

GTU Currents

NEWS OF THE GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL UNION

A Passion for Justice

GTU GRADUATE BLENDS ACADEMICS WITH ACTIVISM

Studying religion is “where the rubber hits the road,” says Jaime Balboa, who earned his Ph.D. from the GTU this May in interdisciplinary studies. “Religion is used to stymie and stifle the human rights of people who are different, as well as for emancipation and liberation.” Balboa is using his theological training as a foundation for the civil and human rights work he has long been committed to.

He credits his family with instilling a hopeful, constructive approach to social ills. His parents were always involved in community work, and half his family is from the Philippines, where they’re all social activists—“it’s in the Balboa blood,” he jokes. While most recently practicing as a Methodist, he also points to his Roman Catholic upbringing as nourishing his “sanguine hope that the world can be a more compassionate and just place, if we roll up our sleeves and get to work. Not that it isn’t difficult, but it can be done.”

Balboa has worked since 2001 at Larkin Street Youth Services, a San Francisco community-based organization that serves homeless and runaway youth. He has also worked as director of public education for the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission. In 2000, he led a campaign in Oregon to defeat an anti-gay ballot measure. The measure would have mandated that public school curricula portray homosexuality as immoral.

Political Leadership

As executive director for the campaign, he found that his theological training was critical to his success. The Christian Coalition which had co-sponsored the measure was faced in debates with a scholar of Christian theology who could meet them—and defeat them—on their own ground. In the end, the campaign Balboa led was successful, and the measure did not pass.

For Balboa, the situation illustrates the extent to which religious values motivate public discourse. “If the Enlightenment was partly about moving religious experience to the private sphere, it failed. Religion pervades U.S. politics. The whole subtext of the campaign was about which moral discourse is going to win.”

Humility and Truth

Balboa came to the GTU after studying literature as an undergraduate and completing his master of theological studies (M.T.S.) degree at Duke University. At Duke, he was strongly influenced by the theologian and ethicist Stanley Hauerwas, who encouraged Balboa to focus on theology rather than literature for his doctoral work.

On his dissertation committee was Naomi Seidman, director of the GTU’s Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies and a scholar of critical theory. Seidman calls Balboa’s work “thrilling. For his dissertation, he proposed a powerful argument for the human dignity of queer people that refused to found itself on ‘logocentrism,’ that is, on the belief that it is possible to make a stable truth claim. As a religious activist, Jaime believes that people working for liberation should view the decentering of truth as an opportunity for resistance and empowerment rather than as a threat to it.”

Balboa applies this insight about the “decentering of truth” to thinkers on both sides of gay and lesbian issues. For instance, he points out that GLBT liberation scholars who assert that “every-one would come to their conclusions if only they knew how to read the Bible” are taking a similar path to those who use the Bible for oppression. Balboa argues “we don’t have a god’s eye view, to make with certainty absolute claims about morals.” As we work for justice, we must do so with humility and respect. That is Jaime Balboa’s path.✽

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Photos: GTU professor Judith Berling, Jaime Balboa (Ph.D. '03), and Vincent Shamo (M.A. '03)

Founded in 1962, the Graduate Theological Union educates women and men in theological scholarship and church leadership. The GTU seeks to teach patterns of faith that nurture justice and peace, and to equip leaders for a world of diverse religions and cultures.

GTUCurrents

Currents presents the news, people, and progress of the Graduate Theological Union. Published three times a year, *Currents* is distributed to alumni, faculty, students, staff, and friends of the GTU.

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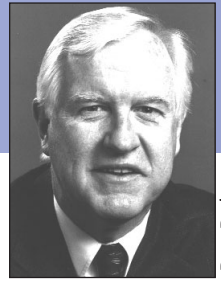
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From the President's Desk



Dana Davis

Dear Friends of the GTU,

The idea of “contextual theology”—that our understanding of the task of theology is inescapably shaped by the contexts in which we find ourselves—dominates the landscape in theological education today. I take this fundamental premise to be true: our thinking about the purposes, goals, and structure of theological education depends on what is going on in the world in which we live. Vibrant educational institutions are ones that not only respond to the dynamics of current issues, but that also understand their historical mission in light of renewed challenges, new threats and opportunities.

