual practice. Her focus for nearly two decades has been on promoting full human rights for all people in Israel and Palestine. Along with her husband, Bob, she has traveled to the region several times. She is founder of Buddhist Alliance for Non-Violence and Human Rights in Israel-Palestine (BANVAHR). She is also involved in fundraising projects to build and support Garden of Hope, a mindfulness center in the West Bank, and to provide humanitarian aid to impoverished children and their families in Gaza – Healthy Lives for All led by Dr Jehad Hasanain, a physician in Gaza. She has been a member of IRAS for many years, and currently sits on the IRAS council.

**WEDNESDAY MORNING**

**PANEL: CROSS-CULTURAL CONVERSATIONS**

Amy Butler, Mahjabeen Dhala, Rabbi David Rosen, Lama Losang Samten, Swami Sarvapriyanande

Elliott, 9:30 A.M.–12:15 P.M.

**ABSTRACT**

Given that the demographic composition is increasingly becoming multi-religious in character—especially in big towns and cities around the globe—an authentic encounter of world religions is of crucial importance today. A deeper understanding of the ramifications of religious identity is necessary, since religious differences have caused much dissension among communities, both in the past, and continue to do so in the present. The aim is to focus on how this cultural gap can be bridged, and why such a discussion is particularly fruitful in a science-religion forum. Dr. Anindita Balslev will introduce the main issues to be discussed in this session, and will be in conversation with five eminent panelists, representing Hinduism (Swami Sarvapriyananda), Christianity (Pastor Amy Butler), Judaism (Rabbi David Rosen), Islam (M. Dhala), and Buddhism (Lama Samten). She has shared four clusters of questions in advance with these spokespersons of five religious traditions for reflection.

**BIOSKETCHES**

**Pastor Amy Butler** believes deeply that courageous communities of people who live with tenacious love can change the world. Much of her career has been spent helping build communities of radical witness in the institutional church. She currently leads National City Christian Church as intentional interim Senior Minister. Before that, Amy served for five years as the seventh Senior Minister and first woman at the helm of The Riverside Church in the City of New York. Currently she serves as Interim Senior Minister at the national church of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Washington, DC, National City Christian Church. She holds degrees from Baylor University, the International Baptist Theological Seminary, and Wesley Theological Seminary. Pastor Amy’s professional ministry career began as the director of a homeless shelter for women in New Orleans, Louisiana; she later became Associate Pastor of Membership and Mission at St. Charles Avenue Baptist Church in the city of New Orleans. In 2003, Butler was called to the position of Senior Minister of Calvary Baptist Church in Washington, D.C.’s Chinatown, where she was also the first woman to lead that historic congregation.

Though leading institutions of faith in this moment can be one of the most challenging leadership tasks around, she is optimistic about the impact faith communities have on the world.

**Mahjabeen Dhala** is Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies at the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, California and Director of the Madrasa-Midrasha Program, a collaborative effort of the Center for Islamic Studies and Center for Jewish Studies at GTU. Her interests are women’s contributions to Islamic doctrine, practice, and devotional piety. She earned her MA in Islamic Studies from GTU and her PhD from GTU’s Department of Sacred Texts and their Interpretation, where she was a Presidential Scholar. Her dissertation focused on the seventh-century Sermon of Fatima to trace early Shia activist voices, especially those of women. Prior to GTU, she pursued traditional Islamic seminary studies for seven years. Dr. Dhala is committed to advancing interreligious and intersectional dialogue through her research, teaching, and mentoring, and through her global travels, presenting on topics such as Muslim diversity and leadership, religious and cultural understanding, women’s empowerment, and social justice.

For **Rabbi David Rosen** see Tuesday morning.

**Ven. Lama Losang Samten** has been sharing teachings of loving-kindness, joy and compassion, as well as the path to enlightenment for almost 30 years. Losang lived and studied over 20 years in the Namgyal Monastery (the monastery of His Holiness the Dalai Lama) earning the highest degree attainable at the monastery, equivalent to a doctoral degree in the West. He also became a Master of Ritual Dance and Sand Mandalas and was the Personal Attendant to His Holiness the XIV Dalai
Lama prior to moving to the United States in 1988. Ven. Losang Samten is one of the Mandala Masters who created the first public sand mandala in the West in 1988. He is the spiritual director of several Buddhist Centers in North America, with a home base currently in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania – the City of Brotherly Love.

Ven. Losang Samten has led an illustrious career creating sacred sand mandalas that follow the ancient Buddhist tradition. These have been created in museums, universities, schools, community centers, and galleries throughout the USA, Canada, Mexico, and Europe. Losang has received the National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, a PEW Fellowship, and two honorary doctoral degrees from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, and the Maine College of Art. Losang played the role of the attendant to the young Dalai Lama in Martin Scorsese’s film Kundun, where he also served as the religious technical advisor and sand mandala supervisor. Losang has written two books, one in Tibetan on the history of the Monastery of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and one in English, Ancient Teachings in Modern Times: Buddhism in the 21st Century. Losang embodies the qualities of loving-kindness, patience, and joy, which have touched the hearts of all those whom he meets.

For Swami Sarvapriyananda see Tuesday morning.

-------------

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON

ABANDONMENT OF THE CATHOLIC IDENTITY IN CONTEMPORARY CHILE

**Lili Almási-Szabó**

Elliott, Wednesday 1:45–2:30 P.M.

**ABSTRACT**

Contemporary Latin America shows a sharp decline in Catholic religious practice, which has been a major focus of social science research in the past decade. Especially the Southern Cone has been considered as evidence of secularization. In the region, Chile stands out for its growing number of disaffiliated individuals, who do not show interest in any other religious options. In this research, I rely on the theory of secularization to discuss the current socio-cultural change that begins with the Catholic history of the country and continues towards a direction of decatholicization.

