

## CORH Connection Spring 2020

### Message from the Chair

Greetings to everyone in our Department of Comparative Religion and Humanities community!

This has been the strangest end of the year ever with the university completely online and all of us isolated at home because of Covid-19. Wherever you are, I hope you and your loved ones are staying safe and healthy. No one expected the semester to end like this, least of all the graduating seniors who had hoped to walk across the stage in the stadium. Please think of them when you read their names in the newsletter.

During this time of crisis and uncertainty, I am more grateful than ever for the wonderful faculty in our department who have worked so creatively and conscientiously to finish up the semester with sensitivity and compassion towards students, making the online classroom as successful as possible given this unprecedented situation. Thank you colleagues!

I finish up my three-year chair term this semester, so this is my last letter to you as department chair. It has been a great pleasure to lead a department of dedicated colleagues who are so easy to work with. They are open-minded, intellectually curious, unusually tolerant of differences, and have a sense of humor. Together they have created the warm, supportive, and collegial environment that is our department. Since I have entered the Faculty Early Retirement Program (FERP), beginning next academic year, I will only be working during Spring semesters, teaching classes on Religion and Nature; Religion, Ethics, and Ecology; and World Religions and Global Issues. I chose to start my FERP to have more time for research and writing, which has always been a big part of my professional life, but has been hard to balance with a full load of teaching and service commitments.

I leave the department in the very capable hands of your newsletter editor Dr. Daniel Veidlinger. Daniel has already made major contributions to the department with the newsletter, producing a promotional video for the Religious Studies BA, and running the important RELS major capstone and senior internships. He will be a fantastic department chair and will most certainly provide the leadership necessary amidst the uncertainties facing us for the next year.

I wish Daniel all the very best of luck with his new position as chair. Please join me in congratulating him and welcoming him to the position!

This edition of the newsletter will focus on religion and its connection to science, technology, and the environment. These are key issues as we move further into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and as recent events have shown, there is little doubt that they will play a significant role in our future.

I hope you all have a wonderful summer,

Sarah

Dr. Sarah M. Pike

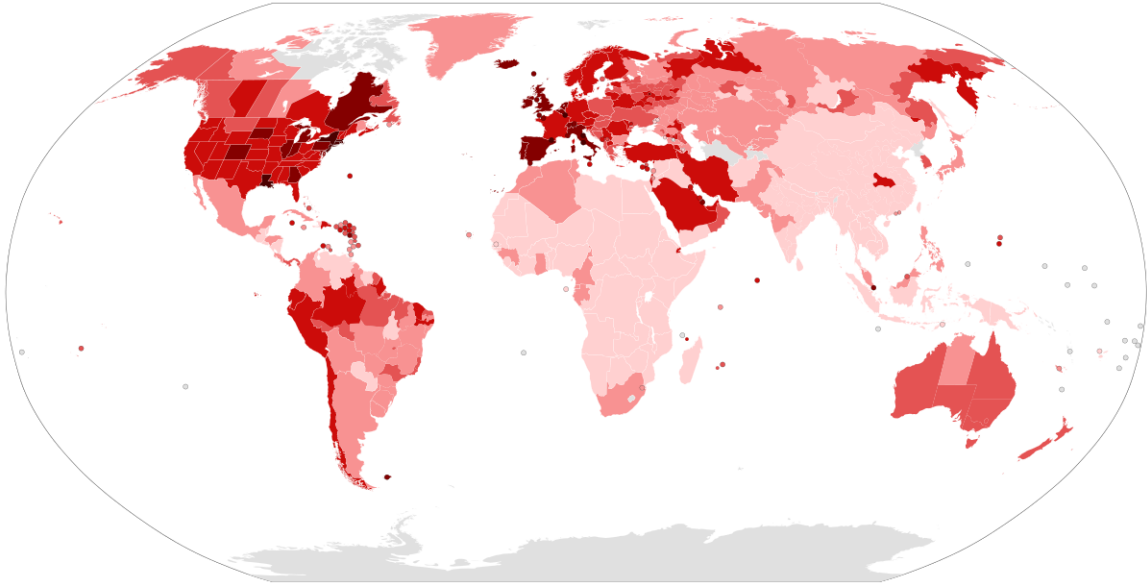


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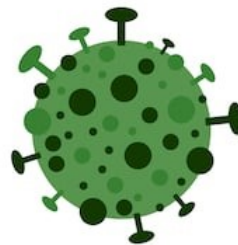
# Pandemic Pedagogies

