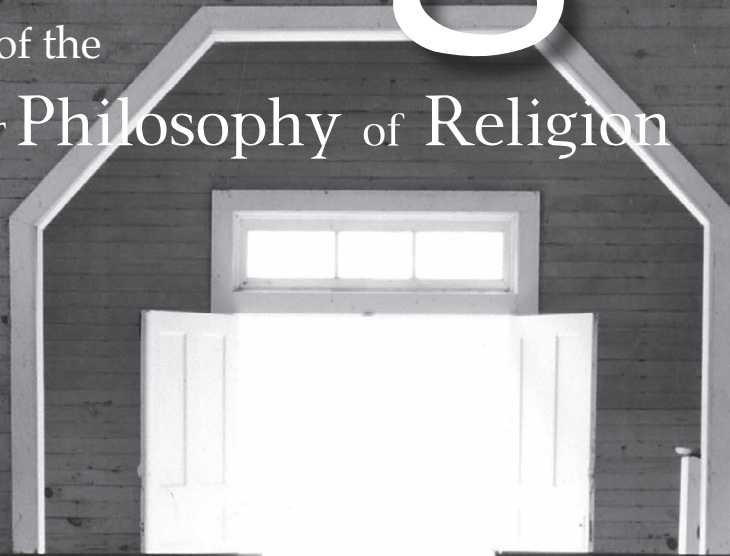




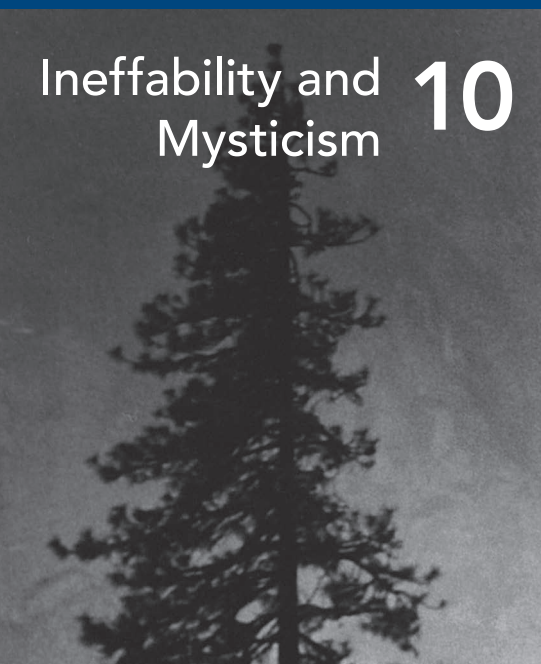
# Logoi

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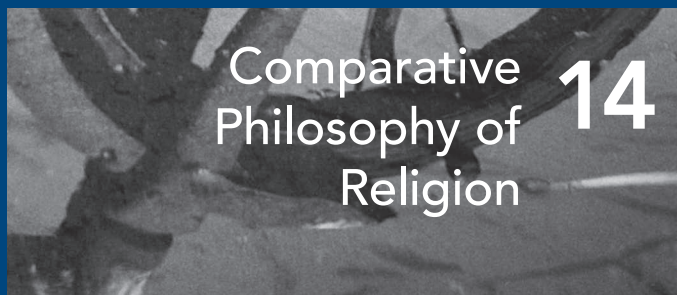
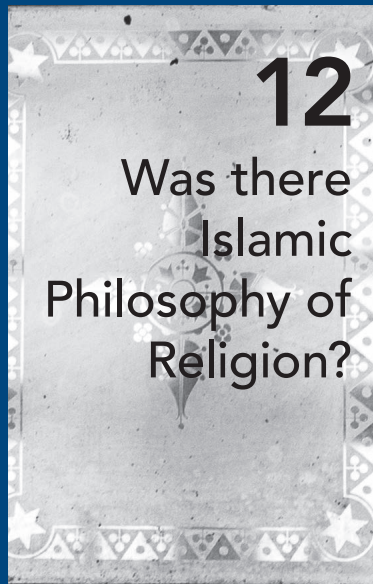




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The Center for Philosophy of Religion is proud to present the fourth issue of λογοι, a publication of high quality articles and interviews about the field of philosophy of religion and the Center's activities.