I hypothesize a societal and cultural change in Chilean society today, triggering a parallel shift in religious identities and the practice of faith. My objective is to discover how and why massive Catholic disaffiliation happens in contemporary Chile. To understand the characteristics of this change, pooled cross-sectional data from National Bicentennial Survey between 2006 and 2019 is analyzed by OLS regressions (N=28,395) considering religious transmission together with age, period, and cohort effects. Decatholicization is captured through Catholic religious identity and religious practice. I find that religious transmission of a Catholic mother (especially towards a daughter) plays a major role in religious affiliation and service attendance at any age. Furthermore, period and cohort effects significantly contribute to Catholic disaffiliation and to the fading dynamics of religious practice. Considering different birth cohorts, the number of Catholic identities in Chile significantly drops in the case of individuals belonging to Millennials and Generation Z, compared to earlier cohorts.

**BIOSKETCH**

Lili Almási-Szabó is a young Hungarian anthropologist living in Chile. I have completed my MA degree in Cultural Anthropology at ELTE University (Budapest). In the framework of my MA thesis I have conducted an extensive ethnographic fieldwork in Chile about the local ethnic-religious tradition of roadside shrines (animitas). This work made me deeply interested in the most recent religious change in the country and the Southern Cone I am currently working on my PhD thesis in Sociology at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (PUC). In the past three years I have been working as a doctoral researcher at an anthropological project in Santiago (http://ethnographiesofaspiration.com/).

Currently, I am working on the final phase of my PhD thesis. This work aims to understand the complex reasons behind the decreasing Catholic affiliation, as well as the increasing number of religious nones, through both quantitative and qualitative methods. My additional duties at the University include teaching the course named “Anthropology of Europe” at the Department of Anthropology (since 2017).

THE PHILOSOPHY OF LEV SHESTOV AS DEFENDING THE RADICAL OTHER

**Timofej Murasov**

Newton West, 1:45–2:30 P.M.

**ABSTRACT**

Many critics claim that Shestov’s philosophy is “negative” in that he merely criticizes reason without building anything positive. In spite of this, it must be said that critics seems not to pay enough attention to the theologically “positive” meaning of the word “negativity” and the presence of it in
Shestov’s thought. I aim to reveal the apophatic side of Shestov’s philosophy by demonstrating it to be a general attempt to protect God understood as radical Other from the invasive nature of “words” and “dogmas” and “definitions.” Preservation or protection is an act of pure denial; the border guard does not conquer new territories and does not build anything, he just tries to preserve the status quo. However, is that not enough? Shestov’s religious worldview is indeed rooted in the Bible. Shestov, as it were, is loyal to the second commandment: “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.” In this regard, Shestov’s religious worldview may be described as an attempt to defend the mystery of the deity. Such an attitude towards God becomes a paradigm which defines mine attitude towards any person in the world. This paradigm says: respect the mystery of other, do not try to define it, since every definition is an attempt of control.

Keywords: Shestov, God, Other, mystery, negative philosophy

**BIOSKETCH**

Timofej Murasov earned both BA and MA degrees in philosophy at Vilnius University and is currently in the doctoral program there. His PhD thesis is “The Problem of the Return to the Origins of Thinking in Lev Shestov’s Philosophy.” He has published several articles on Shestov’s philosophy and presented his work at international conferences. In 2021, he was awarded an Internship at the Pontificia Facoltà Teologica della Sardegna. His work focuses on questions of freedom, unity, and free will.

**ADDRESSING ISLAMOPHOBIA AMONG EVANGELICALS: CAUSES, CHALLENGES, AND CRITICAL NEXT STEPS**

Michal Meulenberg
Elliott, 2:45–3:30 P.M.

**ABSTRACT**

Study after study shows that evangelicals have some of the highest rates of anti-Muslim sentiment compared to the general US public. For example, a 2007 Pew Forum Research study found that among “while roughly half of white mainline Protestants (51%) and white Catholics (48%) express favorable views of Muslims, only about a quarter of white evangelicals (24%) say the same.” Evangelical pastors have even higher rates of islamophobia than their congregations: “Fifty-two percent of evangelical pastors today characterize Islam as spiritually evil. Evangelical pastors increasingly say Islam is dangerous (59 percent)...and promotes violence” (LifeWay Research 2015). Outside the US, even higher rates are found among evangelical leaders: 67% of global evangelical leaders have unfavorable views of Muslims (Pew Research Center 2011). I explore what causes these biases and stereotypes. Where are they coming from? Why are islamophobia rates among evangelicals higher than other groups of Christians?

Additionally, I explore what has been done to combat these prejudices since 9/11, looking specifically at the United States but also some global stories. I summarize the research on islamophobia reduction research in general and interfaith dialogue between Muslims and evangelicals in particular. What kind of initiatives increase respect, understanding, and contributing to justice and peacemaking? What has worked? What hasn’t? Why? Lastly, what are the critical next steps that need to be taken to further bring down islamophobia rates?

**BIOSKETCH**

Dr. Michal Meulenberg works as a professor teaching and researching Muslim-Christian relations, conflict transformation, and prejudice intervention programming. She has an MA in English and Journalism, a Master of Divinity, an MA in Intercultural Studies, and a PhD in Intercultural Studies.

She furthermore cofounded a grassroots Muslim-Christian peace-building initiative called “Two Faiths One Friendship” that has connected over 2,500 Muslims and Christians. The initiative has been nominated for and won several awards.

**MEMORIAL SERVICE**

Edmund Robinson
Chapel, 3:00 P.M.

**WEDNESDAY EVENING**

**TIKKUN OLAM, MAIMONIDES, AND THE FOOD CRISIS**

Sol Katz
Elliott, 7:45–9:00 P.M.

**ABSTRACT**

Maimonides, the famous Jewish Philosopher, Rabbi, and Physician, wrote in the 12th century: “Every person should see himself and the entire world as in a delicate balance, whereby any one deed can tip himself and the entire world towards the good....”