Chris Crews



By a chance of fate, I found myself teaching a course on the End of the World this spring at CSU Chico, just in time to watch the world slide headlong into the coronavirus pandemic. Needless to say, the backdrop of a global pandemic has added an even darker and more serious edge to conversations with my students about the end of the world--already a weighty topic on its own. As we moved from zombies and killer robots to Biblical apocalypses and dystopian futures, those imagined end times scenarios increasingly felt contrived next to the very real disaster unfolding all around us. This pandemic has forced everyone to experience what it means to suddenly have your social lives disrupted, and in true apocalyptic form it has revealed important insights into contemporary political culture (both welcome and painful).

In trying to help my own students make sense of this shifting landscape, and based on feedback from them, I revised the final weeks of our class to take a step back from the present and offer some much-needed historical perspective on past pandemics and fears about the end of the world. Like earlier moments of contagion that threatened the body politic--from the Plague of Justinian and the Black Death to more recent cases of Spanish Influenza and Ebola--understanding these past pandemics can provide insights into our own crisis.



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## Pandemic Pedagogies (cont.)

Given the short period of time, I chose two key moments to focus on--the Bubonic Plague of the mid-1300s and the Spanish flu in the early 1900s--since they offer important contrasts in the scope of their impacts (catastrophic versus severe) and the means by which they spread (bacterial versus viral). In putting class materials together it immediately became apparent that there was a lot of interest in how to use the coronavirus as a teachable moment, particularly to help students think about the ways a global pandemic draws out long-standing social and political inequities and fears.

One noteworthy example is the [#coronavirussyllabusproject](#), which is a "crowdsourced cross-disciplinary resource" compiled with numerous resources for teaching about the coronavirus and other pandemics. The project was even highlighted in a [recent article](#) by *Time Magazine* exploring how universities in the US are responding to coronavirus.

On March 11 Fausto-Sterling [tweeted](#): "I've been thinking about the virtual classroom. It seems like a perfect moment to scrap the existing syllabus and teach the moment. No matter the course topic, I can see how plagues, pandemics, and health care could become the meat of the lesson. [#teachthevirus](#)."

Another shared coronavirus teaching resource worth looking into is being curated by the *Teaching and Learning Anthropology Journal*, called [Teaching COVID-19: An Anthropology Syllabus Project](#). There are a number of other great resources that have emerged in the past few months covering a wider range of topics now found under the [#teachthevirus](#) and

[#coronavirussyllabus](#) hashtags. And in my own circle of religious studies and political ecology peers a recent [call for papers went out](#) on the theme of 'Religion and the Coronavirus Pandemic' from the *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* (JSRNC). As [Religion News Service](#) coverage clearly suggests, the diverse shape of religious responses to the coronavirus will surely yield a wealth of new scholarship on the intersections of religion and coronavirus.

One day we may look back on this as not just a teachable moment, but as a defining moment in our teaching.

**Chris Crews teaches about Religion, Nature and the End of the World in CORH**



# Climate Strikes as Rites of Mourning the Future

## Sarah M. Pike



(to read the entire essay: <https://tif.ssrc.org/2020/02/24/climate-strikes-as-rites-of-mourning-the-future/>)

On Friday, December 6, 2019, a day of national climate strikes, I heard drums outside my monthly morning meeting at California State University, Chico. Climate strikers from our university and local high schools were marching through campus carrying signs, drumming, chanting, and accumulating people as they went. I walked out of the meeting to join them. For a while the president of the university joined the march, as did other university employees as we passed their offices and classrooms. The march followed a circuitous route through the halls of campus buildings and across open quads, a visual and aural reminder of the future we face. Chants and drums created a soundscape of protest, while signs and banners challenged business as usual. Instead of simply gathering in the university's officially designated free speech area, the march permeated many different spaces on campus with its messages: "A Livable Future," "Strike for the Climate," "For the air we breathe, For the water we drink, For the planet we call home," "Extinction Rebellion," and "Fridays for Future."

The December 6 strike was initiated by young people to protest government inaction on climate-related issues and to demand a livable future. That day, in an act of national synchronicity, students walked out of high schools and colleges across the United States. Social media powered the spread of the Friday strike with hashtags like #FridaysForFuture and #ClimateStrike.

