



REACH

Volume 37, Number 2 Spring 2007

IN THIS ISSUE OF REACH

The Spring 2007 issue of *REACH* contains much information about our shared organization and its life of service to religious education. The primary items you will find here include the **Call for Papers** for the November 2-4, 2007 annual meeting of the Religious Education Association at the Hyatt Harborside Hotel in Boston, Massachusetts; a report from the **R.E.A. Board Retreat** held in Chicago in March 2007; a call for **News from the Membership**; a brief update on **Position Announcements** in the field; and other news for the good of the society.

We hope you have already begun making plans to join us at the Annual Meeting in Boston. The previous issue of *REACH* described the exciting and timely theme of the meeting developed by R.E.A. President-elect Jose Irizarry. In this issue you will find the information you need to begin developing your proposals for

participation during the meeting. You will discover that the R.E.A. Board and the Call for Papers Committee have expanded the options available for one to be a part of the program this year. We think you will appreciate the diversity of sessions we are planning for the meeting.

The Board of the R.E.A. met in Chicago March 9-11, 2007. The members of the Board evaluated the November 2006 meeting in Atlanta, examined our finances, discussed plans for the Annual Meeting in Boston this Fall, and conducted much more business for the continued work of R.E.A. A report of this meeting is included for your information.

We also know that you have exciting news about your own scholarship, publications, appointments, and announcements that you wish to share with the

Association as a whole. A section of *REACH* will provide you with an opportunity to share that news with us.

A significant role *REACH* and our Web site provide the membership is the announcement of positions available in the field of religious education and related theological disciplines. This information will be available in this issue as well.

This issue will include a brief report of a recent meeting R.E.A. leadership held with Taylor & Francis, the publishers of our excellent journal, *Religious Education*. We think you will like what you read!

Inside this issue:

2007 Call for Papers	2
Board Retreat	6
"Member News" Call	7
Position Postings	7
<i>Religious Education</i>	8
Notables	9

2007 Membership Dues

2007 Memberships are now due! An online form is posted at www.religiouseducation.net

IT'S COMING!

Look for the exciting new R.E.A. Web site

Coming in April!

Special points of interest:

- Membership forms are available at www.religiouseducation.net
- Send member updates (promotions, tenure, new positions, retirements, publications, projects) to reaappr@msn.com
- Send special event notices to reaappr@msn.com
- 2006 Proceedings available at www.religiouseducation.net

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Deadline for Submission: June 1, 2007

Culture that Matters: Intercultural Explorations in Religious Education.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

BOSTON HARBORSIDE HILTON

NOVEMBER 2-4, 2007

SEE WEBSITE <http://www.religiouseducation.net/> for full program description

Theme Description (From President Elect Jose R. Irizarry)

We live in an interconnected world where human groups are discovering each other in new ways. And once again, culture matters! Through culture each human group mediates the world and forges an identity within that world. Religions are crucial in facilitating this process. Religious educators function as cultural workers—through the language and forms of religious faith and practices, a particular culture is transmitted.

Race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, class, age, and other indicators of human diversity provide the cultural loci from which we explain the desired universality of our religious beliefs. If religious belief and faith experience are intrinsically connected to the cultural forms that shape our religious identity it is important to ask: In what ways is faith transmission mediated by what I find valuable in my culture? How does my cultural identity influence my thinking about religion and education? Can I reflect on the distinction between the “content” of faith or tradition and my own cultural identity? In what ways is what I teach, and the ways I teach, a reflection of cultural influences and interests? Are there ways in which teaching excludes or alienates learners because of the cultural values upon which it is based?

Consciousness of our cultural approaches to religious education opens us to religious knowledge from other people’s cultures. Thus we may ask; What have we encountered worth incorporating into our evolving religious identity? What can we find in other cultural expressions that not only make us more sensitive and tolerant but help us revisit our own understanding of the life-long process of faith formation?

Religious educators are invited to explore these questions and by doing so to promote intercultural dialogues that will further enhance our faith knowledge (beyond ethnocentric theologies) and improve our efforts to educate people in faith (beyond ethnocentric pedagogies). Religious educators are invited to do so by “making the familiar strange and the strange familiar.” More than ever culture matters, and religious educators are challenged to make explicit the culture(s) that matter to their efforts of faith formation and transformation.