My presentation examines the theory and practice of Tikkun Olam in the contemporary contexts of the “other” and of healing and repairing the world. The question I address is: What are our
ethical responsibilities in addressing the worst world food crisis since the famines and starvation that took place in World War II?

BIOSKETCH
Solomon H. Katz is emeritus director and professor at the Krogman Center for Child Growth and Development at the University of Pennsylvania. He is also a leading expert on the anthropology of food and served as Editor in Chief of the Encyclopedia of Food and Culture (2003), which received many major awards including the Dartmouth Medal. His work in the field of science and religion spans more than forty years, with leadership in IRAS, in which he served as president from 1977–79 and 1981–84, president of CASIRAS (1988–2001), and associate editor and co-chair of the Joint Publication Board of Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science. He also served as secretary of Section H Anthropology of the AAAS and serves on several AAAS-wide committees including the Division of Science, Ethics, and Religion. Sol served as a Trustee of the Parliament of the World’s Religions from 2003–2011 and is an elected fellow of the International Society of Science and Religion. He is an advisory board member of the Ocean Genome Legacy Marine Biodiversity Center of Northeastern University 2014–present. He also serves as the Chair of the American Anthropological Association Task Force on World Food Problems from 2007–present. Most recently, he is co-organizing with Dr. Thomas Reuter a new international program to document and preserve the diversity of indigenous people’s traditional food preparation recipes in collaboration with the World Anthropology Association.

PELICAN SHOW

The Pelicans
Marshman Stage, 8:30 P.M.

The Star Island “Pelicans” are the wonderful young adults who staff the island during the summer. This variety show put on by Pelicans for the conference traditionally features a number of musical acts and skits. The show generally culminates in a performance by the Pelican Chorus, led by the Music Director.

THURSDAY MORNING

MORAL INJURY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR LINKING THE HUMAN SCIENCES, RELIGION, AND SPIRITUALITY

Rita Nakashima Brock
Elliott, 9:30–11:00 A.M.

ABSTRACT

First in 1994, then in 2009, and now during the pandemic, moral injury has increasingly been studied as moral suffering in those who experience a conflict of conscience in the wake of significant harm that they failed to stop, witnessed, inflicted, or experienced themselves as victims. While a new concept in mental health professions, it is ancient in religious and spiritual traditions with many terms to describe it. This talk will offer prevailing clinical definitions for moral injury, including how it differs from mental health disorders such as PTSD, how it affects the whole person; its impact on mental health treatment outcomes; corollary concepts in spiritual, philosophical, and literary traditions; and ways moral injury has become a linking concept that overrides the historical divide between psychology, neuroscience, and religion. I will invite participants to consider how their own spiritual/ritual/religious/aesthetic traditions can contribute to healing.

BIOSKETCH
Rita Nakashima Brock, Rel. M., M.A., Ph.D., has been Senior Vice President and Director of the Shay Moral Injury Center at Volunteers of America since 2017. An award-winning author, Dr. Brock was a professor of religion and women’s studies for 18 years before becoming the Director of the Bunting Institute at Radcliffe College in 1997. After she served on a team to effect the Radcliffe-Harvard merger in 1999, she became Director of the Fellowship Program at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University. From 2001–2002, she was a fellow at the Harvard Divinity School Center for Values in Public Life, and from 2002–2012, she was a visiting scholar at the Starr King School for the Ministry at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA. From 2012–2017, she directed the Soul Repair Center at Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University, which she cofounded with COL (Chaplain) Herman Keizer, Jr. (US Army ret.).

Dr. Brock is the co-author of one of the first books written on moral injury, Soul Repair: Recovering from Moral Injury After War (2012), as well as Casting Stones: Prostitution and Liberation in Asia and the United States (1996), Proverbs of Ashes: Violence, Redemptive Suffering, and the Search for What Saves Us (2001), and Saving Paradise: How Christianity Traded Love of This World for Crucifixion and Empire. Her first book was Journeys By Heart: A Christology of Erotic Power, which won the publisher’s prize for the best manuscript in women’s studies in 1988.
MANDALA DISMANTLING CEREMONY
Lama Losang Samten
Sandpiper 11:30 A.M.–12:15 P.M.

DESCRIPTION
The Tibetan art form of sand painting is an ancient and sacred practice intended to uplift and benefit not only every person who sees it, but also to bless the environment. Mandala is a Sanskrit word meaning circle, and in Tibetan it is called kyil-khor, which means essence and circle. Every aspect of the mandala has meaning and nothing is arbitrary or superfluous. The colors and designs of each mandala have profound meaning originating in the ancient teachings of the Buddha, and have remained identical to these original teachings over the centuries, with each color being an antidote to specific negative emotions. Mandalas are used to enhance spiritual practice through imagery and meditation to overcome suffering by healing a person’s body, speech, mind, as well as the healing environment. In essence, mandalas represent enlightened qualities, and are an important form of teaching in Vajrayana Buddhism to support living beings on the path to enlightenment.

The mandala that Losang Samten will create on Star Island is called the Mandala of Compassion. The design of the Mandala of Compassion is over 2,500 years old. It has five major colors that are symbols of the five elements: blue-space, white-water, yellow-earth, red-fire, green-air. On top of the five colors, there are five designs and each design represents negative emotions and healing. During the time they are working on the mandala, Losang will teach and let interested people try pouring some sand.

The dismantling of the mandala symbolizes impermanence. The blessing of the sand to be used to create the mandala and then putting it back to the water symbolizes cleansing the environment.

BIOSKETCH
See Wednesday morning.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON

INTERGENERATIONAL GARDEN FETE AND ICE CREAM SOCIAL
Front Lawn, 1:45–3:00 P.M.

For a description of this event see the Archipelagos section beginning on page 8.