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Jeremiah Cox  
Joyce Zurawski

# YEAR IN REVIEW

The Center is now in its 40th year! Over the past four decades, we have hosted more than 250 scholars from around the world, spearheaded cutting edge research and cross-disciplinary collaboration through our large research initiatives, and engaged the wider public through debates, discussion forums, and competitions. This year has been an exciting continuation of these themes.

Our two grants, *The Experience Project* and *Hope & Optimism: Conceptual and Empirical Investigations*, are nearly finished. These initiatives expanded the scope of human knowledge and captured the public's attention through a number of creative programs. Over the past three years, these projects allowed us to fund more than 150 researchers in the social sciences, philosophy, and theology to explore topics at the heart of the human condition. Though our *Hope & Optimism* project, we will produce the premiere of "I Carry Your Heart," the Hope on Stage competition winning play by Georgette Kelly, in Ithaca, NY, and Los Angeles this spring. Kelly's play explores the relationship between a young poet dealing with the death of her mother and the woman who received her mother's heart through organ donation. People from all over the country told three-minute stories of hope and what it means in their lives as part of our Hope on Screen film competition. Winning films can be viewed at: [hopeoptimism.com](http://hopeoptimism.com).

The fall was an especially exciting and busy time at the Center. On September 22, we hosted "Women and the Church: An Inter-Tradition Dialogue," featuring panelists Sister Simone Campbell, Rachel Held Evans, Mary Rice Hasson, and moderated by the Rev. Amy Peeler. At this lively event, nearly 300 audience members listened as our participants discussed whether Christianity is bad for women. In November, our Analytic Theology Project (2010–2014) continued its influence on the young and flourishing field of analytic theology through the sixth annual Analytic Theology Lecture at the AAR and SBL, originally established as part of that project. This year, Sarah Coakley, the Norris-Hulse Professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge, delivered her lecture, "Sin and Desire in Analytic Theology: A Return to Genesis 3." Earlier in the month, our Alvin Plantinga Fellow, Christopher Menzel, Professor of Philosophy at Texas A&M University, delivered the fifteenth annual Plantinga Fellow lecture, titled "In Defense of the Possibilism-Actualism Distinction."

Our grant projects and annual fellowship program continue to bring top scholars from around the world to Notre Dame in order to collaborate and develop lifelong friendships. On most Fridays, fellows are joined by Notre Dame faculty, graduate students, and visiting scholars to discuss works-in-progress. This year, we have discussed a range of topics,



including religious trauma, divine ineffability, disability and theodicy, religious indifference, and forgiveness, among others. The engaging conversations often continue over lunch in the philosophy department lounge (or outside when the weather's nice!) and over a pint at our weekly pub nights each Thursday held at local venues, of which there are a growing number in the South Bend area.

The Center continues to engage the undergraduate community at Notre Dame through our popular *Food for Thought* series. Along with a catered meal, we bring a speaker to campus to give a lecture followed by Q & A and small group discussion. In February, Center Fellow Lorraine Juliano Keller presented, "Should We Believe What We Don't Understand?" To see what Food for Thought is all about, take a look at our promotional video at ([philreligion.nd.edu/calendar/food-for-thought/](http://philreligion.nd.edu/calendar/food-for-thought/)).

Our video archive continues to expand. Visit our websites ([philreligion.nd.edu](http://philreligion.nd.edu); [hopeoptimism.org](http://hopeoptimism.org); [the-experience-project.org](http://the-experience-project.org)) and follow us on Facebook to view exciting content in philosophy, theology, and the social sciences.

We update our *Global Philosophy of Religion Calendar* (available on the Center website) monthly so those interested in philosophy of religion can stay informed of upcoming events and opportunities in the discipline. Please send updates to: [philreligion@nd.edu](mailto:philreligion@nd.edu).

Our annual Logos Workshop in Philosophical Theology is in its ninth year. We are excited to announce that our friends at the new Logos Institute at the University of St. Andrews, directed by Alan Torrance, will host the 2017 Logos Workshop from June 1–3 in Scotland. This year's topic will be *God, History and the Incarnation*. Registration is required for the conference, but is open to anyone who would like to attend.

Thanks to all who have made 2016–2017 another fabulous year at the Center!