Approaches to the Theme

Approaches to the theme might address the following topics (among others):

1. Ways of teaching-learning that “make the familiar strange and the strange familiar”;
2. Intercultural educational practices;
3. Cultural encounters that evoke changes in faith understanding and practice;
4. Examining culture as explicit, implicit and/or null curriculum;
5. How cultural identity of teachers influences teaching of religious education;
6. Reflections on the distinctions between “content” of faith/tradition and cultural identity;
7. Cultural barriers: ways in which teaching excludes or alienates learners because of the cultural values upon which is based?
8. Relationships between inter-religious and intercultural education
9. Approaches to the theme in relation to congregations/faith communities

You are invited to submit proposals for *Research Interest Groups, Colloquia, and Workshops* for the annual conference.

PROPOSALS ADDRESSING THE THEME especially invited. However, prospective presenters should not force their research to fit the theme artificially. Papers and workshops may be proposed on any theme contributing to religious education. Papers related to the theme of the annual meeting, and those most directly and deliberately linked to religious education, will receive preferential consideration for publication in the conference issue of *Religious Education*. All proposals must make clear connections between their topic and the theory and practice of religious education.

Call for proposals: REA members in good standing are invited to submit a proposal for a presentation in a Workshop, Research Interest Group, or a Colloquium. See directions below. One presentation per person, please. Collaborative/interfaith/interdisciplinary proposals may receive preferential consideration for single or extended time slots.

Formats for Presentation:

(1) Workshops: interactive presentations of practical and scholarly resources or approaches supporting the multiple practices of religious education. These sessions are intended to be interactive working groups led by

the presenter, rather than speaker-focused presentations. These sessions may seek to increase awareness or enhance performance of specific religious education practices. The context for these practices may be settings such as faith communities, higher education, wider public settings, schools, etc.

(2) Research Interest Groups (RIG): Participants sign up in advance to receive and discuss a finished paper of publishable quality among a group of up to 25 members. Final papers must be submitted by September 15, 2007. All research papers will be posted in a protected area of the website prior to the meeting, and included in the REA Annual Meeting Proceedings, distributed at Registration. *Note!!! In order to present a paper in the context of a RIG, you MUST meet the deadline of September 15, 2007 to submit your completed paper. Presenters who do not meet this deadline will not be permitted to present their papers in the RIG format.*

(3) Colloquia: are less formal than RIG's and provide an important arena for sharing emerging research, research in progress, or practices and programs that do not readily lend themselves to formal papers. An outline of ideas, or sharing of practices, is appropriate in this format.

INFORMATION ON SUBMITTING PROPOSALS:

Proposals should be a one page abstract (may be single spaced), submitted electronically (email via attachment) to the chair of the Call for Proposals, committee, Dr. Joyce Ann Mercer, at jmercerc@vts.edu. Proposals must be received by **JUNE 1, 2007**. Please include the following:

- a. Title of RIG paper, colloquium, or workshop
- b. Name of author/presenter(s), position and institutional affiliation
- c. The category for which the proposal is submitted (Workshop, RIG, Colloquia)
- d. The specific or intended audience, such as grade school teachers, adult educators, seminary faculty, or congregational religious education directors
- e. **Statement regarding the significance of the presentation for religious education**
- f. Indication of whether/how this proposal addresses the theme ***Culture that Matters: Intercultural Explorations in Religious Education*** (other proposals will be accepted)
- g. Names of persons who might chair your session. Please check with them first to see if they will be attending the meeting.
- h. Three to four line (maximum) description for use in the meeting program
- i. Abstract:
 1. For workshops, include context, main concepts/issues, practice(s) being addressed, context of those practices (e.g., faith community, higher education, wider community, schools), outline of the workshop (sequence of topics and methods), resources presented and used.
 2. for RIG papers, include main points, methodology (e.g., literature-based, qualitative or quantitative)

tive research, historical, or insights from our community of practice), generally the sources grounding the paper, and the status of the research at the time of the proposal.

2. For colloquia, include main concepts/issues, methodology for addressing the topic, generally the sources grounding the presentation, and the status of the research at the time of the proposal.

Each proposal will be reviewed by the Call for Proposals Committee. Presenters selected will be notified on or by July 15. Proposals may be paired according to interest and topical relation. Your submission of a proposal is your agreement that you will complete the paper, will abide by these deadlines, and will personally present your paper or workshop at the 2007 Annual Meeting.