## Climate Strikes as Rites of Mourning the Future (cont.)

Young people and their supporters of all ages acted together, aspiring toward a different future than the tragic one that seems destined to come their way. Related protests have also included Extinction Rebellion's [Red Rebel Brigade](#), who maintained a silent vigil in the streets. Dressed in red robes, their faces painted a ghostly white, Red Brigaders say their red attire "symbolises the common blood we share with all species, that unifies us and makes us one." And it also symbolizes the blood that will be spilled in the future.

Climate strikes are rites of mourning the future, lamenting current catastrophes, and demanding world leaders to radically reduce carbon emissions. The bodies of young people acting together on rural lands, city streets, and in front of powerful political institutions such as embassies transform public, secular spaces into sacred spaces. They ritually invoke sacred relationships with other humans and other species that are worth the sacrifice of strikers' own comfort and safety. These young protesters express ultimate values with their vulnerable and precarious bodies: the integrity of the planet, the right to a livable future, the dire situation of species (including humans) facing extinction.

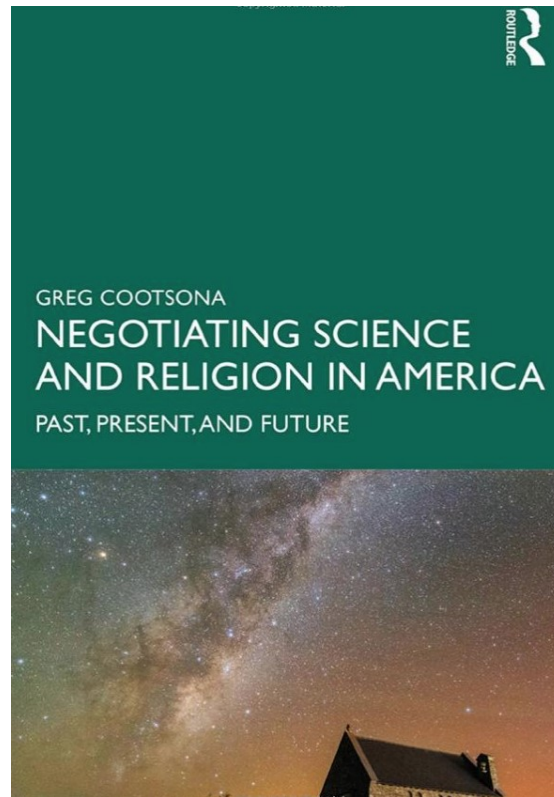
Some climate strikers belong to religious communities, but many of them are agnostic, atheist, or "spiritual but not religious." Some embody a kind of nature religion, as described in the work of scholars [Catherine Albanese](#) and [Bron Taylor](#), in which nature is seen as a sacred center and human lives are inextricably connected to the lives of other species and "Mother Earth." Young climate strikers' actions both constitute and express religious commitment in the sense of what matters most, now and in the future to come. They are a prime example of how secular, spiritual, and religious categories have become blurred, as explored in Ann Taves's and Courtney Bender's 2012 book, [What Matters: Ethnographies of Value in a Not So Secular Age](#). Youth-led climate strikes are important sites for exploring the dynamics of contemporary spirituality, and especially youth spirituality, in secular spaces. Instead of anticipating death, young climate strikers want the rest of the world to choose a life-filled future, meaning not simply a future in which life in some form continues, but one in which all humans and other species flourish. Theirs is a mourning meant to spur action....

Climate strikers draw on the efficacy of ritual to save the earth and their future. Their bodies, acting together, marching or sitting in, seize and occupy spaces of state power, demanding a response. Thunberg sitting in front of Parliament challenged the everyday, taken-for-granted realities of nation-states where political agendas have outweighed the urgency of the climate crisis....

As rites of mourning and hope, climate strikes consecrate the streets and act out utopian aspirations. They insist the world must become otherwise than it is. Through the physical process of walking out of school, into streets, identifying with other species and with marginalized human communities, and gathering together diverse groups of people, climate strikers enact the social order they want to bring about. Their actions are interventions, ruptures in the social order, that turn streets that would normally carry cars burning fossil fuels into sites of resistance, grief, and utopian hope for a different future.