# STORIES OF HOPE

Josh Seachris

Nearly 800 play scripts . . . over 100 short films, all telling stories of hope. As it turns out, people have a lot to say about hope. From the very beginning of the *Hope & Optimism Project*, we wanted to hear the voices of those outside the laboratory, lecture hall, and cloistered study. To explore hope from all angles meant listening to filmmakers, playwrights, amateur videographers, and a host of others as intently as we listened to social scientists, philosophers, and theologians. Our researchers are illuminating long-hidden aspects of hope, but there remain facets that others are better-equipped to raise to our awareness.

Hope on Screen winning filmmaker, Keaton Davis, when reflecting on the unique way that film can convey and cultivate hope, remarked:

“Hope, as a feeling of expectation and desire, lends itself to an emotional response. I believe that film is, at its core, an emotional medium, through camera placement and editing. Other forms of art and communication may successfully present its subjects with emotion. Film, combining multiple forms of art and communication, can command more powerful emotional responses, including hope.”

And so we turned to story-tellers, those in film and theater, to help us tell the fuller story of hope.

Through our Hope on Stage and Hope on Screen competitions, we challenged artists to create original plays and films that explore the concept of hope. More than a few were up to the challenge. The response was overwhelming. We received nearly 800 submissions to our play completion, and another 125 to our screen competition.

We awarded playwright, Georgette Kelly, our Hope on Stage grand prize for her play, “I Carry Your Heart.” Kelly holds a B.A. in Performance Studies from Northwestern University, and an MFA in Playwriting from Hunter College. Her other plays include “Faith in a Fallen World” and “In the Belly of the Whale.” We will produce “I Carry Your Heart,” which will have a rolling premiere at the Hangar Theatre in Ithaca, New York on April 27–29, and then at the Bootleg Theater in Los Angeles on May 19–21. Kelly’s winning play

explores the relationship between a young poet dealing with the death of her mother and the woman who receives the mother’s heart through organ donation.

Filmmaker Keaton Davis won our Hope on Screen competition for his three-minute film, HOPE IS. HOPE IS powerfully conveys how music brings moments of clarity—and hope—to a woman with Alzheimer’s who cannot otherwise remember her daughter’s name. Along with Davis, eleven other filmmakers, some established, many amateur, received awards for their compelling, sometimes whimsical stories of hope. We heard from people all over the country—schoolchildren in Oklahoma, professional filmmakers in Chicago and New York, a grandmother from Hawaii—on what hope means in their lives. We were amazed at how much of a story a person could convey in three minutes.

Both Kelly and Davis will join us for our capstone festival in Los Angeles from May 19–21. During this three-day event, we will celebrate the tremendous success of the *Hope & Optimism Project*. Our researchers will speak on how hope helps us overcome seemingly impossible situations, how optimism promotes health and well-being, and other topics on the place of hope in human life. They will be joined by keynote speakers, including Tali Sharot and Cornel West. Kelly’s “I Carry Your Heart” will make its west coast debut, we’ll have staged readings of our runner-up plays, blues bands, and other activities. Big Think, an online knowledge forum with over 4 million followers, will help us promote and cover the event.

Through our public engagement initiatives, people from all walks of life are helping us tell stories of hope, stories in need of telling on stage and screen every bit as much as in journals, the lab, and classroom. Thank you to all who are helping us tell them.

To learn more about the *Hope & Optimism Project*, visit: [hopeoptimism.org](http://hopeoptimism.org).



# WOMEN AND THE CHURCH

Catherine Odell



JEREMIAH COX

"The church has wounded women in many ways, but it has also been one of the most healing places for me as a woman," observed Rachel Held Evans, a best-selling Christian author

Evans was the opening speaker at "Women and the Church: An Inter-Tradition Dialogue." The event's provocative subtitle, "Is Christianity Bad for Women?" filled the auditorium with students, faculty and curious Christians.

The Center for Philosophy of Religion also invited two well-known Catholic women speakers: Social Service Sr. Simone Campbell, popular national spokesman for the Nuns on the Bus movement and Mary Rice Hasson, a Catholic conservative and fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

Evans launched the evening by recounting a faith testimony she gave as a teenager to her evangelical youth group.

"After giving my testimony, I sat down next to a guy I went to high school with. He said, 'Wow, Rachel, you're a really good speaker and preacher. Too bad you're a girl.' I knew exactly what he meant. I was part of a church that forbade women from teaching and leading." Nonetheless, she said, she deeply loved her church. "These were people who loved me through hard times... who told me that I was a beloved child of God." However, she chose to leave her

church because it would not welcome LGBT people — an exclusion Rachel found inconsistent with the Gospel.