FILM AND DISCUSSION – YEMANJA: WISDOM FROM THE AFRICAN HEART OF BRAZIL
Donna C. Roberts (Producer, Director, and Cowriter) and Gerald Hoffman (Videographer)

Elliott, 3:00 p.m. (52 minutes, followed by discussion)

ABSTRACT
Narrated by Pulitzer Prize winning author Alice Walker, *Yemanjá: Wisdom from the African Heart of Brazil* is an award-winning documentary that explores ethics, social justice, racism, ecological sustainability and true power found in community and faith, via the stories of extraordinary elder female leaders of the Afro-Indigenous Candomblé spiritual tradition, in Bahia, Brazil. In metropolitan Salvador, the Americas' largest city, the Americas' largest slave port during the trans-Atlantic slave trade, slavery’s brutal history was transformed into a vibrant religio-cultural tradition in Brazil, the world’s largest Catholic country. Candomblé is a brilliant example of resilience, profound dedication to one’s heritage and the forces of nature that sustain us all. In the face of tremendous planetary and humanitarian crises, these ancient wisdoms offer inspiration for our shared global concerns.

The film’s setting is the vibrant city of Salvador—the center of Candomblé—and historic small town Cachoeira, home of the heroic 250-year-old Sisterhood of Our Lady of the Good Death (Brazil’s oldest women’s organization), formed to buy the freedom of women slaves. The film’s story is told primarily through the voices of select women leaders of Candomblé, the eldest is 109-year-old Mãe Filhinha de Yemanjá-Oguni. These women are not only keepers of the wisdom of this oral tradition, but also create and support social and environmental campaigns and causes; write books and public policy; and are sought-after wise women within their spiritual communities and throughout their regions.

Can Candomblé, the work of these women, and their spiritual communities impact the direction of so-called development and sustainability in Brazil and elsewhere? The story unfolds when global society desperately needs inspiring paradigms to remind us of our interdependence with the natural world. The film aims to challenge viewers to reconsider values and relationships with the wider world, and with nature. Read more about the film and project at www.yemanjathefilm.com.

BIOSKETCH
Donna Carole Roberts is Producer, Director, and Cowriter of the film, *Yemanja*. (The film’s Associate Director/Cowriter is Donna Read of the acclaimed documentary, *Goddess Remembered.*) Donna has
worked between North America and Brazil since 1997, when she created a film for the Rio + 5 Forum on sustainability, then traveled to Bahia. Her heart was forever opened to the beauty of Candomblé and the power of its women leaders. Thus began a journey culminating in the film Yemanjá nearly two decades later.

Donna previously directed the award-winning Sea of Uncertainty documentary about the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico (with WGCU-TV). After producing several Canadian TV programs on environmental themes, she worked with PeaceWomen Brazil (Mulheres pela Paz) creating short videos about ending violence against women. She is currently developing a film based on experiences with her 23-year-old autistic son Gabriel. She recently told her motherhood story about the unpaid caregiving work of women around the world in a performance with a producer of The Moth.

Donna has worked in environmental education, activism, and advocacy for more than three decades, often using the Earth Charter Initiative as an inspiration and guide to creating a more just and sustainable world. With an M.S. in Environmental Sciences, Donna’s thesis explored the work of Brazilian women socio-environmental educators and activists; her goal was to add their voices to the global discourse on environmental education. She created a cultural exchange program, Connect to Care in the Heart of Brazil, bringing together North American and Bahian women artists, educators, and religious leaders, while also interacting in service capacities with organizations serving women and youth, including Calafate Women’s Collective in Salvador. Donna is currently Coordinator of the non-profit Vermont Interfaith Power & Light, bringing faith-based advocacy and education to the climate crisis and climate justice.

PHOTO EXHIBIT: GODDESSES OF NATURE

Gerald (“Chip”) Hoffman

ARTIST STATEMENT

I had the privilege to be the videographer and photographer for the documentary film, Yemanja: Wisdom from the African Heart of Brazil, and to create the photo exhibit, Goddesses of Nature, which is displayed with the film at select events. On location during production of the film, I would always have my still camera at the ready. So many scenes and moments were strikingly beautiful and deserved to be represented as still images. The exhibition Goddesses of Nature provides a wonderful opportunity for people who have seen or will view the film to be able to allow their eye to linger on the colors and intensity of images representing moments of time in the documentary. This body of work speaks directly to the power and respect of our elders, especially our Mothers, and cultural traditions that connect us with the natural world. We are not separate from, but part of the whole environment. I thank my ancestors for this opportunity and the Orixás for their guidance and inspiration.

BIOSKETCH

Gerald Hoffman is Photographer/ Curator of the exhibit, Goddesses of Nature and Videographer of film, Yemanja: Wisdom from the African Heart of Brazil. His artistic background is primarily in still photography, principally focusing on social documentary work. His photography is held in private collections in North and South America, including the Boston Red Sox, and the Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center and Harry Chapin Food Bank, both in Fort Myers, FL. Gerald earned an an MFA in Photography from University of Illinois at Chicago and a B.F.A. in Photography from Rochester Institute of Technology. He was selected for a paper making and performance artist residency at Banff Centre, Canada in his early career. Gerald and his wife Donna C. Roberts, Producer/ Director/ Cowriter of the film, Yemanja: Wisdom from the African Heart of Brazil, currently live in Burlington, Vermont. They resided in Brazil during the two years of documentary production. Read more about the photography exhibit at https://www.yemanjathefilm.com/photographyfotografia.html.

THURSDAY EVENING

BOUND BY JUSTICE: RAISING SOCIAL ETHICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE SERMON OF FATIMA

Mahjabeen Dhal

Elliott, 7:45–9:00 P.M.

