

Delwin W. Brown, Longstanding Member of the AAR, Dies at 73

Delwin W. Brown, longstanding member of the AAR and dean emeritus of the Pacific School of Religion (PSR), died at his home in San Rafael, CA, on September 12, 2009, of colon cancer. As a lay theologian equally at ease in academia and in the public square, Brown was a leading national voice of progressive Christianity.

Born in Indiana in 1935, Brown received a BA from Anderson College, a bachelor of divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in New York, and a PhD from Claremont Graduate School in California. From 1983 to 2003, Brown was Harvey H. Pottoff Professor of Christian Theology at Iliff School of Theology, where he served as dean for four years. He had also taught at Arizona State University, where he was elected the first chair of their religious studies department. Brown joined the Pacific School of Religion as dean and vice president for academic affairs in the fall of 2002.

“Del was of the lucky generation to be taught by Reinhold Niebuhr and other Union Seminary giants,” says William McKinney, president of PSR, “and he used his lay status to great advantage, freed from the authority of denominational tradition. He was a true professional: unflappable and approachable.”

Brown was considered by many to be a voice for progressive Christianity. He launched a blog, “Communicating Christianity in the Public Square,” which became the basis for his book, *What Does a Progressive Christian Believe: A Guide for the Searching, the Open, and the Curious* (Church Publishing, Inc., 2008).

Among other publications, his 1994 book *Boundaries of Our Habitations: Tradition and Theological Construction* (State University of New York Press) examined the nature of religious traditions in light of culture theory. He also coauthored several books on facets of Christian theology and the role of theology in healthy religious traditions.

PSR Trustee Margie Allen met Brown when she joined the board and ended up serving as his editor. Allen says, "He used the blessings he was given with imagination and discipline, and the world is a better place because of it. His integrity, intellect, humility, kindness, compassion, and unfailing gentle humor were a beacon of hope to me and many others."

Brown is survived by his wife Nancy, daughters Kimberli, Terri, and Kristen, and five grandchildren.

Roman Catholic Nun Settles in as Dean at San Francisco Theological Seminary

Elizabeth Liebert, a Roman Catholic nun and longstanding member of the AAR, has been named dean of San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo, CA. This makes Liebert the first Roman Catholic sister to serve as a dean of a Presbyterian seminary.

Liebert is not new to campus. She was a professor of spiritual life and a member of the doctoral faculty at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. She is described as a pastoral theologian with a special interest in Christian spirituality. Liebert is a member of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, a congregation dedicated to educational and pastoral ministries.

"We are particularly pleased to be attaining an historic ecumenical milestone," seminary President Phil Butin said. "Dr. Liebert's deanship is a sterling example of SFTS's thoroughgoing commitment to ecumenical theological education." (IJ photo/Jeff Vendsel).

American Academy of Arts and Sciences Inducts Three AAR Members into Its 229th Class of Members

Congratulations are owed to three AAR members who were recently inducted into the 229th class of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Only 231 scholars worldwide from all fields of study were invited to join this prestigious membership in 2009. The newly inducted AAR members are as follows:

- Carl W. Ernst, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- Jonathan D. Sarna, Brandeis University
- Emilie M. Townes, Yale University

Founded in 1780, the [American Academy of Arts and Sciences](#) is an independent policy research center that conducts multidisciplinary studies of complex and emerging problems. Current Academy research focuses on science and technology policy; global security; social policy; the humanities and culture; and education. With headquarters in Cambridge, MA, the Academy's work is advanced by its 4,600 elected members, who are leaders in the academic disciplines, the arts, business, and public affairs from around the world.

Launch of New Online Journal on Race and Religion

Sopher Press announces the launch of a new online journal, the *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion*

. The editor of the journal is noted scholar and AAR member Miguel A. De La Torre. The first article is now available at

<http://www.raceandreligion.com/>

. During 2010, all of the journal's articles will be free to the public.

Religion, race, and ethnicity combine in multiple ways to shape American history and global human life. This new journal, the first to address this interaction, will offer fresh insights into the varieties of religious expression. In the journal's opening article, De La Torre writes that the *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion* challenges "the prevailing assumption that the present religious scholarly landscape, rooted in Eurocentric thought, is the pinnacle of academic excellence." By questioning the ways that Euroamerican scholars have understood religion, *JRER* will offer new descriptions of the religious experience that reflect the lived reality of racial and ethnic communities.

De La Torre, associate professor of social ethics at Iliff School of Theology, Denver, CO, is the author and editor of more than a dozen books on theology, ethics, and marginalized communities.

Launch of New Online Journal on Childhood and Religion

Sopher Press announces the launch of a new online journal, the [*Journal of Childhood and Religion*](#)

. The editor of the journal is noted scholar Allan Hugh Cole Jr. This website will host new articles about children and religion, as well as a

guide to the best resources available on the topic.

Children's religion is a vital topic for society and the future of the church. The *Journal of Childhood and Religion* provides the first attempt to study these issues from an interdisciplinary perspective, bringing together Christian educators, Bible scholars, theologians, social workers, youth ministry experts, historians, pastoral theologians, psychologists, sociologists, and community organizers. With so many angles of vision on the questions of children, youth, and religion, *JCR*

promises to increase our understanding of how children learn, develop, and express faith.

Cole is an associate professor of pastoral care at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Austin, TX. He is the author of several books and a coauthor of *Losers, Loners, and Rebels: The Spiritual Struggles of Boys* (Presbyterian Publishing Corp., 2007).

New Student-Run, Peer-Reviewed, Online Journal of Religious Studies

The [Intermountain West Journal of Religious Studies](#) is designed to promote the academic study of religion at the graduate and undergraduate levels. The journal is affiliated with the religious studies program at Utah State University. Their academic review committee

includes professionals from universities throughout the United States specializing in the religions of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Mormonism, as well as specialists in the fields of psychology, anthropology, and sociology of religion.