Hasson said she understood the challenges women have faced in male domains. However, she noted that the church has defended the rights and God-given dignity of women around the world for centuries.

Hasson's second point was philosophical.

"It's impossible to know if something — like Christianity — is good unless you know the purpose of it. So, what's the purpose of Christianity?"

The purpose, she said, involves God the creator who made each person in his image and desires for them to have eternal life with him. "And so the goal of the church is to help us move toward God and eternal life."

Despite admitting the Catholic church has had flawed leaders, she expressed her belief that the Catholic church is a supernatural gift. "I look at the structure, the authority, and the truths that the church hands on. I believe that those come from God." An all-male priesthood, she maintained, is part of that God-given structure. "That's not mine to question."

As Campbell began, she responded to Hasson.



"I come with much less certitude than you have, Mary," she said, admitting that the certitude was "disturbing." Campbell shared personal experiences of her life in the church — as a woman. She had, as she called it, "an intensely rabid feminist phase."

It was only after she became a lawyer and opened the Community Law Center in Oakland, Calif., to serve the working poor that an important insight came to her.

"Part of the reason that I became a lawyer was that I couldn't become a priest," she said. "I realized that the limitation in one place pushed me to be a minister of a different sort in another place."

Campbell then remarked that the church had become locked in medieval patterns of leadership and patriarchy. "If you look at the Gospel as I read it," she said, "Jesus was often engaging women as peers, and first appeared to Mary Magdalene." In our own times, she pointed out, "I think that we're wrestling with how we should live the Gospel as culture changes."

After each speaker gave and commented on each other's opening remarks, the audience also had a chance to ask questions. The night ended with more questions than answers. But seeking answers, the panelists seemed to say, is part of the Christian journey of faith — for women and men.

*This article is adapted from an article that first appeared in National Catholic Reporter. Used with permission. <http://www.ncronline.org>.*



**ND CPR** @NDCPReligion · 22 Sep 2016

In the scripture, Jesus fosters women's leadership IMO @sr\_simone  
#WomenandtheChurch #livetweet



**Kamilla Ludwig** @TheBraveLass · 22 Sep 2016

Absolutely loving the wisdom from @maryricehasson here:

**ND CPR** @NDCPReligion

Our problem is we think we can outsmart God. We are not made by mistake. God has a purpose. @maryricehasson #WomenandtheChurch #livetweet



**Scott** @greeneyedguy23 · 22 Sep 2016

Replying to @rachelheldevans @maryricehasson @sr\_simone  
@NDCPReligion so great to hear from you all!



**Laura Lynn Yoder** @lauralynnyoder · 22 Sep 2016

Biggest take away from the @NDCPReligion forum tonight...I need more grace for those who think differently. @rachelheldevans @sr\_simone

# RELIGIOUS TRAUMA

Michelle Panchuck

Sometimes people like to reason about evil. Whence evil? Is the existence of evil logically consistent with the existence of the God of classical theism? Does evil provide evidence against theism? We ponder; we deduce; we argue. Other times, we experience evil. We tremble; we cry; we writhe in pain. Thinking about evil is fundamentally different from experiencing it.

Philosophers call the former the logical and evidential problems of evil and the latter the “pastoral” or “existential” problem of evil. As a result, most assume that the first falls within the domain of analytic philosophy of religion, while the latter is the sphere of clergy, therapists, and devout friends. This division is unhelpful because it suggests that we can make a clean distinction between the reasons a person can have and their first person

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... there is something unique, and uniquely problematic, about being harmed ... by God

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experiences of God, religious community, and the created world. In particular the two aspects of the problem meet in the phenomenon that I call *religious trauma*. By religious trauma I mean an array of negative experiences of the divine, of religious practice, of religious community, or of religious dogma that are personally transformative in ways that significantly diminish the individual’s capacity to participate in religious life in the future. Suffering in general can pose an obstacle to faith, but there is something unique, and uniquely problematic, about being harmed (or perceiving oneself to be harmed) *by God*, in the *name* of God, with the *approval* of God, or by those who claim to *represent* God.