***Sarah Pike teaches about Religion, Nature & New Religious Movements and is Chair of CORH***

## Greg Cootsona on Science and Religion in America



We caught up with Greg Cootsona, CORH lecturer and specialist in science and religion, and spoke to him about his new book on this topic: *Negotiating Science and Religion in America: Past, Present, and Future* (Routledge, 2020). If you'd like to hear his interview on the North State Public Radio program, "Nancy's Bookshelf," you can find it [here](https://www.mynspr.org/post/nancys-bookshelf-greg-cootsona-0): <https://www.mynspr.org/post/nancys-bookshelf-greg-cootsona-0>

CORH Connection: *Why did you write your recent book?*

Greg Cootsona: I wanted to make a contribution to the field, and frankly, though there are really excellent treatments of science and religion out there, no one had offered an overview of how the specific context of the United States has affected the interaction of these two cultural forces.

CC: *What is the book about?*

GC: As the book jacket says, "Science and religion represent two powerful forces that continue to influence the American cultural landscape. *Negotiating Science and Religion in America* sketches an intellectual-cultural history from the Puritans to the twenty-first century, focusing on the sometimes turbulent relationship between the two. Using the past as a guide for what is happening today, this volume engages research from key scholars and the author's work on emerging adults' attitudes in order to map out the contours of the future for this exciting, and sometimes controversial, field." I think that works fairly well.

## Greg Cootsona on Science and Religion in America (cont.)

CC: *How do you approach the topic?*

GC: I come at religion and science, not as a scientist, but from the angle of religious studies and humanities, and this means that I approach both science and religion as cultural forces that have profound influences on our lives.

CC: *Did your research produce unexpected results?*

GC: There were three surprises:

1. The depth of the interaction between science and religion throughout American history: Sometimes this interaction is phrased as relating “head” (science and rationality) and “heart” (religion and emotion), which is a helpful typology, but distorts how religion engages rationality and how passion often drives scientists into what they study.

2. The ongoing presence of racism in pursuit of science: This expressed itself profoundly in the explosion of eugenics from about 1900-1930, which was not a fringe movement, but was financed by the U.S. government and huge foundations as well as studied at elite institutions like Yale and Stanford. I’m also concerned that eugenics could come back with today’s scientifically and technologically based transhumanism.

3. American religious individualism: Throughout our history, we love to make religion our own individual practice, which is finding an explosion among the nones, who can also be called the “spiritual but not religious.”

CC: *Can we hear more about these?*

GC: Audit one of my classes. Check out my blog, <https://cootsona.blogspot.com>. Or of course, buy the book.

CC: *Are there any emerging trends in the study of science and religion that you would like to mention to us here?*

GC: Here’s my Top 11 list in increasing order of importance:

1. The relationship of religious faith and reason.
2. How God can act in a world that science describes?
3. The effect of evolutionary thought on understanding religious traditions.
4. The power of genetics, CRISPR and the specter of eugenics.
5. Psychology, neuroscience, and the cognitive science of religion and, as one example, the degree to which religious life is a natural function of our brains.

6. Cosmology and astrobiology and how, for example, the presence of other intelligent beings (ETs) changes our view of religion.

7. Big Data: What religious ethics has to say in a world where huge multinational companies know a great deal about us.

8. Technology, AI, and transhumanism and the promise (or horror) of making better human beings.

9. Scientific insights into race.

10. Sex, gender, and sexuality.

11. Global climate change and how religions can help with, but have also hurt, the global problem of climate change.

CC: *Anything you wish you’d added to your list?*

12. Trusting medicine in an age of anti-vaxxers and COVID-19

CC: *Do you have a final thought?*

GC: Science and religion have, most often, been in an amazingly intricate and often collaborative relationship, not—as many people think—always at war. If anyone wants to grasp American life and thought, it’s certainly worth studying science and religion.

**Greg Cootsona teaches about Religion and Science and Western Religions in CORH**



## “A cubic yard of soil per person”: The Green New Tech of Composting Bodies

Sarah Gagnebin



Recently I've been musing as we stare at each other through computer screens, boxed up neatly in our little digital personas, that we are all potentially about one cubic yard of soil. Lately we've been relying so much on technology to help us in life, but can new technologies help us in death? While the process of composting organic material is hardly new tech, [Katrina Spade's](#) vision of composting human bodies, or "Recomposition", certainly is innovative.

In Spade's work, she is used to defending her recomposition process with statistics that illuminate the pollution inherent in the current funeral industry, and the ecological benefits of composting bodies instead of embalming or cremating them. My take on Spade's work has more to do with its implications for religious and ritually oriented folks in our nation.

