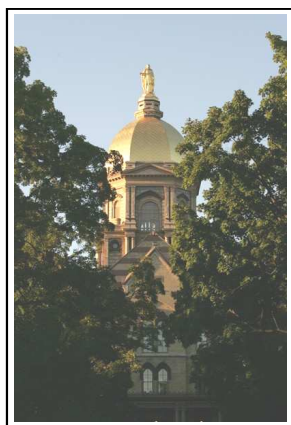


CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION AND SOCIETY

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Center for the Study of Religion and Society

Director
Christian Smith

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Faculty Fellows
Kraig Beyerlein
Kevin Christiano
Jessica Collett
Edwin Hernández
Mary Ellen Konieczny
Atalia Omer
David Sikkink
Jason Springs
Andrew Weigert
Michael Welch

Post Doctoral Fellow
Robert Brenneman

MOBILIZING RESEARCH IN GENEROSITY

This year the University of Notre Dame was awarded a \$5 million grant from the John Templeton Foundation to launch a project called the Science of Generosity. The principal Investigator, Christian Smith, said, "The goal is to mobilize top-quality research across various disciplines on the origins, expressions and effects of generosity."

The grant is one of the largest ever received by a faculty member in Notre Dame's College of Arts and Letters. Notre Dame is supporting the project with additional resources of approximately \$200,000.

The project defines generosity as the spirit and practice of giving good things to others freely and abundantly.

Smith began exploring the topic in his 2008 book, *Passing the Plate: Why American Christians Don't Give Away More Money*, written with Michael Emerson

and Patricia Snell. With funding from the Science of Generosity, Smith will continue his research on generosity through a sociological investigation of what causes generous and ungenerous behavior.



In addition to funding academic research at the University, the Science of Generosity initiative is hosting a competition among international scholars in fields such as sociology, economics, psychology, behavioral economics, education, law and religious studies.

The first phase of the competition will award \$250,000 to \$500,000 to four to eight of the most promising research proposals. The second phase will fund

a number of smaller awards, totaling to \$1.2 million.

Current academic studies on generosity are a scattered constellation of research projects operating under different terms such as philanthropy, giving, charity and altruism, Smith noted, but he anticipates a more unified field will develop around the Notre Dame initiative.

John McGreevy, Dean of the College of Arts and Letters, said, "Research projects such as this that investigate broad moral questions and the common good are integral to Notre Dame's academic mission. Just as important," he commented, "Professor Smith's work will bring scholars across the country and from many disciplines into conversation on a topic of fundamental importance."

Additional information can be found online at:
generosityresearch.nd.edu.

YOUNG SCHOLARS AND CRITICAL REALISM

The Center for the Study of Religion and Society held two conferences in May:

The first, Young Scholars in the Sociology of Religion (YSSR), was designed to foster social networking and intellectual interchange among the most promising of the next generation of sociologists of religion. The conference brought together about 40 participants to discuss important questions,

theoretical challenges, and research programs in the field.

A conference on Critical Realism and Personhood in the Social Sciences followed, with presentations by Christian Smith and Doug Porpora (Drexel University).

Alessandra González, a graduate student at Baylor University, said of the events, "It was such a privilege to be among such an excellent group of people, to



have a chance to get to know them and think earnestly together about the bigger questions, beliefs and implications of our research."

Graduate Students

Stephen Armet

Jade Avelis

Peter Barwis

Tom Buschman

Cole Carnesecca

Ellen Childs

Kari Christoffersen

Hilary Davidson

Daniel Escher

Justin Farrell

Brooke Fischer

Monique Gregg

Amy Jonason

Linda Kawantel

Chris Morrissey

Peter Munday

Sara Skiles

Lisa Swartz

Brandon Vaidyanathan

Brad Vermurlen

Meredith Whitnah

GRADUATE ACTIVITIES**American Sociological Association Conference Presentations:**

Kari Christoffersen: "The time has come to set aside childish things": Presidential Addresses and the Changing Face of Citizenship"

Hilary Davidson: "Written on the Heart: Weberian Rationalization and Contemporary American Protestant Literature"

Stephen Armet: "Catholic Education and New Latino Immigrants: Are Parish Schools Effective Agents of Catholic Socialization?"