ABSTRACT

Female voices on theological and philosophical understandings of justice are rare if not entirely missing. In this paper, I draw upon the seventh-century Sermon of Fatima delivered by Fatima, daughter of Muhammad (p) in protest of the confiscation of her lands by the caliph. Interrogating the academic silence around studies on premodern Muslim women in traditional Islamic scholarship as well as contemporary western academia and arguing for the value of knowledge produced by their experiences, I focus on Fatima’s definition of justice, its key import towards ethical leadership, and her mobilizing social consciousness in the pursuit of restorative social justice.
**ABSTRACT**

We will cover current knowledge and understanding of the many varieties of spiritual experiences, particularly as they relate to the upcoming book of the same title. Emphasis will be on how spiritual experiences affect the self and personal identity. We will also review the current connection between neuroscience and spiritual experiences as well as broader implications for studying such experiences including those that occur through different paths including spiritual, psychedelic, or even pathological processes.

**BIOSKETCHES**

For Andrew Newberg, see Tuesday morning.

David B. Yaden, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. His research focus is on how brief inner experiences, or ‘altered states of consciousness,’ can have long-term positive impacts. He currently studies the subjective effects and treatment potential of psychedelics. His work has been featured in outlets such as The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, The Atlantic, CNN, NPR, BBC, and The New York Times.

Michael Ferguson, Ph.D. is an Instructor in Neurology at Harvard Medical School, Lecturer on Neurospirituality at Harvard Divinity School, and a research neuroscientist at Brigham and Women's Hospital's Center for Brain Circuit Therapeutics. His research spans methods development for advanced brain circuit mapping, with special applications in memory and spirituality. Dr. Ferguson is a leader in the emerging fusion of neuroscience and spirituality studies, a subfield which has been dubbed "neurospirituality" and also has a popular TEDx Talk titled “This Is Your Brain On God.”

---

**FRIDAY MORNING**

**THE VARIETIES OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES: EMPHASIS ON IDENTITY AND THE SELF**

Michael Ferguson, Lisa Miller, Andrew Newberg, David Yaden Elliott, 9:30 – 11:00 A.M.

**ABSTRACT**

Does religion play a role in preserving or disrupting the survival of the human species? Most sociologists agree that religion is a cultural universal – a social institution that has existed throughout human history. All known human societies have had a system of beliefs, values, and practices that define what is held sacred and that unite its members into a moral community. These systems of beliefs and practices have varied along with differences in economic systems, geographic conditions, level of development, and cultural heritage to address the unique needs of groups and societies. From a functionalist perspective (see Durkheim), religion plays a positive role in preserving social cohesion (binding people together as a “we”), enhancing social control (managing behavior), and providing support, meaning, and purpose during life’s transitions and tragedies. I utilize this paradigm to delineate the elements of religion that benefit and preserve the future of the human species with a particular eye for the challenges faced by humanity in our contemporary world. In contrast, conflict theory (see Marx) illuminates the role certain religious belief systems have played in justifying economic, racial, and gender inequalities that eventually trigger disequilibrium and social disruption. Using this paradigm, I illuminate historical and contemporary ways that religious belief systems have camouflaged or reinforced injustices and divisiveness (between “we” and “they”) that, when unearthed, have triggered the breakdown of traditional social relationships while paving the way for change. Can a transformation of religion lay the groundwork for Humanity to survive the social impact of industrialization, climate change, unequal distribution of resources, and the fragmentation of social relationships in the information age? Can religious institutions preserve the beneficial elements and facilitate change in the pernicious elements of traditional belief systems/practices in the modern world? Is the enhancement of social cohesiveness (“we”) and the reduction of divisiveness (“we” vs. “they”) necessary for the survival of Humanity?

**Keywords:** religion, humanity, sociological perspective, transformation, future, inequalities, disequilibrium, preservation, social change, belief systems
BIOSKETCH

Marlena M. Studer was born in Denver, Colorado and lived in eleven different cities, in seven states and three countries by the age of eighteen. She received a B.A. from Bowling Green State University and a PhD in Sociology from the University of Michigan. Her exposure to diverse places and people ignited in her a fascination with human societies, leading her to studies in sociology, which cemented her recognition that there are multiple lenses through which humans see the world. Delving into social issues affecting women and children, Marlena served on the Sociology faculty at Tulane University, George Washington University, American University, and the University of Michigan. While in New Orleans, Marlena took her lifelong passion for music to the stage and began to perform as a professional jazz vocalist, leading to the recording of three CDs over the last 25 years. Not one to be confined to a single place or role, Marlena, also served as the CEO of a wine company, founded a nonprofit, became a licensed realtor, and became mother to two (now adult) daughters. She now lives in Ann Arbor, where she manages a real estate portfolio, serves as membership chair of the Rotary Club, is a member of an Interfaith community, an avid Jazzerciser, and a jazz vocalist, often performing with her partner, Steve (Dr. Stephen Ragsdale).

FRIEDAY AFTERNOON

FILM AND DISCUSSION: HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE A PROBLEM?

J.W. Wiley (Cowriter)

Elliott, 1:45 P.M.

ABSTRACT

How Does It Feel To Be a Problem? is the existential question posed by famed sociologist W.E.B. DuBois in his book The Souls of Black Folk. Ask almost any person of color in America what their journey in America is like and you are bound to get a story of being treated as different, as an “other,” as someone who is perceived to be suspicious, a threat, a problem. This film, featuring legendary actor Danny Glover and the late Edward Asner, traces the phenomenon of “othering’ in America, how marginalized groups of people are systemically mistreated in a far-too-often hypocritical nation that allegedly cares about justice and equality, while struggling to cloak its efforts to protect its unearned privilege(s).