Recomposition involves a deceased body being placed into a container with woodchips and other natural material that will facilitate the composting process. The facility in Washington State designed by Spade relies on simple but specific systems of heat, pressure, and timed displacement to thoroughly compost remains. Within about thirty days the body has been transformed into soil and can be taken home by loved ones for a memorial garden.



## “A cubic yard of soil per person”: The Green New Tech of Composting Bodies (cont.)

The composting process is more economical than modern funeral systems and far more ecologically conscious. “[Cremation] uses an energy-intensive process to turn bodies into ash, polluting the air and contributing to climate change. All told, cremations in the US emit a staggering 600 million pounds of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere annually.” Consider also that formaldehyde, one of the main ingredients in embalming fluid, is a carcinogen. Several studies link workplace exposure to formaldehyde to increased risk of specific kinds of cancer. Embalming fluids from bodies, and heavy metals, wood finishing products, synthetic fabrics, etc. from caskets can often contaminate soil and groundwater.

We should feel hopeful at the ecological implications of the “new” death tech, but what about the religious and ritual implications? Recomposition allows for many rituals, and precludes very few. Still, many religious traditions are not in favor of composting human bodies.

Catholicism has taken an early firm stance against recomposition but, considering a history of changes in the deathways of Catholicism brought on by the popularity of newer death technologies (cremation became accepted by the Church in 1962), we may well see a future in which Catholics are affirmed by their faith to compost their corpses.

Judaism’s responses will likely be varied with Reform traditions leaning more toward contemporary death innovations like recomposition, and Orthodox traditions standing firmly against it, citing theological mandates regarding “burial in earth” and the “place” of bones. However, we may indeed see some acceptance of recomposition in the future of Judaism. One look at [Yarkon cemetery outside Tel Aviv](#), with its stories-high stacked graves, shows us the possibility of movement toward new deathways in even Orthodox traditions.

Spiritual but not religious folks may be among those who benefit the most from recomposition. “The emerging interest in spirituality in society without a corresponding increase in institutional religious participation ([Bibby 2006](#)) implies that

many individuals may not have formal religious resources to draw upon in time of death.” This may mean a lack of ritual and support when it comes to our deathways, and deciding what we might want done with our remains.

Kristina Spade’s innovation allows for ritual, ceremony, and meaning-making for both religious and non-religious folks seeking to engage with their grief. [Bill Hoy](#) says “It’s almost as if by disposing of the body we dispose of our grief, and what I know as a clinician is it’s exactly the opposite. . .” “What encourages me is that Spade has made provision for there to be ceremony in ways that the family finds meaningful.”

In life, we so frequently use technology and often enough we focus that tech toward ecological matters, but considering that in this nation millions of us will leave behind a body, perhaps we should be focusing more of our technological energies towards our death.

Don’t let the pixelated, on-screen versions of your co-humans fool you, we are all organic beings, breathing and bleeding in real life bodies that will one day have to be dealt with. With the innovation of recomposition we have the opportunity to deal with our bodies in an ecologically responsible and ritually meaningful way.



**Sarah Gagnebin teaches about  
Death and the Afterlife as well as  
Women and Religion in CORH**

# Playing with Fire: The Possibilities and Pitfalls of CRISPR

Andrew Flescher and Joel Zimbelman

The frontiers of technology advance today more rapidly than in any previous era. While each innovation brings the optimistic prospect of alleviating great suffering and sorrow, each is also accompanied by unintended, often unwelcome, side-consequences. “CRISPR,” Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats, represents the crux of a bacterial defense system underlying new genome editing capabilities in which genes in living cells and organisms can be permanently altered, correcting for mutations and, as a result, potentially eliminating defects in whole species over time. Aside from insufficiently considered dangers that ensue when such well-intended technology is deployed, there are moral issues to consider.



Would we want to be part of a species resistant to experiencing defects even if we could be? We can surely welcome medical innovation that reduces undue hardship, but we can still wonder whether there is a threshold past which a human being altogether immune from experiencing serious flaws is no longer an eligible participant in the human condition. At the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting in San Diego in November 2019, Drs. Joel Zimbelman and Andy Flescher presented an evaluation of CRISPR technology along these lines, examining its promise and perils.