Context has been integral to the GTU’s self-understanding from its inception. In 1962 the context of our founding was the conviction that theological education was necessarily done in ecumenical dialogue among Protestants and Catholics. Today the focus of our dialogue builds on these foundations to include other faith and cultural traditions as well.

Over the last 40 years the GTU has grown into the promise that was there at the beginning. We are, I believe, the premier theological consortium in this country and perhaps the world. Our niche is characterized by:

- The standards of academic excellence that are our hallmark;
- Our commitment to ecumenical and interfaith dialogue;
- The “engaged” quality of our scholarship, where thinking and doing come together;
- Our commitments to interdisciplinary methods of analysis;
- Our commitment to bringing the insights of religion and ethics to discussions of the public good; and
- Our interest in Asia as we detect the dynamics of future religious influences.

We are an institution that was created for dialogue amidst differences. I am enormously proud of the GTU’s achievements and of its creativity and resolution in today’s context as we face the ongoing challenges of providing the best theological education possible. This issue profiles two new graduates whose work illustrates our commitments. Laura Roberts examines the role of interpretation in the context of the Mennonite tradition, and Jaime Balboa works—both as a scholar and an activist—to address issues of difference among oppressed minorities. These are just two of the fifty-nine remarkable individuals in our 2003 graduating class; you’ll find the complete class list on pages 4 and 5.

I thank each of you for your interest in the life of this institution, and encourage your continued support for the GTU’s work on behalf of the religious and academic leaders of tomorrow.



James A. Donahue



Tradition and Change

LAURA ROBERTS INVESTIGATES MENNONITE IDENTITY

As a doctoral student at the GTU, Laura Roberts' grounded love for her Mennonite faith has grown to include a fresh, critical examination of the nature of tradition, in ways that introduce a new dynamism and flexibility.

The Mennonites' origins are in the Protestant Reformation. An evangelical group descended from the 16th-century Anabaptists, early emphases were on separation of church and state, separation from the world, and on discipline for both community and individual. Most Mennonite communities today are known for their interest in social issues, their strong peace stand, and their emphasis on community, embodied in independent local churches.

Theology and Tradition

Since the 1980s, discussion among Mennonite thinkers has focused on more explicit theology and theological method. Recent historical work had shown that there was not one original Anabaptism in the 16th century, but many related movements with diverse beliefs, styles, and practices. This multiplicity of origins included numerous elements that did not fit comfortably with the existing Mennonite self-understanding. The issue then was, what did these new findings mean about the tradition and its theology?

Despite the new scholarly interest in the Mennonites' multiple origins, Roberts heard the language around the tradition itself as "pretty static. I wanted to look at how we thought about tradition itself, in order to find a way that it could be understood as adequately dynamic."

To this end, her dissertation explores conceptualizations of the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition since the mid-20th century. Paul Ricoeur's focus on hermeneutics was a key inspiration, notably his insight that "Traditions live by the grace of interpretation."

Exploring the power and aliveness of interpretation became a way to use the Mennonites' own focus on community to open up the tradition from the inside, protecting it from a single, overly rigid, or fundamentalist definition. As Roberts said, "None of the tradition drops from heaven like a stone. It comes through lived faith in a community, and that has to be recognized. The lived component is a process of interpretation, which

means arguing out competing interpretations, within community."

At the same time, the "grace of interpretation" does not imply that "the tradition can be made to mean just anything or everything. There are multiple meanings but not an infinite number." The theologian's role, as Roberts came to understand it, lies in interpretations of the tradition that are both responsible and creative.

"A Broadening Experience"

Roberts found her GTU experience to be enormously broadening both personally and in her scholarship. She came to the GTU with a strong sense of her identity and its location in a minority tradition, and was struck by the level of "genuine interest" from faculty and students alike. Her best friends in the program were Catholic, Lutheran and Episcopalian, and she cherished the opportunity to "walk through core theological issues with them."

The ecumenical and interfaith environment influenced her scholarly work as well. "The gift of the GTU has been studying with people who have been asking some of the same questions of their traditions that I have begun asking of mine, but for much longer," Roberts said. "The challenge from my committee and colleagues was to think more broadly about how my project was dealing with problems common to other traditions, not just Mennonite—to recognize the commonalities while at the same time

addressing the particular shape of these issues in the Mennonite tradition."