Consider the following example:

A young child is repeatedly and brutally beaten by her religious parents. She is told that since God commanded the Israelites to stone their rebellious children, anything they do to her short of that is divinely approved and morally deserved. And she believes them. One night, they lock her out of the

house as punishment for some misdeed. Sitting alone, bruised and bleeding, gazing at the stars, the girl has an overwhelming sense of the presence of God—a presence utterly terrifying because she perceives it to be of a being who delights in her suffering. This experience fundamentally shapes her feelings about the divine. Whatever she may come to believe about her parents’ behavior and about God, she cannot shake the deep sense of fear, guilt, shame, and revulsion she has at any attempt to address herself to God.

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The experience itself both transforms her and subjects her to ... states that partially or completely preclude full participation in religious life.

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There is a sense in which it is almost irrelevant what the girl comes to *believe* about the experience or about God as a result of this experience. The experience *itself* both transforms her and subjects her to affective (e.g., fear, revulsion), physical (e.g., nausea, racing heart), and other psychological (e.g., intrusive thoughts, doubts) states that partially or completely preclude full participation in religious life. The woman’s attempts to worship are hindered because, though she may believe God to be worthy of her worship, her revulsion at every attempt to relate herself to God impedes the love and adoration she believes she must feel. She has been traumatized by religion, and that trauma negatively affects the further practice of her faith. Certainly, this is not the only way that harm done in the name of God may impact an individual, but this is one significant, and not at all rare, way that it does.

As hinted above there is a temptation to dismiss this phenomenon as creating pastoral, rather than philosophical, concerns. Since they are not problems about the *rationality* of religious belief (at least not from the standpoint of theoretical reason) or the *evidence* for the truth of some religion, they are thought to fall outside of the purview of philosophy. But pastors are often equally unable to address the topic in a helpful way. They say things like, “But you KNOW that isn’t true! Why don’t you





CRAIG STEAKS

just move on, forgive, and forget?" Both responses reveal a failure to adequately account for the nature of religious life and the role of embodied human existence in that life. While I cannot offer a complete theory of religious worship here, worship cannot simply amount to the holding

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They say things like, "But you **KNOW** that isn't true! Why don't you just move on, forgive, and forget?"

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of the right set of propositional attitudes. Even within Christianity, which strongly emphasizes the importance of right belief, paradigmatic cases of worship involve things like committing oneself to God, loving God, obeying God,

adoring God, trusting God, and even enjoying God. If this is correct, and certain kinds of religious trauma preclude the individual's ability to embodied the requisite states, might that inability count as a practical reason to deconvert? If so, what do we say of those who stay? Is it rational to continue considering oneself a follower of a God by whom one is repulsed? These are the kinds of questions my current research seeks to answer.





# INEFFABILITY AND MYSTICISM

Lorraine Juliano Keller

The claim that God is ineffable has an important place in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. An analogue of this claim is also prominent in Eastern traditions, such as Taoism and Zen Buddhism. For instance, Lao Tzu writes, “Even the finest teaching is not the Tao itself. Even the finest name is insufficient to define it. Without words, the Tao can be experienced, and without a name, it can be known.” As

Lao Tzu’s words suggest, ineffability claims are the purview of mystics. Mystics from different religious traditions tend to hold that human language and perhaps even human concepts are inadequate to describe or grasp the ultimate reality (whether God, or the Tao, or something else).

In the Christian tradition, claims of divine ineffability can be

found not only in the devotional writings, autobiographies, and theological treatises of mystics, but also in the liturgy itself. In the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, for example, God is called “the inexpressible, incomprehensible, the invisible, the ungraspable.” And St. Thomas Aquinas, whose theological treatises inform the dogma of the Catholic Church, writes, “concerning God, we cannot grasp what he is, but only what he is not, and how other beings stand in relation to him.”

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“concerning God, we cannot grasp what he is, but only what he is not, and how other beings stand in relation to him.”

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Despite its impressive pedigree, divine ineffability is widely rejected by contemporary analytic philosophers of religion. Their rejection stems from an argument that goes back to Augustine, who argued in 397 that the claim that God is ineffable is self-undermining. The basic idea is this: to express the claim that God is ineffable, we must have a word that picks out God. But if we have a word that picks out God, then God isn't ineffable after all.