The film examines systemic racism in America at a time when education is under attack by those attempting to scrub accurate history from the curricula of college and university classrooms. It features Harvard historian James Loewen, W.E.B. DuBois scholar Aldon Morris of Northwestern University, and USC professor of law Franita Tolson, who helps audiences understand how contemporary voter suppression threatens to take away voting rights from people of color. Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinx Americans are also featured as people who have been marginalized in American culture in numerous ways due to policies of systemic racism. Chase Iron Eyes of Standing Rock Sioux Nation and Naely Pike of Apache Nation explain to audiences how the “American experience” has been anything but equal and fair to Native people and other communities of color. How Does It Feel To Be a Problem? emphasizes the need for allies as an important ingredient in bringing about authentic racial equality in America, from abolitionist John Brown to contemporary activists Hawk Newsome, Jamia Wilson, and Kevin Powell and others. The film is written by J.W. Wiley and Thomas Keith, and directed by Thomas Keith.

BIOSKETCH

J.W. Wiley was born in Tulsa and raised in Los Angeles. He is an author, speaker, and educational consultant with two decades of experience as a director of diversity and inclusion. He received his BA in philosophy at California State University–Long Beach, his MA in philosophy at Claremont Graduate University, and his Doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Vermont. Dr. Wiley served as Chief Diversity Officer and Director of the Center for Diversity and Lecturer in Philosophy/Interdisciplinary Studies at SUNY Plattsburgh from 2000-2018. For over a decade he wrote a monthly column on diversity & social justice for the Press Republican newspaper in upstate New York, titled “Justice for All,” which was preceded by his social justice blog “Wiley Wandering.” His book The Nigger in You: Challenging Dysfunctional Language—Engaging Leadership Moments (Stylus Publishing) was published in 2013 and serves as inspiration for the film. Dr. Wiley is founder and President of Xamining Diversity, which uses an innovative approach to challenge individuals to examine how they see the world by creating an environment where honest interaction occurs on difficult matters.

IRAS ANNUAL MEETING

Elliott, 3:30 P.M. (or after conclusion of the film and discussion)

All are welcome, IRAS members and nonmembers alike.
PELICANS V. CONFEREES SOFTBALL GAME

Come and help our conference play against the Pelican team!

FRIDAY EVENING

EXPLORING THE ORIGINS OF AMERICAN SONG

Martin Hargrove
Elliott, 7:45 P.M.

ABSTRACT

In this program I will talk about song and how a uniquely American Song took shape. This will be a “song/talk.”

BIOSKETCH

Bass Martin Hargrove is from Willingboro NJ — and has performed in Opera, Musical Theater, Recitals and Concerts throughout the US, Europe, and Canada. His concert repertoire includes Handel’s Messiah and Israel in Egypt, Beethoven’s 9th Symphony, The Faure Requiem, Haydn’s Lord Nelson Mass, Mozart’s Requiem, and Alice Parker’s Sermon on the Mountain. Martin’s operatic roles include Colline, in La bohème, Figaro in Le Nozze di Figaro, Sparafucile and Monterone in Rigoletto, Angelotti in Tosca, Jake in Porgy and Bess, Sarastro and the Speaker in Die Zauberflöte, Masetto and Il Comendatore in Don Giovanni, and Cinque M’tume in Robert Zuidam’s Freeze. On the Musical Theater stage, Martin has performed in “Ain’t Mis’Beavin’”, and “Little Shop of Horrors”. He was in the pre-Broadway workshop cast of the Tony award winning Musical “The Colour Purple”, and was featured in the Tony Award winning “Show Boat” by legendary director Hal Prince. Martin studied at Westminster Choir College, and Trenton State College and was an apprentice at Florida Grand Opera, and Minnesota Opera. In addition to his solo work, Martin is currently on the roster of the Delaware Choral Artist, The National Chorale in New York City, and The American Spiritual Ensemble. He is also an active church soloist, lecturer, and music workshop leader.

SATURDAY MORNING

EXPLORING IDENTITY TO AS A BLOCK TO SPIRITUALITY

Calvin Chatlos
Elliott, 9:30–11:00 A.M.

ABSTRACT

A “Framework of Spirituality” will be described focusing on how experiences of self-worth and dignity relate to Identity and spiritual openness. The interactive presentation/workshop will encourage participants to explore how their own “identities” have been formulated from experiences that may limit their openness to spirituality. A process to transform these identities will be demonstrated, as a process for transforming society toward more unity.

BIOSKETCH

See Monday afternoon.

ALTERITY AS MATTER OF MATERIAL INJUSTICE IN SURGICAL OUTCOMES

Jason Keune
Elliott, 11:30 A.M.–12:15 P.M.

ABSTRACT

The notion of “fitting” becomes clinically (and therefore materially) important when one tries to answer the classic question of evidence-based medicine (EBM): Can the result of the appropriate trials be applied to the patient in front of me? (i.e., Does the patient in front of me resemble the patients in the trial in terms of demographics, co-morbidity, severity, and other prognostic factors?) If the answer is “no,” EBM advises the clinician to be compelled to refrain from applying the results of the study to the patient. What happens, though, when the patient is marginalized in so many regards that the answer to this question is “no” for every single appropriate study there is? There is a grave injustice done to such patients that results from an outcomes science that is rooted in economics, is fully quantifiable and only functions at the mean, and which pays little attention to the distribution.

Rosemary Garland Thomson’s feminist-materialist disability concept, “misfitting” will be used as a starting point to ask whether a science of the plurality might be just as important for clinical outcomes as that of the mean. For Thomson, to fit is a “generally positive way of being and positioning based on an absence of conflict and a state of correct synchronization with one’s circumstances.” Misfitting, then, is “a performance” that “enacts agency and subjectivity,” “by centering its analytical focus on the co-constituting relationship between flesh and environment.” When misfitting is theorized, as an “otherness” in the material arrangement of surgical intervention, it becomes a matter of material injustice, since the scientifically determined aspects of medicine only apply to patients that fall close to the mean, and patients that do not are left to a non-scientific practice that is much more open to influence from bias, and hence a
potentially substandard, and certainly unknown, outcome. I argue that such injustice is rooted in a conceptual limitation about what an empirical endeavor in medicine and surgery could be – the science is not only underdetermined, but misdetermined. A science of the plurality would allow medicine to take alterity into its fold of caring in a formal way, thereby aiming at a resolution of this injustice.