A Career in Teaching

Having completed the GTU doctoral program in four years, Roberts now returns to Fresno Pacific University, a Mennonite Brethren affiliated school, where she taught for five years before coming to the GTU. With her are her husband Mark, a high school English teacher, and their new daughter Clara.

At Fresno Pacific, with its religiously diverse student body, she will remember the support for pluralism at the GTU and work to make a similar experience for her students—"encouraging them to explore their own traditions, and making sure there's room for everybody." ❖



Dana Davis

"None of the tradition drops from heaven like a stone. It comes through lived faith in a community..."

Commencement 2003



The GTU extends its warmest congratulations to the graduating students of October 2002 and May 2003.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Jaime Ronaldo Balboa
Interdisciplinary Studies
The Word Made Queer: Implications for a Liberationist Imago Dei

Mark Gerard Bosco
Interdisciplinary Studies
Graham Greene's Pattern in the Carpet: A 20th Century Catholic Imagination



Dana Davis

Cornelia Cyss-Wittenstein (Ph.D. '02)

Robert E. Conover
Homiletics • *The Enchantment of the Theology of Preaching by the Theology of Liturgy: A Dialogue between Gordon Lathrop and David Buttrick through the Dramatistic Pentad of Kenneth Burke*

Cornelia Cyss-Wittenstein
Biblical Studies • *Reading I Corinthians in the 21st Century: Aporias, Dialogues and Discernment*

Alain P. Durocher
Ethics and Social Theory
Between the Right to Forget and the Duty to Remember: The Politics of Memory in Canada's Public Church Apologies

Geoffrey Edward Foy
Cultural and Historical Studies of Religions • *Engaging Religion: An Ethnography of Three Religious Adherents in Taiwan's Academic Culture*

Judith Laura Georges
History • *Home for the Holidays: Anglo-Protestants and Christmas in Northern California, 1849-1900*

Joseph Holt
Inter Area • *The Logic of Sense, Nonsense and Sacrament: Gilles Deleuze and the Transfiguration of the Commonplace*

Bonnie Gayle Tigner Howe
Interdisciplinary Studies
Metaphor and Meaning in Moral Discourse: The Role of Conceptual Metaphor in the Creation of Meaning in Christian Moral Discourse, with 1 Peter as Exemplar

Alan Dale Kelchner
Homiletics • *Toward a Collegial Homiletic: The Conversational Preaching Paradigm of Lucy Atkinson Rose in Light of the Conversational Hermeneutics of David Tracy*

Soo-Young Kwon
Religion and Psychology
God Representations: A Psychological and Cultural Model

Stanley Lin Lanier
Systematic and Philosophical Theology • *Making Change: Amartya Sen as a Bridge Between Theology and Economics*

Jennifer L. Lord
Homiletics • *The Sermon in the Ordo: Toward the Recovery of a Liturgical Homiletic for the Reformed Tradition*

Mark David Parsons
Liturgical Studies • *"With Sighs Too Deep for Words": Liturgical Song as Metaphor*



Dana Davis

Joseph Thometz (Ph.D. '02), Heng Sure (Ph.D. '03), GTU professor Judith Berling (see p. 7), and Geoffrey Foy (Ph.D. '03)

Laura Schmidt Roberts
Systematic and Philosophical Theology • *Refiguring Tradition: Paul Ricoeur's Contribution to an Anabaptist-Menonite Hermeneutics of Tradition*

Chizuko Saito
Religion and Psychology
Bereavement and Meaning Reconstruction among Senior Japanese Immigrant Women in the San Francisco Bay Area: An Ethnographical Study for Spiritual Care

L. Roxanne Seagraves
Cultural and Historical Studies of Religions • *A Bit About Dirt: Pilgrimage and Popular Culture at the Santuario de Chimayo*

Jean Elizabeth Ponder Soto
Interdisciplinary Studies
Redeeming Eros: A Christian Ethical Spirituality of Sexual Intimacy

Heng Sure
Cultural and Historical Studies of Religions • *Sacred Literature into Liturgy: Jingyuan (1011-1088) and the Development of the Avatamsaka Liturgy in Song China*