Meredith Whitnah: "Authority and Anglicanism: A Weberian Perspective on a Contemporary Debate"

Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Presentations:

Peter Munday: "The Prosperity Gospel and the Spirit of Capitalism According to Joel Osteen"

Brandon Vaidyanathan:

"Religious Decline, Persistence and Reform among Call Centre Workers in India"

Publications:

Patricia Snell: "What Difference Does Youth Group Make?: A Longitudinal Analysis of Religious Youth Group Participation and Religious and Life Outcomes" in the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*

FACULTY PROFILES

Kraig Beyerlein spent the last three years at the University of Arizona after receiving his Ph.D. in 2006 from the Sociology Department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Kraig teaches and works in the areas of collective behavior, social movements, civic engagement, volunteerism, and sociology of religion, especially congregation-based studies. He has published articles on these topics in such journals as *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *Mobilization*, *Social Forces*, and *Social Problems*.



Jason

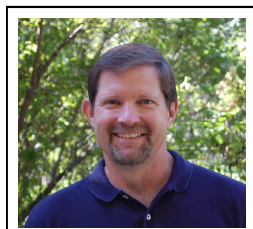
Jason Springs joined the CSRS in fall 2008. He earned his Ph.D. in Religion and Society from Harvard University's Committee on the Study of Religion (2005).

Jason's research and teaching broadly integrate religious ethics with moral philosophy and political and social theories in modern European and North American contexts. His journal articles appear in the *Journal of Religious Ethics*, *Modern Theology*, *Contemporary Pragmatism*, and the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*.



Atalia Omer earned her Ph.D. (2008) from the Committee on the Study of Religion at Harvard University.

Atalia's research has focused primarily on a systematic study of the dynamics of ethno-national conflicts, political and social theory, the theoretical study of religion and society, and the theoretical study of the interrelation between religion, nationalism, and questions of justice, peace, and conflict. She is currently working on a book manuscript titled *After Peace: How does the Israeli Peace Camp think about Religion, Nationalism, and Justice?*

INTRODUCING DAN HUBERT

Dan Hubert joined the center full-time this year as the RFP Manager for the Science of Generosity project. He completed his undergraduate degree at the University of California, Davis and M.S./Ph.D. at Oklahoma State

University. Dan was previously on faculty at Utah State University and the University of Texas Health Center in Tyler. He and his wife Lynn, a regional fundraiser for the University, have three young children.

RESEARCH SPOTLIGHTS

David Sikkink is directing the Cardus Education Study, a \$650,000 study investigating the alignment between motivations and outcomes for Christian education, focusing particularly on academic, spiritual and cultural outcomes.

The main goal of the project is a survey that will be conducted with a representative sampling of alumni, teachers and administrators from 350 religious schools and home schools.

Graduate students Clint Elison, Elizabeth Kopko, Rich Majerus, and Brad Vermurlen are assisting with the project.

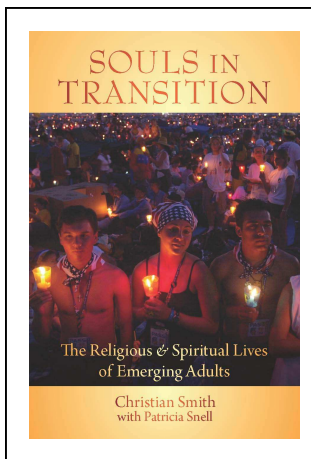
It is expected that the survey will be ready for online completion at the end of September.

Mary Ellen Konieczny launched a new project this summer with the purpose of understanding how religious leaders' and congregants' views of domestic violence are related to their religious faith and congregational contexts.