Keywords: alterity, surgery, outcomes, science, caring, justice, misfitting

BIOSKETCH

Jason D. Keune MD, MBA, FACS is a surgeon, bioethicist and author who is an Associate Professor of Surgery and Health Care Ethics at Saint Louis University and is the Executive Director of the Bander Center for Medical Business Ethics, which is part of the School of Medicine at Saint Louis University. Dr. Keune was born in St. Louis and was raised both there and in Northern California. He earned his bachelor’s degree and MD from Washington University in St. Louis and completed his General Surgery Residency and Fellowship in Minimally Invasive Surgery at Washington University School of Medicine. He was the Emerson Clinical Scholar in Residence of the American College of Surgeons from 2009 to 2011 and obtained a Certificate in Professional Ethics from Washington University and a Master’s in Business Administration from Saint Louis University during that time. He is board certified in General Surgery by the American Board of Surgery and is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons. Dr. Keune has published papers in The Annals of Surgery, Academic Medicine, The American Journal of Bioethics, and Narrative Inquiry in Bioethics and Surgery amongst others and has authored several textbook chapters on surgery and ethics. He writes questions for the American Board of Surgery, is Co-Chair of the Committee on Diversity, Leadership and Professional Development at the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons, and chairs the Missouri Chapter of the Committee on Applicants for the American College of Surgeons.

THE RELIGION OF THE FUTURE AND THE FUTURE OF RELIGION: ON DUSSEL, HABERMAS AND RORTY

Eduardo Mentieta

Newton West, 1:45-2:30 P.M.

ABSTRACT

I will focus on Habermas’s 2019 book, This Too a History of Philosophy and Rorty’s 2021 Pragmatism as Anti-Authoritarianism. Rorty and Habermas were longtime friends but philosophical antagonists, and yet in these two books they converge on the power of religion to instigate both orthodoxy and heterodoxy. Habermas’s book is two volumes, 1700 pages, but I only focus on the key theme of the second volume, namely rational freedom. I argue that this notion converges with Rorty’s arguments
about pragmatism as a philosophical project that aims at what may be called "active freedom" (Justice Breyer). There is no authority other than the authority of our stories, narratives, and how we hold each other accountable, how we demand from each other justifications or ways to understand better what it is that we are claiming. Notwithstanding their profound disagreements about the universal character of reason, in these two books they converge on their appreciation of religion as a source of enlightenment, or a certain version of enlightenment.

Keywords: religion, enlightenment, secularization, justification, anti-authoritarianism, freedom, Habermas, Rorty

BIOSKETCH


UNDERSTANDING THE “OTHER” AND WELCOMING THE SGTRANGER: A VISION FOR CROSS-CULTURAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN TURKEY

Mustafa Cabir Altintas
Elliott, 2:45–3:30 P.M.

ABSTRACT

All religions have problems when they encounter the stranger. In Turkey, which has settlements where multi-religious nations live, the problem of identity and culture has produced solutions with various ideological approaches, such as Ottomanism, Islamism, Turkism, Turanism, Westernism, along with modernization, but has also created new cultural and identity problems. The way to benefit from the cultural diversity within the same geographical borders and to establish effective communication with individuals from different countries and to ensure international peace and exchange is through an education system that aims to develop cross-cultural communication competence. Developing the skills that make up cross-cultural communication competence is an important effort to prevent intercultural conflicts.

As a case or a “context” where cross-cultural relationships and boundaries could be observed, I analyze how culture, cultural identity, and religious education are related to each other as well as to the communication and relationships between different cultures in Turkey. Considering that cultural specificities and differences, hence identity, are socially constructed in cross-cultural communication and daily intercultural practices, I discuss the applicability of inter/cross-cultural religious education. Cross-cultural religious education is a fairly new field, especially for Turkey. It requires educational environments where different preferences and opinions in the field of religion are respected and supported, cultures are accepted equally, and the majority and minority are ready to understand each other. Environments where language, religion, race, gender, social class, etc. are accepted as richness contribute to individuals recognizing differences without being marginalized and establishing healthy relationships with people they see as different. The main purpose here is to contribute to the development of a healthy perspective towards individuals and societies with different religious preferences and, accordingly, to social and global peace.

I discuss the status and applicability of the cross-cultural religious education model in Turkey and explore how the concept of inter/cross-cultural and multicultural religious education might be applied to religions in their interactions with one another and, in particular, how such pluralism and cross-cultural conversations could become increasingly acceptable to contemporary Muslims in their interactions with people of other religious traditions.

Keywords: cross-cultural religious education, cross-cultural relationships, interculturality, the other and stranger, cultural identity, pluralism, Islam, non-Muslims, Turkey

BIOSKETCH

Dr. Mustafa Cabir Altintas is Assistant Professor at Sirnak University of Turkey, Faculty of Theology. His research interests extend from Religious Education, Religious Studies, Islamic Education to Worldview Studies and Education. After ten years’ experience teaching Religious Education in secondary schools in and around Turkey and London, he was appointed lecturer at the university in 2020. This has contributed to his wide-ranging practical and theoretical understanding of Religious Education. He has two Masters degrees, one from Dokuz Eylul University and the other a Masters of Art and Education from Fordham University. He
completed his PhD at University College London, Institute of Education. Altintas’s doctoral research was in Critical Religious education and worldviews of young people at religious-based schools. He is an Erasmus Youth Leader and works on youth and culture. He has many international published paper and articles; his newest book, *The Role of Religious Education in the 21st century: Worldviews and Identity Discernment of Muslim Youth* is published by Nobel Academy. He currently studies and give lectures based on the Religious Education pedagogy and curriculum, worldviews and education, identity and culture, Social ministry of Islam, and social cohesion in Turkey.