Cynthia Taylor
History • *A. Philip Randolph and the Transformation of the Negro Church*

Joseph Michael Thometz
Cultural and Historical Studies of Religions • *Speaking With and Away: A Buddhist-Christian Meta-Dialogue*

Kirk Wegter-McNelly
Systematic and Philosophical Theology • *The World, Entanglement, and God: Quantum Theory and the Christian Doctrine of Creation*

Margo Elizabeth Wesley
Art and Religion • *"Holy Discontent": John Donne's Poesis as Sacred Struggle*

MASTER OF ARTS

Kanjo Asuka
Institute for Buddhist Studies, WITH HONORS • *Shinran's View of Karma*

Richard Kenneth Atkins
Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary • *On Self-Control and the Human Future*

Susan B. Criscione
American Baptist Seminary of the West, WITH HONORS • *For the Well-Being of All: Towards a Christian Theology of Pastoral Care for Women Who have Chosen Abortion*

Michael Dougherty
Franciscan School of Theology, WITH HONORS • *A Paradigm of Individuation: A Study of the Implications of Integrating a Jungian Perspective of Jesus Christ*



Sangeet Duchane

Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology • *East Meets West: A Study of Two Mystics*

Teresa Ann Ellis

Center for Jewish Studies • *Joab Ben Zeruiah: Politics in the Books of Judges and Samuel*

Timothy Fries

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary • *David, Solomon and Hiram: The Phoenician Connection—A Study of the Use of Phoenician Building Projects in the United Monarchy*

Rosemary R. Hicks

American Baptist Seminary of the West • *Religious Movements and the Challenge to Nineteenth-Century Victorian Ideology: Christian Science and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union*



Dana Davis

Jennifer Lord (Ph.D. '03). Her commencement address, "Zen Gardens and Amish Quilts," can be read at www.gtu.edu.

Matthew V. Higham

San Francisco Theological Seminary, WITH HONORS • *Acts, Events and God: A Study in the Philosophy of Action*

Lucas Fiegenger Johnston

Franciscan School of Theology • *Scientific and Scriptural Foundations for an Ethics of Sustainability*

Ji-Wan Kim

Franciscan School of Theology • *Institution and Charism in St. Francis of Assisi*

Nyya Fellecia Lark-Wilson

Church Divinity School of the Pacific • *The Appropriation of Christianity: Church Mission and Its Encounter with the Other*

Jonathan Lee

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary • *Journey to the West: Tianhou in San Francisco*

Kang Hack Lee

Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley • *Discernment in Jonathan Edwards' Writings: Distinguishing Marks and Religious Affections*

Scott A. Mitchell

Institute of Buddhist Studies, WITH HONORS • *Indra's CyberNet: The Impact of the Internet on the Development of American Buddhism*

David J. Moore

San Francisco Theological Seminary • *Calvin's Theology of Music*

Naomi Yukiko Nakano

Institute of Buddhist Studies • *The Light of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in the Dark Days of World War II*

Kwangshik Park

Church Divinity School of the Pacific • *The Spiritual Landscape of the Hortus Conclusus in Bernard of Clairvaux's Sermons on the Song of Songs*

Richard Hee Chun Park

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary • *Language and Truth: Dialogue in the New Homiletics*

Tilman Anselm Ramelow

Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology, WITH HONORS • *Beyond Modernism? George Lindbeck and the Linguistic Turn in Theology*

Gregory Otto Schaefer

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary • *We Are the Young, Our Lives Are a Mystery: The Pastoral Care Needs of San Francisco Bay Area Generation X Christians in the Wake of the Tragedy of September 11, 2001*

Vincent Shamo

Church Divinity School of the Pacific • *In Death We Belong to God: Integrating Gadangme Widowhood Rites into Christian Formation*

Nicole Martha Simopoulos

American Baptist Seminary of the West • *"Reading With": Interpreting Genesis 16 with Caucasian, Latina, and Black South African Women*

Hanna Kafton Smidt

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, WITH HONORS • *Troubling the Waters: Women's Narratives Engaged Post-Structurally Towards a Theology of Be/coming*

Sandra Jeanne Sullivan

Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, WITH HONORS • *Beyond Preferences: Moral Formation, Social Choice, and Martha Nussbaum's Thick, Vague Notion of the Good*

Derek John Thomas

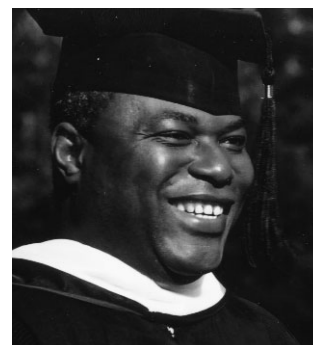
Franciscan School of Theology • *The Book and the Bead: Daily Prayer Practices of 15th Century English Laity*

Tamafaiga Falaniko S.