Notice that there is nothing special about God in this argument—it can be applied to anything to which we attempt to attribute ineffability. If something were ineffable, we could never say that it was. And if we could never say that it was ineffable, it's plausible that we could never know it either. For suppose you knew a proposition of the form ‘x is ineffable’. If you know this proposition, then you grasp it. If you grasp it, then you have some mental way of picking out its subject. Now simply introduce a word for that subject and you can linguistically express this proposition. So the subject is not ineffable after all. So it seems that Augustine's argument shows that if some entity were ineffable, we could never know that it was.

Were the mystics just talking nonsense then? Are the liturgical and theological claims of divine ineffability false or, worse, meaningless?

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If something were ineffable, we could never say that it was.

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Some philosophers have suggested that we understand divine ineffability not as a claim about our inability to refer to God or our lack of a word that picks out God but, rather,

as a claim about our inability to express what God is like *intrinsically*. This seems to be what Aquinas was getting at in the quote above. Aquinas' claim can be glossed as saying that the only true attributions we can make to God are *negative* or *extrinsic*. So, for example, we can truly say that God is a creator, since this is an extrinsic attribution. And we can truly say that God is unlimited, since this is a negative attribution. But what about the claim that God is loving? Isn't this an intrinsic attribution? And isn't it true?

Perhaps it sounds shocking to say that the claim that God is loving, taken at face value, is not true. This is not because its negation is true but, rather, because our word ‘loving’ picks out a property of creatures. We can truly say that God is the *source* of this property (an extrinsic claim), but God doesn't possess this creaturely property. Our words, as well as the concepts they express, are too limited to describe God's nature. The aim of our concepts is to limn the structure of reality, but God is the foundation of that reality—not simply another part of it.

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... the only true attributions we can make to God are negative or extrinsic.

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Couldn't we just introduce a term to pick out whatever feature it is of God that is the source of the loving-property in creatures? Whether or not one thinks this is possible will depend on one's view of how words get their meanings—what it takes for a word to express a concept or refer to an individual. The stricter the standards for linguistic expression, the harder it will be to introduce such a term. The looser the standards, the easier it will be. But even if we had very loose standards for linguistic expression—and so could linguistically express claims about God's intrinsic nature—we wouldn't understand what our words meant.

Should we be pessimists about our ability to understand God then? No—if we want to *understand* God, we should become mystics.



# WAS THERE ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION?

Peter Adamson (LMU Munich)

Thinkers working in the pre-modern Islamic world never, as far as I know, used the phrase “philosophy of religion.” Yet religion and God of course played a central role for philosophers writing in the Islamic world, whether they were Muslim, Jewish or Christian. They dealt with some of the core issues of modern-day analytic philosophy of religion, like proofs for the existence of God, the nature and source of evil, and the possibility of miracles. In fact, anyone who is familiar with the way that philosophers of Latin Christendom dealt with such problems will be well prepared for reading authors like Avicenna or Averroes — unsurprising, given that the Latin Christian authors were so often drawing extensively on Avicenna and Averroes!

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Their method was careful study of the scripture and traditions about the life of Muhammad, but also rational argumentation designed to bring other theologians around to their way of thinking.

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There was however a significant difference between the two traditions. In Latin Christendom, the leading philosophers, from Anselm and Abelard to Aquinas and Scotus, were mostly theologians. In the case of Aquinas and Scotus, even explicitly so: they taught in the theology faculty at Paris. Exceptions to the rule, like Siger of Brabant or John Buridan, were in university arts faculties, meaning that they focused on logic and related issues. In the Islamic context, there was no such institutional division. The best-known philosophers of the tradition were independent thinkers, often with connections to court culture and other social roles, for instance as jurists or doctors. Averroes ticks all three boxes, as a confidant of the Almohad emir in Spain, a chief judge, and a medical author.

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... Avicenna devised a proof for the existence of God that would be reproduced by ... authors for centuries to come.

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Such figures did not hesitate to expound views on God and his relation to the world, and for that matter on the meaning of the revelation. Averroes famously taught that only the philosopher is in the position to produce reliable interpretations of the Quran, while Avicenna devised a proof for the existence of God that would be reproduced by Muslim, Jewish and Christian authors for centuries to

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historians of philosophy overlook the contribution of kalām when they investigate texts of the Islamic world, but I see this as a mistake.