FREE UNIVERSITY SESSION: A DISCUSSION OF THIS YEAR’S SUPREME COURT OPINIONS

Ted Laurenson
Newton West, 2:45–3:45 P.M.

ABSTRACT

I will review and discuss Supreme Court opinions that have been handed down in the current term, including if possible term-end decisions handed down during the conference week.

BIOSKETCH

Ted Laurenson is a lawyer with a long-time interest in constitutional law and the workings of the Supreme Court. He has been a member of IRAS for more than 30 years and served in many positions with us, including most recently as president, and has offered this workshop at many previous conferences.

CONCLUDING PANEL: SCIENCE AND RELIGION IN DIALOGUE

Various Presenters
Elliott, 4:00-5:15 P.M.

ABSTRACT

At the end of the plenary program, we will reflect together on the conference theme, in light of the plenary presentations, chapel services, the short papers presented, the book seminars. What might be fruitful perspectives? What may be difficult questions?

SATURDAY EVENING

IRAS TALENT SHOW

Elliott, 8:00 P.M.

As is the custom, we close our week with a bang-up talent show. Sign up beforehand at the Writing Desk in the Oceanic Lobby.
2022 Conference Planning

Anindita Balslev  Conference Cochair
Carolyn (C.J.) Love  Conference Cochair
Jennifer Whitten  Conference Cochair
Abigail Fuller  Conference Cochair for Operations
Emily Houk  Registrar

Conference Facilitators

Archil Pelagos Staff  Beth St. John, Coordinator
David Kaufman, Jane Lippincott, Susan Treleaven, Alice Austin, and Martin Hargrove

Auction Coordinator  Susan Treleaven
Call for Papers Coordinator  Carolyn (C.J.) Love
Candlelight Coordinator  Katharine Houk
Conference Chaplain  Dorsey Odell Blake
Memorial Service  Edmund Robinson
Online Streaming  Carolyn (C.J.) Love
Program Book (Orange Book)  David Klotz
Social Hour Coordinator  Jean Gest
Star Beacon Editor  Rick Agran
email address: starbeacon@gmail.com

Stargazing  David Klotz and Dan Solomon
Talent Show Coordinator  Pauline Candaux
Star Island Annual Fund Representatives from IRAS
Amy Pooley and Ruth Orme-Johnson
Shapley-Booth Fellows  Donna Roberts
Sturgis Music Fellow  Martin Hargrove
IRAS Student Scholars  Timofej Murašov and Lili Almási-Szabó

Conference Cosponsor

Isles of Shoals Association, UU, Inc.

Candlelight Presenters

Sunday: Dan Solomon
Monday: Sol and Rachel Katz
Tuesday: Lama Losang Samten
Wednesday: Edmund Robinson
Thursday: Beth St John and friends
Friday: Jennifer Whitten

IRAS Officers

Ted Laurenson  President
Jane Bengtson  Vice Chair to the Council
Karl Peters  VP for Administration
Jennifer Whitten  VP for Membership Engagement
Carolyn J. Love  VP for Summer Conferences
Bruce Naylor  VP for Organizational Relationships
Dan Solomon  Secretary
David Klotz  Treasurer

Council Members

Connie Bertka  Sally Bowden-Schaible
Marilyn Brien  Roger Brown
Willem Drees  Lise Miltner
Maynard Moore  Tariq Mustafa
Bill Shoemaker  Lisa Solomon
Mladen Turk  Carol Wayne White
Barbara Whittaker-Johns  Neil Wollman
Gayle Woloschak

Advisors to Council (nonvoting members)

Arthur Petersen  Zygon Editor
Jane Bengtson  Parliamentarian

Honorary Officers

Nancy Anschuetz  Conference Coordinator
Ursula Goodenough  Vice President
Philip Hefner  Vice President
Solomon Katz  Vice President
Karl Peters  Vice President

Representatives to Other Organizations

Solomon Katz  AAAS Representative
Mladen Turk  AAR Representative
Karl Peters  CASIRAS Representative
Solomon Katz  Zygon Board
Ted Laurenson  Zygon Board
Willem Drees  Zygon Board

Others with Official Responsibilities

Griswold Scholarship  Marion Griswold
Internet  McGhee Orme-Johnson
Membership Coordinator  Dan Solomon
Newsletter  Carol Orme-Johnson
Nominating Committee  Jane Bengtson
Student Scholarships  Jane Bengtson
First, we are grateful for every person who was on Star Island this week, for whatever reason and of whatever age. Your presence among us is appreciated. Much of the work of making a successful event possible is done by those who are unseen—kitchen staff, grounds keepers, babes in arms, carers for children—to name but a few.

Second, we are grateful for every person who was not with us this week, but who contributed over the past year in ways that made this week possible.

Third, we are grateful for all persons who participated in any of the events of the week. To the best of our ability we did this for you. Without you our work would have been sterile. With you we have lift-off.

Fourth, we are grateful for each person who spoke, dialogued, presented, and facilitated. Your stimulating leadership moves us.

Fifth, we are grateful for the present generation of Star Island staff, both permanent and temporary. You have made our life easy and contributed to our success in ways we cannot measure.

Finally, we are thankful for all of the generations of those who over many decades have kept both IRAS and Star Island alive as a source of love, courage, and faith.

Anindita Balslev, Conference Cochair
Carolyn (C.J.) Love, Conference Cochair
Jennifer Whitten, Conference Cochair
Abigail Fuller, Conference Cochair for Operation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>7:00 AM</strong></td>
<td>Polar Bear Swim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8:00 AM</strong></td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8:30 AM</strong></td>
<td>Solar Bear Swim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9:30 AM</strong></td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10:00 AM</strong></td>
<td>Social Hour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11:00 AM</strong></td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12:30 PM</strong></td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2:00 PM</strong></td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4:00 PM</strong></td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6:00 PM</strong></td>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8:00 PM</strong></td>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10:00 PM</strong></td>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>