Cost-benefit analysis aside, CRISPR technology is here with us to stay. There is no turning back the clock. The prospect of availing ourselves of genetic editing tools which can accomplish more of what we want, with greater precision, faster, and cheaper than ever before, is too tempting not to utilize. Even if, in deference to a cautious approach, we resisted the temptation at home to move too quickly, others abroad would not. There are also other motives and dangers to consider. For some, significant wealth stands to be made on treatments and enhancements. Researchers are and have always been seduced by the possible. For these reasons, technical innovation tends to outpace international oversight of CRISPR, leading to a globally decentralized market with no unified standards for safety. With CRISPR and related gene editing tools, we thus assume new and unknown risks with potentially catastrophic consequences for the biosphere, just as we seek tangible benefits to improve the welfare and well-being of our species. While CRISPR technology is here to stay, bringing with it untold promise, we should embrace it neither too rashly nor uncritically, and most of all remember the humanistic—and humane—purpose for which it presumably has, in the first place, come to be.

***Joel Zimbelman is Professor Emeritus in CORH and Andrew Flescher, formerly of CORH, now teaches about Ethics and Public Health at SUNY Stony Brook***

# Thus Is It Tweeted: Religion on Twitter

## Daniel Veidlinger

Twitter, which is regularly used by over 20% of Americans, is host to countless tweets about religion. Many of those tweeting about matters of faith are remarkably prolific and send numerous tweets each day related to some aspect of religion, to which there are also often many replies that build into a lively discussion of the issues, with praise and criticism aplenty. The amount and quality of tweets about religion suggest that this platform is becoming an important source of religious ideas, images and debates. In fact, many people are engaging with religious ideas far more intensely on Twitter than they might in a place of religious worship. In a random sample of 420,600 tweets collected over three days in August, 2019, I found 242 tweets mentioning the term “religion” and 501 with the term “prayer.” For comparison, there were 239 tweets discussing pop singer Rihanna, 203 discussing baseball, 32 discussing gun laws, 447 discussing wine and 1748 discussing football. This suggests that religion is receiving a level of engagement on Twitter comparable to other popular themes and issues in contemporary society. In some important ways, the anonymity and distance provided by Twitter can actually deepen and improve the level of discussion about religion. Unlike the hushed voices and insincere, conflict-avoiding nods that often accompany face-to-face conversation about religious topics in the offline world, on Twitter people are less afraid of offending people by disagreeing strongly with their opinions.



One of the enduring questions that arises in the context of religion online is whether digital media can give voice to marginalized and disenfranchised religious groups that would otherwise struggle to access the print and broadcast media resources required to get their message out to the public. In the Fall of 2019, I studied tweets that included the hashtags of #Christianity, #Islam, or #Buddhism and analyzed them using the R statistical programming language with an eye to the following features: who initially produced the tweet, what was the topic of the tweet, how many retweets did it receive, how many followers do the original tweeters have.

My research suggested that Twitter is an important site to investigate if we are to understand the nature of religion in the media environment of the contemporary world and the content of tweets should be taken seriously as valid and meaningful expressions of attitudes and ideas connected to religion and spirituality. Twitter can provide a platform for alternative and marginalized voices to be heard in ways they never could have been previously, but they do not appear to drown out the ones that are traditionally regarded as most authoritative. There was no statistically significant correlation between the formal religious authority of a tweeter and the number of retweets received in any of the three religions analyzed. In the total set of results, a user who did not have any official standing in the religious hierarchy was just as likely to get a lot of retweets as was one with some authority, such as a church leader or well-known preacher. This contrasts with traditional print or broadcast media, in which individuals with no standing are normally not able to give voice to their pronouncements on religious matters at all. Many of the unofficial accounts were also very active, sending out several tweets each day, every day, on the subject of religion, suggesting that they are fervently engaged in building a community of people who read, retweet and comment on these topics. It will certainly be interesting to follow religion on Twitter in the coming years and see how these communities develop new strategies for getting their message across, and how – or whether- this changes the shape of religion in the future.