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come. They might even have been willing to say that they were engaging in “theology”: Avicenna designates his writings on metaphysics as *ilāhiyyāt*, meaning “divine matters,” because so much of what he has to say concerns God. The Greek word *theologia* was also known to Arabic-speakers, who applied the term (transliterated into Arabic) to their translation of the Neoplatonist Plotinus, thought to be a work of Aristotle. It traveled under the title *Theology of Aristotle*. In general, philosophers inspired by Greek thought were happy to include the study of God within philosophy, typically either identifying this study with metaphysics or seeing it as a significant project within metaphysics.

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... religion and God of course played a central role for philosophers writing in the Islamic world, whether they were Muslim, Jewish or Christian.

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The wrinkle is that there was another group of people with a stronger claim to be “theologians.” These were the *mutakallimūn*, that is, practitioners of *‘ilm al-kalām*, the “science of [God’s] word.” These are the thinkers whom we usually call “theologians,” and there is some reason to consider them as the true “philosophers of religion” in Islam. Unlike the Greek-inspired thinkers, the *mutakallimūn* focused solely on the correct understanding of religious doctrine. Their method was careful study of the scripture and traditions about the life of Muhammad, but also rational argumentation designed to bring other theologians around to their way of thinking. Typically, historians of philosophy overlook the contribution of *kalām* when they investigate texts of the Islamic world, but I see this as a mistake. If you are looking for technical discussions about God’s ineffability, the mode by which He creates things, the possibility of free will in the face of divine omnipotence, arguments about the divine command theory of ethics, and in general the use of rational argumentation within the context of an Abrahamic faith tradition, then a *mutakallim* like al-Juwaynī or Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī is just as worthy of your attention as Avicenna or Averroes.



MARY MCGRAW

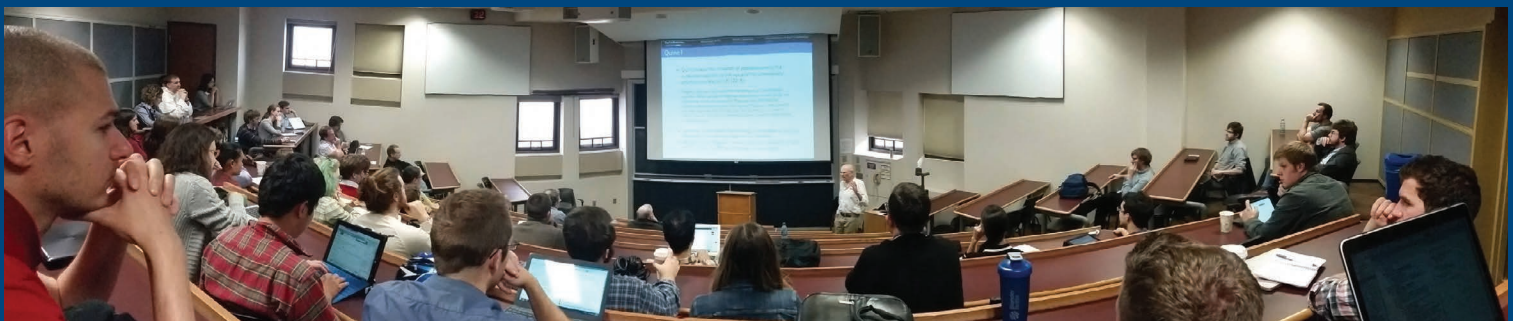
# LIFE AT THE CENTER





- Center Director Michael Rea delivered the 2017 Gifford Lectures (“Though the Darkness Hide Thee: Seeking the Face of the Invisible God”) from March 27–April 7 at the University of St. Andrews.  
<http://philreligion.nd.edu/videos/2017-gifford-lectures/>
- World premieres of the Hope & Optimism Project winning play “I Carry Your Heart” will be in Ithaca, NY, on April 27–29 and Los Angeles, CA, on May 19–21.
- Logos 2017 (“God, History, and the Incarnation”) will be held at the University of St. Andrews from June 1–3.
- Deadline to apply for AY2018–2019 fellowships will be February 1, 2018.

Visit our Center and grant project websites for fresh video content and other items of interest.



# COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Tim Knepper, Professor of Philosophy at Drake University

How does philosophy of religion engage with “Eastern thought,” or, for that matter, with any kind of religious thought other than Christian theism? It’s been six years now that I’ve been thinking through this matter—first, through my 2013 book *The Ends of Philosophy of Religion*, then through The Comparison Project, a Drake University program in comparative philosophy of religion, and most recently through the work of an American Academy of Religion seminar devoted to writing an undergraduate

textbook in globally inclusive and critically engaged philosophy of religion.