Eligibility: In order to be eligible to submit a proposal, persons must have their REA membership fees up to date. Renewal can accompany your proposal. If selected to present, presenters must renew for upcoming membership year as well and register for the meeting.

Important Additional Information Regarding Research Interest Group Papers:

Research Interest Group presenters will receive a copy of the Guidelines for Contributors for the journal *Religious Education*. Your Proceedings must be no longer than 3000 words (plus references), single spaced, 12 point, Times New Roman Font, 1" margins all around. (Presenters of Colloquia and Workshops are not required to contribute a paper although they may wish to submit material for posting on the website for participants in their groups.)

Completed RIG papers for the program must be received in both hard copy and electronic format ('rtf' or 'pdf') by the Executive Secretary W. Alan Smith no later than September 15, 2007. **PAPERS NOT RECEIVED BY THAT DATE WILL NOT BE INCLUDED IN THE PROCEEDINGS AND WILL BE CANCELED FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM.** Unless otherwise requested, all papers will be posted on the website prior to the meeting. Proceedings will be distributed to participants as they register at the meeting.

By January 15, 2008, RIG papers that were presented at the meeting may be revised and submitted to the Call for Papers Committee which will act as a peer review jury for the conference issue of *Religious Education*. Selected papers are recommended for possible publication and sent to the editor of the journal, who they makes the final selection.

R.E.A. BOARD RETREAT

The R.E.A. Board gathered in retreat at the Cenacle Retreat Center in Chicago the weekend of March 9-11, 2007. Fifteen members of the Board were able to travel to the Windy (and chilly) City, including the two newest staff members of the organization: Executive Secretary W. Alan Smith and Network Coordinator Sybrina Atwaters.

The retreat served several different purposes. With a new Executive Secretary on staff, an update on the financial status of the organization was of particular interest. Alan shared observations about the 2007 Budget and both income and revenue projections for the year. In brief, it appears the 2007 Budget will need adjustment in the course of the year, but that the overall financial picture is positive. In particular, conversations with Taylor & Francis, publisher of the journal *Religious Education* suggest our income from this expression of our collective work may be above what was projected when the budget was prepared. A meeting with the publisher on March 19, 2007 would help clarify this income item, with a royalty check from Taylor & Francis expected by the end of March. Alan also mentioned that plans were being made for an audit of the financial reports for the organization.

Much of the afternoon session of the retreat focused on a discussion of association membership and suggestions for growing the membership. An item of concern in this regard was a steady decrease in membership renewals over the past several years. The lack of participation of those members considered "practitioners" was of special interest in the discussion. A sub-committee was appointed to begin strategizing a marketing plan for this purpose.

Jose Irizarry, the incoming President of R.E.A. and the chief planner for the Fall 2007 annual meeting in Boston, updated the members of the Board with further elaboration on the theme he announced in Atlanta and which was later printed in the Winter issue of *REACH*. He offered several suggestions for key note speakers that are being considered for the plenary sessions on the theme *Culture That Matters*. He stated that the local arrangements committee in Boston has been working on a variety of tasks in preparation for the meeting, so we anticipate a great

meeting in November.

Joyce Ann Mercer asked for clarification of the make-up of the "Call for Papers" committee. Once the membership of the committee was identified, she agreed to convene the committee to prepare the "Call for Papers" that appears in this issue of *REACH*.

Jack Seymour presented a very positive report on the health of the journal *Religious Education*. The members of the Board discussed the feasibility of adding a fifth issue of the journal, and Jack agreed to place this option on the agenda of the March 19 meeting with Taylor & Francis. Further discussion with the members of the Board produced the suggestion that we attempt to establish reciprocity agreements with several related journals, particularly several *international journals*.

Sybrina Atwaters presented the new design for the R.E.A. Web site that will be introduced in April 2007. The new design is more interactive, more appealing, and much more user-friendly than what we have been using up until now. We believe the membership will be impressed once the new site is up and running and invite comments from the members once they have had the chance to use the new features being introduced.

Carol Lakey Hess, President-elect, shared preliminary ideas for the 2008 Annual Meeting to be held in Chicago. The theme is still in its formative stages, but can share it will be quite literary in nature!

The retreat ended with the members of the Board engaging in "wild dreams and possibilities." This gave us the opportunity to identify the best that R.E.A. has to offer now and envision what we could become as an organization.