***Daniel Veidlinger teaches Asian Religions in CORH***

## 2020 CORH OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

### Comparative Religion and Humanities

#### Outstanding Leadership Award

**ANGELA STIEBER**



Angela Stieber is a graduating senior majoring in Religious Studies. She has served as both Student Ambassador for Religious Studies in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts and an officer in the Comparative Religion and Humanities Society since Fall 2018, this past year as club president. Angela has been a delightful participant in our hybrid classes, inspiring students around her. More than any student in the Department's recent memory, Angela has emerged as an outstanding leader who has embraced her role not only as a Religious Studies scholar but also as an advocate for the program and the academic discipline. In addition to serving as a Student Ambassador, Angela has helped the Department with new initiatives aimed at promoting the Religious Studies Online Degree Completion program; including a great new marketing video that we know will generate increased interest in the program. Angela has shown extraordinary determination and resilience in her journey to the degree, which she is completing this spring before heading on to graduate work in the excellent master's program in religion at Rice University in Houston, Texas.

Angela was also awarded:

**Brooks Thorlaksson HFA Outstanding Student Leader Award**

## 2020 CORH OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

### Outstanding Online Religious Studies Major

#### TERRENCE BELL



Terrence Bell joined the Religious Studies program at Chico State in 2018. Terrence resides in Sacramento, California, where he currently works full-time for a California law enforcement agency. As a first-generation college student, scholarship in RELS has not only provided Mr. Bell the opportunity to acquire an enriched understanding of social and cultural experiences, but has also been instrumental in fostering the knowledge, skills, and abilities conducive to engage in the rigors of education with passion and confidence. Terrence is an online student who has shone from day one. He always writes extremely insightful comments on the lectures and goes through them so carefully that we can use his notes to remind us what we said. His papers are invariably well written and well researched, displaying all the skills we would like to see in a budding scholar of religion: they are theoretically sophisticated, carefully argued and show an impressive sensitivity to the complex valences that are at play in the religions of the world. He is a model online student. Upon graduation, Terrence plans to matriculate at a local law school and study public law.

## 2020 CORH OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

### Outstanding Religious Studies Major

**MICHAEL RISER**



Michael Riser came to Chico State in 2017 after studying and working in his home state of Texas for many years. A double major in Comparative Religion and Asian Studies with a Japanese minor, Michael has displayed an unflagging work ethic, a bottomless hunger for intellectual adventure, and has served as a College of HFA Student Ambassador. He studied Japanese at a direct exchange to Shinshu University in Matsumoto, Japan during 2018-2019 and studied at a Buddhist temple in Ningbo, China over the summer of 2017. Michael has truly risen to the demands that we have made on him and prepared excellent papers, presentations, and tests that demonstrate he has learned a tremendous amount about the religions of the world. He is an open-minded and adventurous thinker who is not afraid to ask big questions and is eager to do the deep research needed to answer them responsibly. He is able to bring together knowledge from a variety of domains both within and outside of comparative religion to provide context and insight into the issues that we deal with in this program. He would love to continue working (and possibly studying) at CSU Chico, and is considering future study of Buddhism.

Michael was also awarded:

**Outstanding Student in Asian Studies**

**Cum Laude**

## 2020 CORH OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

### Outstanding Humanities Major

#### YULIANA CALVILLO SOLIS



Yuliana Calvillo Solis, who is representing the College as an HFA Student Ambassador, joined us at Chico State in 2015 to double major in Humanities and French, with a double minor in European Studies and Middle Eastern Studies. Yuliana is an intrepid Humanist and a delightful and sparkling presence in all her classes and many activities at Chico State. Following her first year, Yuliana traveled to France for a year of study at the CSU's IP campus in Aix-en-Provence. Nevertheless, she soon realized that one year was not enough. She remedied this intolerable situation by taking the exceptional step of applying to spend an additional year studying abroad in Paris. She returned wearing only black clothing, of course. Recently she has been teaching herself medieval French and Spanish (and has completed three semesters of Arabic language as well!). Yuliana's Honors Thesis in Humanities centers on the representation of Muslims in the two foundational epic poems of medieval France and Spain, *La Chanson de Roland* and *El Cantar del Mio Cid*. Yuliana hopes to one day earn a PhD, and wishes to use her knowledge of English, Spanish, and French to work with refugees and immigrants around the world.