Tuiteleleapaga
Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology, WITH HONORS • *Towards a Dialogue Between Indigenous Samoan Culture and Christianity*

Martín Hugo Videla

Church Divinity School of the Pacific • *Implications of a Theology of Friendship for Decolonizing and Queering the Doctrine of the Trinity*



Dana Davis

Vincent Shamo (M.A. '03)

Motonao Yasui

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary • *The Problem of Evil: A Niebuhrian Perspective*

MASTER OF ARTS IN BIBLICAL LANGUAGES

Shinil Kim

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

Andrew Harrison Kitt

Church Divinity School of the Pacific

Hoonjung (Gemma) Lee

Franciscan School of Theology

Sung-Young Lee

Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley

Dale E. Loepp

Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley

Debra Jean Mumford

American Baptist Seminary of the West

Ann Marie Naffziger

Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley❖

News & Notes



What's new - from Alumni and Students

For more updates from other alumni, faculty, and students, and to send in your news, visit www.gtu.edu.

JAVIER ALVAREZ-MON (M.A. '97) received a Fulbright scholarship for research in Iran, where he is completing the fieldwork for his UC Berkeley doctoral program in ancient Near Eastern art and archaeology.

MARY CHRISTINE ATHANS (Ph.D. '82) was appointed professor emerita upon her recent retirement from the Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity of the University of St. Thomas (Minnesota). She has moved to Chicago where she will continue to write and do some teaching at Loyola University.

DAVID BATSTONE (Ph.D. '89) has published *Saving the Corporate Soul--and (Who Knows?) Maybe Your Own: Eight Principles for Creating and Preserving Wealth and Well-Being for You and Your Company Without Selling Out* (Jossey-Bass). Batstone is executive editor of *Sojourners* and a social ethics professor at University of San Francisco.

GAYMON BENNETT, a first year doctoral student, co-edited *Bridging Science and Religion* (SCM Press) with Dr. Ted Peters. The book is from the GTU affiliated Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences (CTNS).

KIRK BINGAMAN (Ph.D. '00) has published his first book, *Freud and Faith: Living in the Tension* (SUNY); contributed a chapter to *Teaching Freud*, an edited volume with Oxford; and published an article on narcissism in the *American Journal of Pastoral Counseling*. He is director of satellite offices for the Lloyd Center Pastoral Counseling Service at San Francisco Theological Seminary.

GREG COOTSONA (Ph.D. '96) is associate pastor for adult discipleship at Bidwell Presbyterian Church in Chico, CA. His second book, *Creation and Last Things: At the Intersection of Theology and Science*, was published in 2002.

GTU President **JAMES DONAHUE** (Ph.D. '84) published *Ethics Across the Curriculum: A Practice-Based Approach* (Lexington Books). Co-authored by Michael Boylan, the book provides a practical framework and concrete suggestions for engaging questions of ethics in the university curriculum.

VERNA HARRISON (Ph.D. '86) has been appointed assistant professor of church history at Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, beginning fall 2003. She has articles in recent issues of *Sobornost* and *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*.

Nominate the 2003 Alum of the Year

Please let us know your candidates! Send nominations, including special achievements or accomplishments, via e-mail to advance-ment@gtu.edu (or phone 510/649-2420). We need to hear from you by **July 14**. The Alum of the Year will be honored at the annual GTU alum luncheon on Saturday, November 22 at the AAR/SBL conference in Atlanta. 2002's Alum of the Year was John Titaley, rector of Satya Wacana Christian University in Indonesia—you can read about him and other notable alums at www.gtu.edu.