We all left Chicago exhausted, but enthused after a great retreat!

TELL US WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN UP TO!

At least once a year, we like to hear what passions have been consuming the members of the Association. Please share with us your publications, appointments, recognitions, joys, or concerns. Send a brief description of what you have accomplished since Summer 2006 to the editor at reaapprre@msn.com and we will include updated news of the membership in the next issue of *REACH*.

POSITION OPENINGS

A regular feature of *REACH* as well as our Web site is an updated listing of professional positions in Religious Education that may be of interest to our membership. We invite those who are aware of openings in congregational, professional, or academic settings to forward those announcements to reaapprre@msn.com for ongoing postings on the Web site and in each issue of *REACH*.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY seeks an accomplished, innovative scholar to **lead and direct the Jewish Studies Program** on the Tempe campus. The successful applicant will be designated the Irving and Miriam Lowe Professor. The Jewish Studies program offers a vibrant interdisciplinary curriculum, supports excellent scholarship and had developed extensive community oriented programming. Arizona State University is committed to program and research growth in Jewish studies, a program enhanced by solid collections located in the University Libraries. The successful candidate would have an earned doctorate, and achieved national and international recognition in his/her area of specialization. As a professor his/her research and teaching would be in any aspect of modern Jewish studies. The university seeks an intellectual leader who can engage with established academic units as well as a variety of exciting initiatives relevant to an active and growing Jewish community. Application: The position is available beginning July 1, 2008. Salary and start-up will be competitive and commensurate with qualifications. Nominations for this position are being sought. Review of completed applications will begin on September 1, 2007; applications will be evaluated every two weeks thereafter until the search is closed. Applicants must submit electronically (in MS Word or PDF format) an cover letter stating qualifications for the position, a current curriculum vitae, and names and contact information of three professional references to: Ms. Roxana Martin (Roxana.Martin@asu.edu). Inquiries and nominations should be directed to: Deborah Losse (Deborah.Losse@asu.edu or 480-965-8065) or Joel Gereboff (Joel.Gereboff@asu.edu or 480-965-7738). A background check is required for employment. ASU is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. (from *Openings*, American Academy of Religion)

MURDOCH UNIVERSITY, School of Social Sciences and Humanities/ Uniting Church in Australia. Lecturer in Practical Theology: **Religious Education and Ethics**— Ref:1176E02. Full-time continuous joint appointment: (a) 40% Murdoch University— Salary Range: \$64, 149-\$77,500 plus 17% employer superannuation contribution (full-time equivalent salary Murdoch University); (b) 60% Uniting Church in Australia, through Perth College of Divinity— Perth Theological Hall Lecturer Salary: \$45,000 plus car and housing allowance (full-time equivalent salary Perth Theological Hall). Theology is taught at Murdoch University via a partnership between the University and Perth College of Divinity, consisting of members from the tertiary faculties of the Anglican, Catholic, and Uniting Churches in Western Australia. The Program offers a Bachelor of Arts (Theology), four-year Bachelor of Theology, Master of Divinity and research

Degrees. You will teach, undertake and supervise research in religious education, ethics and/or other fields as required. Responsibilities also include lay education and ministerial formation in the Uniting Church. You will hold a postgraduate qualification in religious education and/or ethics and have strong teaching, research and leadership skills. Practical experience in professional ministry is highly desirable. For further information, please phone Dr Rowan Strong, Theology Program Chair on +618 93606470 or email R. Strong@murdoch.edu.au. Application information and selection criteria are available from <http://jobs.murdoch.edu.au/>. Applications close Friday, 4 May 2007. (from *Openings*, American Academy of Religion)

Azusa Pacific University announces a full-time position in the Department of Ministry in the Haggard Graduate School of Theology, beginning September 2007. Ph.D., D. Min., or other terminal degree required; rank open. Candidate must have demonstrated abilities in effective classroom teaching and scholarly research; proven track record of practical ministry experience; commitment to the Wesleyan theological tradition; and the education of ministers of the Christian church. Further details available on the university Web site (<http://www.apu.edu>). Women and individuals of ethnic minorities are encouraged to apply. Send letter of intent, and a curriculum vitae with names and contact information for three references, to Keith J. Matthews, Haggard Graduate School of Theology, Azusa Pacific University, P.O. Box 7000, Azusa, California 91702-7000, USA. Applications accepted until April 30, 2007. (from *Openings*, American Academy of Religion)