The study includes interviews and participant-observation of Christian churches that vary according to race, socioeconomic status and theological tradition. With the assistance of graduate students Meredith Whitnah and Daniel Escher, Mary Ellen

is exploring perceptions and understandings of domestic violence to understand better how men and women perceive and resolve situations of conflict with intimate partners and their children, and to look at the relation of faith to these understandings and behaviors.

Atalia Omer is working on a book manuscript titled *After Peace: how does the Israeli Peace Camp think about Religion, Nationalism, and Justice?*



Christian Smith and **Patricia Snell** published a book on the religious and spiritual lives of emerging adults, based on the third wave of the National Study of Youth and Religion (youthandreligion.org).

NICS: A team of Center for the Study of Religion and Society faculty, staff, graduate students, and undergraduate students finished data collection for the Northern Indiana Congregations Study, a five stage, mixed-methods project with dual foci in youth group programming and congregational giving and involvement.

In 2008 and 2009, the team conducted participant observations at four Christian denominations, observing worship services, youth activities and other congregational meetings throughout the year. A total of 229 discrete events were recorded in 724 pages of field notes.

The final stage consisted of additional in-person interviews (n=233) with a response rate of 87.6. A stratified quota sample of youth were interviewed as well as their parents. Members of the congregation were also sampled and interviewed based on levels of giving and church involvement.

The project has resulted in a total of 18 papers which are in publication, under review or in progress.

Student Research Assistants

Josh Cook

Kaitlyn Conway

Emily Difilippo

Carmen Fitzsimmons

Caroline Hudson

Jennifer Jesse

Molly Kiernan

Molly Kring

Scott Mitchell

Marie Sanchez

Michelle Saucedo

Meredith Rowland

Jessica Technow

Allison VanderBroek

Katie Weber

Robert Wedow

Staff

Senior Staff Assistant

Rae Hoffman

Project Manager

Dan Hubert

Research Assistant

Katie Spencer

GRADUATE AWARD



Robert Brennehan (left) won the first William V. D'Antonio (middle) award for Graduate Student Excellence in the Sociology of Religion at the University of Notre Dame, awarded by Christian Smith (right).

William D'Antonio joined the faculty of the University of Notre Dame as Assistant Professor, where he worked until 1971. He served as Professor and Chair of the Department at Notre Dame from 1966-1971.

'08 Correction: Interviews for the overseas funding project were conducted by Stephen Armet, not Elizabeth Martinez.

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**INTERDISCIPLINARY WORKSHOP
ON AMERICAN RELIGION (IWAR)**

The CSRS's IWAR hosts a number of meetings with University of Notre Dame students and faculty from a variety of disciplines including sociology, history, and political science, to discuss topics of intersection within the study of religion.

Last year's IWAR speakers include **Stephen Warner** of the University of Illinois at Chicago, **John Green** of the University of Akron, and **Brian Steensland** of Indiana University.

2009 IWAR speakers:

September 17: Robert Numan of the University of Colorado Boulder, 119 O'Shaughnessy

October 30: Donna Freitas of Boston University, 319 Hammes/Mowbray

November 20: Keith Meador of Duke University, 319 Hammes/Mowbray



Stephen Warner presenting "Race and Religion in the American Republic"

UNDERGRADUATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Scott Mitchell, a junior, co-authored a paper with Patricia Snell entitled "The Future of Church Finances: Intergenerational Transmission of Protestant Religious Financial Giving," which is currently under review for publication.

Juniors **Kaitlyn Conway** and **Robbee Wedow** received grants totaling more than \$1,000 from the University of Notre Dame for travel and conference expenses to attend the 2009 meeting of the American Sociological Association in San

Francisco with CSRS graduate students and faculty.

Junior **Robbee Wedow** was accepted to present a paper at the 2009 conference for the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.



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**For upcoming
CSRS events, visit:
csrs.nd.edu/events**