At its heart, *The Ends* advocates a four-step method for practicing cross-cultural philosophy of religion. First comes description, which is simply a means of rendering the object of inquiry—acts of religious reason-giving—in as much contextual detail as is needed to understand it relative to its use. Comparison, second, is the means by which important





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and interesting similarities and differences are discovered among the descriptions. Explanation, third, gives reasons why the comparative data are patterned as they are—why there are the important and interesting cross-cultural similarities and differences that there are. Evaluation, finally, raises philosophical questions of truth, value, and meaning about the object of inquiry in comparative perspective.

By the time *The Ends* had been released, I was already drawing on its method for The Comparison Project's lecture and dialogue series. The design of this series is simple enough: a topic or problematic first gets explored from the perspective of different religious traditions through scholar lecture and practitioner dialogue, then that topic is philosophized about in comparative perspective by philosophers of religion. In our first year of programming, we applied this design to the topic religious responses to suffering, which, among other things, functioned as an examination of the problem of evil in a religiously diverse manner. At the end of this year, we found that, as fascinating as our lectures individually were, not only did we not have enough of them to compare very widely, but they were also not focused enough to be able to draw particular conclusions. We therefore decided that we would pursue our next topic over two years and focus its lectures through a set of questions that could later be used to guide the comparisons.

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... as fascinating as our lectures individually were, not only did we not have enough of them to compare very widely, but they were also not focused enough to be able to draw particular conclusions.

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Our topic for this next programming cycle, in 2013–15, was ineffability, or as we eventually articulated it, religion beyond words. Over two years we scheduled nine lectures on ineffability in religious traditions: Classical Daoism, Medieval Zen Buddhism, Indian Buddhist Apoha Theory, Advaita Vedanta, Sikhism, West African (dozo) religion, Kabbalah, Christian Neoplatonism, and Sufism. To put ineffability in broader perspective, we also arranged for four lectures on ineffability in the arts (visual art, music, poetry,

and literature). We also supplemented these academically focused lectures with interfaith dialogues and other special events. Finally, at the end of the series, my co-director (Leah Kalmanson) and I offered our comparative philosophical conclusions. We're proud to say that all these essays will be published next year with Springer. Meanwhile, we are wrapping up our 2015–17 series on death and dying and looking ahead to miracles as our 2017–19 theme.

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The ultimate goal of the 5-year seminar is to write an undergraduate textbook in philosophy of religion that is globally inclusive of the religions of the world and critically engaged with the academic study of religion.

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The third and final project in which I have been engaging "Eastern thought" falls under the auspices of an American Academy of Religion seminar on "Global-Critical Philosophy of Religion." The ultimate goal of the 5-year seminar is to write an undergraduate textbook in philosophy of religion that is globally inclusive of the religions of the world and critically engaged with the academic study of religion. But the project also includes a companion anthology, teaching resources, and a series of scholarly essay-collections.

The aspect of the project that I especially want to highlight here involves my own attempt to rethink the fundamental categories or topics of philosophy of religion. As a means of starting afresh, I turned to metaphor theory in general and the journey metaphor in particular. If we apply the components of the metaphor life is a journey to a religious "traveler," five philosophical questions stand out: (1) Who am I? (2) Where do I come from? (3) Where am I going? (4) How do I get there? (5) What obstacles lie in my way? These are no doubt rich, neglected questions for the philosophy of religion; but they are also questions that neglect the topics of traditional philosophy of religion. I therefore also apply the journey metaphor to the cosmos, thereby generating five more questions for philosophy of religion: (6) What is the cosmos? (7) Where does the cosmos come from? (8) Where is the cosmos going? (9) How does the cosmos get there? (10) What obstacles lie in the cosmos' way? With these ten questions, I believe we can re-orient the philosophy of religion in a way that neither privileges nor neglects theistic philosophy of religion.

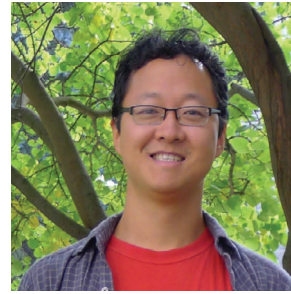
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