Yuliana is also graduating with:

**Magna Cum Laude**

**Honors in Humanities**

## Achievements

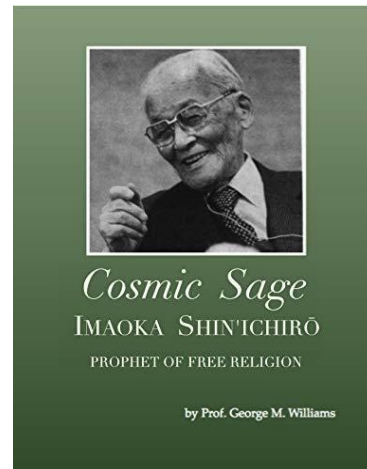
**Congratulations to two Emeritus Faculty on their recent publications:**

**Don Heinz's** new book, *After Trump: Achieving a New Social Gospel*, has come out from Cascade Books. The book examines the birth of a new social gospel in the aftermath of previous challenges such as the Great Depression and racial inequality, and examines whether and how liberal voices can fashion a new social gospel in the wake of the Trump era.

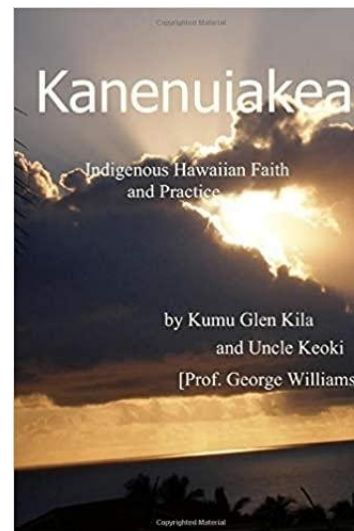


**George Williams** has penned *Cosmic Sage: Imaoka Shin'ichirō, Prophet of Free Religion*, available on Amazon Kindle.

This book chronicles Prof. Williams' fascinating encounter with an enigmatic human being whom Buddhists thought to be a Bodhisattva, Shintoists a living Kami and Christians a virtual saint. Religious liberals and scholars considered him the Emerson of Japan. This fascinating account explores how Imaoka Shin'ichirō lived multiple religious identities, yet preserved the integrity of each.



**Williams** has also published *Kanenuiakea: Hawaiian Indigenous Faith and Practice*, co-authored with one of Hawaii's most important religious leaders, Kumu Glen Kila. This handbook describes the faith and practices of a living Indigenous Hawaiian religion, Kanenuiakea. After two centuries being *huna* (hidden, sacred) because of persecution and fear, its faith and practice is now shared publicly in so far as it will not be exploited.





## Achievements (cont.)

**Sarah Pike's** recent articles:

"Paganism," in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood Studies*, edited by Daniel Thomas Cook (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publishing, May 2020)

*Ritual and Democracy: Protests, Publics and Performances*, edited by Sarah M. Pike, Jone Salomonsen, and Paul-Francois Tremlett (forthcoming June 2020 from Equinox Publishing)

"What Lies Beneath: Wildfires and Indigenous Fire Knowledge," *Counterpoint: Navigating Knowledge*: <https://www.counterpointknowledge.org/what-lies-beneath-wildfires-and-indigenous-fire-knowledge/> (March 2020)

"Climate Strikes as Rites of Mourning the Future," *The Immanent Frame: Secularism, Religion, and the Public Sphere*: <https://tif.ssrc.org/2020/02/24/climate-strikes-as-rites-of-mourning-the-future/> (February 2020)

"White Supremacy at the Farmer's Market," *Counterpoint: Navigating Knowledge*: <https://www.counterpointknowledge.org/what-lies-beneath-wildfires-and-indigenous-fire-knowledge/> (January 2020)

Sarah also was Co-chair, Ritual Studies Unit, American Academy of Religion

**Bruce Grelle** was quoted in a Time Magazine story regarding President Trump's guidelines on prayer in public schools on January 16, 2020.

<https://time.com/5765829/trump-school-prayer-evangelicals/>

<https://today.csuchico.edu/religion-and-diversity-of-thought/>

He also served as Respondent to "A Gramscian Reading of Robinson Jeffers' *Give Your Heart to the Hawks and Such Counsels You Gave to Me as Historical Documents of the Great Depression*" by Richard Drake (University of Montana) at the annual conference of the Robinson Jeffers Association, Carmel, CA, February 22, 2020 and presented "Rethinking Consumption and Well-Being" at the annual "This Way to Sustainability" Conference, CSU, Chico, March 26, 2020.

**Congratulations are also due to our incoming Chair Daniel Veidlinger** who has recently won Professional Achievement Honors from CSU, Chico for his excellent scholarship and teaching.

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***Have a great Summer from  
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