SISTER MARTHA ANN KIRK (Th.D. '86) is professor of religious studies at the University of the Incarnate Word. She was awarded the San Antonio Bar Foundation 2003 Peacemaker Award for her work in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim relationships, and also won an award from the St. Mary's University President's Peace Commission for her use of the arts in peace-making. She writes "I share news of my recent awards because my potential for creativity and commitment to justice and peace were nurtured in the Arts and Theology area of the GTU."

NANCEY MURPHY (Th.D. '87) is professor of Christian philosophy at Fuller Theological Seminary. Her first book, *Theology in the Age of Scientific Reasoning*, won prizes from both the American Academy of Religion and the Templeton Foundation.

VICTORIA RUE (Ph.D. '93) and her partner Kathryn Poethig (Ph.D. '97) are moving to California, where Kathryn has been appointed assistant professor of global studies at California State University at Monterey Bay.

SUSAN M. SMITH (Ph.D. '02) has accepted a position at Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, beginning fall 2003. She will be assistant professor of preaching and worship.

THEODORE TROST (M.A. '89) is assistant professor of religious studies at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. In 2002, Harvard University Press published his *Douglas Horton and the Ecumenical Impulse in American Religion*. This is the first biography to appear on Horton, a significant but surprisingly unheralded 20th century religious leader who worked tirelessly for church and world unity under the broad banner of ecumenism.

DIANA WALSH (M.A. '99) is assistant professor of religion at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. She was married in July of 2002.

KIRK WEGTER-MCNELLY (Ph.D. '03) co-edited two recent CTNS publications: *Quantum Mechanics: Scientific Perspectives on Divine Action* (CTNS/Vatican Observatory), and *Science and the Spiritual Quest: New Essays by Leading Scientists* (Routledge). This fall, he will join the religious studies department of Manhattan College, in New York City.

RICHARD WOOD (M.A. GTU '89, Ph.D. UC Berkeley) and Dana Bell (M.Div. PSR '91) are married with two children. Rich is associate professor of sociology at the University of New Mexico. His *Faith in Action: Religion, Race, and Democratic Organizing in America* (University of Chicago Press 2002) is based on research done partly through the GTU's Center for Ethics and Social Policy.*



New Faculty Award Given to Judith Berling

Judith Berling, who has been at the GTU since 1987, is the first recipient of the Sarlo Excellence in Teaching Award, given by the Sarlo Family Supporting Foundation. She is professor of Chinese and comparative religions, and has also served as GTU Dean. This annual award honors a core doctoral faculty member whose teaching incorporates the values of interreligious dialogue and an interdisciplinary approach to teaching.

Berling's own faith journey crosses a diverse terrain. Raised as a Presbyterian in the Midwest, she attended a United Church of Christ college. She became very involved with that church, and even planned a career in ministry. However, troubled by an incident of Asian racism at a local church, Berling changed her path. Seeing that the racism was rooted in ignorance, she set out to educate and immerse herself in Asian language and culture, with the intention of equipping herself to "interpret Asia back" to her fellow Americans.

Now Episcopalian, Berling treasures her parish in part for its openness to other faiths. She comments that she herself could be considered a "Confucian or Taoist Christian."

The key to teaching with interreligious and interdisciplinary values at heart is, she says, to "find ways for the teacher to get out of the way and create a collaborative learning environment. I design courses so that people know from the first day that each of them has something to contribute and to learn from each of the others."

Berling teaches courses in her field of Chinese religions, as well as courses organized around themes with interreligious dimensions. Recent courses have covered pilgrimage and story; how scripture is honored in various traditions; and the history of God in the monotheistic traditions and in the varieties of Christianity.

"The GTU pushes at the boundaries better than anywhere."

Interdisciplinary values tend to threaten entrenched academic territories. Berling relates that UC Berkeley's Robert Bellah, who worked on many GTU committees, "used to say that students here asked questions that couldn't be asked across the street—because of the power of the disciplines. Certain questions require boundary-crossing. The challenge is to do that responsibly."

Responsible boundary-crossing means that interreligious and interdisciplinary components can't be add-ons. For instance, Berling says, just adding a book on Buddhist meditation to a course on prayer isn't enough. Prayer and meditation have to "come up against each other, so that students wrestle with the sameness and the difference." When this is done well, students come to better understand their own discipline and religion, as well as the other.