Associate Dean, Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education, Fordham University. The Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education at Fordham University's Rose Hill Campus in the Bronx, New York, is seeking applications for the position of Associate Dean. The role of the Associate Dean will be to oversee and assist the Dean with the many administrative tasks needed for the orderly maintenance of the school and at the same time to assist with the growth and development of the school. Applicants should submit a letter of application reflecting qualifications and interests and a current resume by May 15, 2007 to Fr. Anthony Ciora, Dean, Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education, Keating Hall Room 303, 441 E. Fordham Road, Bronx, NY 10458. Fordham is an independent Catholic University in the Jesuit tradition that welcomes applications from men and women of all backgrounds. Fordham is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Institution. Starting date: July 1 2–7. Salary commensurate with experience. (from the *Chronicle of Higher Education*)

NEWS FROM OUR JOURNAL, *RELIGIOUS EDUCATION*

Jack Seymour (Editor of *Religious Education*), W. Alan Smith (Executive Secretary), and Sybrina Atwaters (Network Coordinator) met with Taylor & Francis, publishers of the journal in a productive session in Philadelphia on March 19, 2007. Craig Pacelli, Associate Editor for Education, Arts and Humanities Journals with Taylor & Francis and the person with the publishers responsible for our journal, led the R.E.A. representatives through a series of reports suggesting a healthy subscription base in libraries and institutions. He updated the R.E.A. team on the income the Association can anticipate from subscriptions, advertising, and other sources associated with the journal. He and members of the Marketing team that work with *Religious Education* were receptive to developing a more interactive membership database for use on our Web site and to consideration of exciting possibilities such as adding an additional issue of the journal. Sybrina Atwaters shared the prototype for the new Web site with Taylor & Francis, who were impressed with the developments in this medium. An exciting part of our association with Taylor & Francis is the ability to access back issues and archived journals through *informaworld* and the publisher's Web site www.religiouseducation.net

The publishers expressed an appreciation for the quality of the articles published in the journal and are committed to working with R.E.A. to increase membership as well as increasing the presence of the journal in the market. This appears to be a fruitful relationship for the Association and the journal.

NOTABLES

Correction The Winter issue of *REACH* listed the institutional affiliation for Board member Dean Blevins incorrectly. Dean is on the faculty at Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, rather than at Trevecca Nazarene in Nashville, where he taught previously. We apologize to Dean for the inaccurate information.

Word has reached us that **Boardman (Barney) Kathan**, former Executive Secretary of R.E.A. came through his cataract surgery fine and is recovering well in his Connecticut home. In fact, Barney reports that he sees better through the newly repaired eye than his “good” eye. Get well soon, Barney!

We learned about a host of hidden talents among the members of the R.E.A. Board during the Board Retreat in Chicago. Among this august body of scholars you will find saxophone players, classically-trained dancers, classically-trained concert pianists, actors and persons trained in technical theatre, experts in a form of kick-boxing, yoga masters, and an eclectic selection of other “hidden” skills. Who knew? Your mission— should you choose to accept it— is to figure out which Board member possesses which talent and encourage that person to share her or his talent with us in Boston!

CALENDAR FOR R.E.A.

June 1, 2007 DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS FOR WORKSHOPS, RESEARCH INTEREST GROUPS, AND COLLOQUIA for the annual meeting of R.E.A. in Boston. Send proposals for these sessions to the persons listed in the *Call for Papers* in this issue of *REACH*

July 15, 2007 NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSALS FROM THE *Call for Papers* Committee.

September 15, 2007 ALL PAPERS ACCEPTED FOR RESEARCH INTEREST GROUPS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO W. ALAN SMITH, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY IN BOTH HARD COPY AND ELECTRONIC (Word or pdf only) FORMATS BY THIS DATE TO BE INCLUDED IN *PROCEEDINGS*.

November 2-4, 2007 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING AT THE Hyatt Harborside Hotel in BOSTON.

January 15, 2008 DEADLINE TO SUBMIT PAPERS FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING TO *CALL FOR PAPERS* COMMITTEE FOR CONSIDERATION FOR INCLUSION IN THE CONFERENCE ISSUE OF *RELIGIOUS EDUCATION*.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!

R.E.A. ANNUAL MEETING

NOVEMBER 2-4, 2007 IN BOSTON!