While noting that there is still a way to go, Berling believes the GTU "pushes at the boundaries better than anywhere."✧

Markey Scholarships Support Catholic Women Leaders

Nancy Pineda-Madrid and Kerry Danner-McDonald, two GTU doctoral students whose work joins ministry with scholarship, received the first Father Markey Scholarships for Catholic Women in Ministry. Established through the generosity of Margaret Webb, Father Markey's cousin, the new scholarships support women in the doctoral program who are studying for Roman Catholic leadership and ministry.

Father Francis L. Markey (1908-1999) was a prominent priest in the Santa Cruz area who deeply believed that women should be prepared for leadership in all aspects of Roman Catholic ministry. It was to further this vision and to honor her cousin that Webb established the fellowships. "Father limned a vision for gender integration in the Catholic Church throughout his priestly life. Father stretched his mind, and he encouraged and empowered others to do the same," Webb commented, adding that the GTU's innovative structure and intellectual freedom made it the natural home for the scholarships.

Now teaching full-time in religious studies at St. Mary's College in Moraga, Nancy Pineda-Madrid is also completing her dissertation. It focuses on Our Lady of Guadalupe as a symbol for liberation and salvation. Pineda-Madrid's previous experience working in governance and planning for the Archdiocese of Seattle provided her with skills she continues to use in the service of the Catholic Church, through

conferences and course offerings for priests and others. Women as church leaders is a particular focus for her presentations, along with current feminist scholarship.

Kerry Danner-McDonald finishes her first year at the GTU this spring. Her primary interests are the moral imagination, social ethics, and quality of life issues. She commented that the stipend component of the scholarship "is truly a blessing, as it allows me to be a more present student, friend, wife and mother."

Her ministry has included work with Catholic and feminist networks, including leadership training for young Catholic women. Danner-McDonald's ambition is to contribute to a strong public dialogue—in both scholarly and popular venues—about the social mission of the church, women's concerns, and issues of economic justice.

Although most Ph.D. programs in religious studies offer their students full funding as well as living stipends, the GTU is only able to provide partial support to a percentage of its students. Thanks to this generous gift from Father Markey's cousin Margaret Webb, the GTU has taken an important step forward in supporting its students. To learn about more ways to advance the GTU's vision of education for theological scholarship and ministerial leadership, please contact the advancement office at 510/649-2420, or visit www.gtu.edu.✧



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GTU Islam Conference Draws Local Muslims

On March 14 and 15, 2003, the GTU hosted an Islamic studies conference with almost 200 attendees. "Religious Pluralism in the 21st Century: Muslim Identities in the Diaspora" brought scholars together with people of faith from Bay Area Muslim communities to examine how we live in the local and global contexts of religious diversity.

Participants commented on how "thought-provoking" and "energizing" the conference was. Especially appreciated were the keynote speakers—Dr. John Esposito from Georgetown University; Dr. Hamid Algar from University of California, Berkeley; and Dr. Amina Wadud from Virginia Commonwealth University. Workshops were offered on topics such as Islam and the African American experience, Sufism, radical Islam, and Muslim women. Dr. Ibrahim Farajajé, the conference director, is vice president of academic affairs and professor of Islamic studies at GTU member school Starr King School for the Ministry.

With this event, the GTU inaugurated a series of conferences and increased course offerings in Islamic studies. President James Donahue commented that the event "furtheres the GTU's longstanding commitment to dialogue across diverse religious traditions. The world situation underlines the urgent need for interreligious understanding, and the GTU's importance as a center for the kind of conversation and education that create the foundation for a diverse and peaceful world."✽



Dana Davis

Dr. Ibrahim Farajajé, conference director. He heads the GTU's Islamic studies task force.

BLESSING OF THE CRUSH

6:30 pm on Thursday, October 23, 2003

The Westin St. Francis, San Francisco

Please join us for our second annual black-tie gala, *Blessing of the Crush*. Henry Luce III will be honored for his leadership of the Henry Luce Foundation, which has been a major contributor to the GTU and to theological education nationwide. Proceeds from the gala will support student scholarships. GTU trustee Peggy Hansen Olsen is the dinner chair. Call 510/649-2425 for reservations and information.