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## 2009 Spring Humanities Symposium: Faith in the Public Square

Messiah College

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## 2009 SPRING HUMANITIES SYMPOSIUM

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### FAITH IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE

How do our cherished values find public expression? Should religion be treated as belonging to the domain of public or private? What is the role of religion within a secular polity? While such questions point to the importance of faith in public life, they need not be confined to the domain of religion. We also publicly express our faith in everything from stock markets to abstract ideals like love, justice, equality, and humanity. It is all too clear that human faith, both in its religious and non-religious manifestations, finds public expression with profound implications, touching almost every sphere of human life—politics, culture, society, economics, and even the world of ideas. Such public expressions of faith raise a range of fascinating questions that merit exploration, debate, and dialogue from a variety of perspectives. Faith in the Public Square is good to think and talk about.

The Spring 2009 Humanities Symposium provides an opportunity for the Messiah College community to explore the many aspects of faith in the public square as a driving force in human life. The Center for Public Humanities' Executive Committee has planned this symposium with hopes that it will provide the campus with a public intellectual conversation that contributes to our common life together and to our understanding of the wider world.

#### Schedule

<b>Monday, February 23</b>	
3:45-4:15 p.m.	<b>OPENING RECEPTION</b> Howe Atrium, Boyer Hall Welcome and Opening Remarks, Dr. Norman Wilson, Interim Director, Center for Public Humanities (4:05)
4:15-4:45 p.m.	<b>The Wall: Promoting Civil Dialogue and Expression of Faith in the Public Square</b> Dr. Nance McCown (Communication); Professor Mary Holloway (Communication); Dr. Anita Voelker (Education), Boyer 131
4:45-5:30 p.m.	<b>CONCURRENT FACULTY LECTURE SERIES</b> <b>1. African American Agency and Education, 1860-1900</b> Dr. Lawrence Burnley (Multicultural Office), Boyer Hall 131 During the late 19th century, several denominations in the restorationist Stone-Campbell movement—including the Church of Christ, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and others—established educational institutions for African-American students. Over time, debates arose about what educational philosophies would guide them and who would direct them. Dr. Burnley, author of a forthcoming book on this topic, will recount this story and examine the important role that African Americans themselves played in exercising agency and shaping the development of the educational institutions they attended. <b>2. Morals and Meltdowns: Dangerous Consequences of the Loss of Faith in Capital Markets</b> Dr. Stephen L. Bloom (Management & Business), Boyer Hall 131 We will explore the breakdown in public faith and trust in capital markets. Are market participants trustworthy and ethical? If not, what implications does this have for Adam Smith's notion of an economic system as dependent upon and motivated by enlightened self-interest? Potentially constructive Christian responses will be considered.
7:00 – 8:15 p.m.	<b>FACULTY LECTURE SERIES</b> Boyer 131 Intelligent Design on Trial, Dr. Edward D. Davis Dr. Davis, who attended parts of the Kitzmiller v. Dover trial, will examine "intelligent design," focusing on cultural and philosophical aspects including its challenge to naturalism and the claim that ID is a scientific alternative to Darwinian evolution. He will explain some of the main ideas associated with intelligent design, discuss the political and educational goals and strategies of the intelligent design movement, and review the trial. The session will also include comments on evolution, public education, and the limits of science.
8:30 p.m.	<b>FILM SERIES</b> Boyer 137 (Parmer Cinema) Theology and the State, Professor Reid Perkins-Buzo (Communication) and Professor Monika Giesellewicz (Modernity and Languages) Theology in both cooperation and conflict with the ideologies of the modern nation state has had tremendous impact on the fate of many human lives in the last century. Contrary to the notion that secular ideologies are driving theology from the public square, many recent examples testify to the exact opposite. This film series will explore this theme in two documentaries and one feature film. "Theologians Under Hitler" (2006) 64 minutes After World War II a convenient story was told of church leaders and ordinary Christians defying the Nazis. More recent research has uncovered a very different story: rather than resisting, the greater part of the German Church saw Hitler's rise in 1933 as an act of God's blessing, a new sign of God's glory among the German people. This film asks: how could something like this happen in the heart of Christian Europe? Does the Church in both the US and Europe retain the ability to recognize profound evil today?
<b>Tuesday, February 24</b>	
4:00-5:00 p.m.	<b>CONCURRENT FACULTY-STUDENT COLLOQUY/FACULTY LECTURES</b> The Relationship Between Faith and Social Justice Christy Hutcheson, Amanda Arbour, Desiree Weaver, Hether Colignola, Emily Nelson, Julie DeLuca of SoJo (Satellite House for Social Justice), Boyer Hall 134 How does faith play a part in understanding social justice issues in our community and around the world. The students will particularly address the questions: "In advocating for social justice, is it clear that faith is the driving force behind our actions?" and "How is faith shown in the public sphere as it relates to promoting social justice?" Panelists will speak about the global food crisis, urban education, poverty, sex trafficking, and refugee and immigrant support and will explain ways that members of the Messiah community can join in local service efforts to help with these issues in order to achieve real solutions, better love their neighbors, and care about the oppressed.
4:45-5:30 p.m.	<b>Sanctuary to Sidewalk: Black Religious Iconography in Philadelphia</b> Professor Matthew Hunter, Boyer 131 Matt's dissertation research examines religious visual culture in Philadelphia's Episcopal churches. This research has led him to look beyond churches to Philadelphia's street murals. He has discovered ways that black community murals challenge our notions of the artistic task, our concepts of what is "public" and the boundaries we draw around "religion."
7:00-8:15 p.m.	<b>LECTURE SERIES</b> Alexander Auditorium (F110) Islam and Higher Education in the US Imam Yaya Hendi, Muslim Chaplain at Georgetown University Imam Hendi, the first Muslim Chaplain at a Christian institution of higher learning in the US, has a unique perspective of the role of Islam in liberal education in the US. His perspectives will foster understanding and conversation concerning the relationship between Islam and the religious diversity and academic freedom that characterizes higher education in the US.
8:30 p.m.	<b>FILM SERIES</b> Boyer 137 (Parmer Cinema) Theology and the State "Prymas – trzy lata z tyślaka [Primate]" (2000) 103 minutes Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, head of the Catholic Church in Poland from 1949 until 1981, was one of the most important figures of Polish twentieth-century history, and also one of the best-known resistors of Stalinist repression in Eastern Europe. Teresa Kotarczyk's film is an account of the three years he was imprisoned by the Communist state. In gripping detail it narrates the theological struggle between the all-powerful, officially atheist state and the vital Catholic faith of the vast majority of the Polish people.
<b>Wednesday, February 25</b>	
4:00-5:30 p.m.	<b>CONCURRENT FACULTY-STUDENT COLLOQUIA</b> Faith and Politics: A Student-Led Discussion Amanda L. Arbour (Politics), Boyer 131 All questions will relate to the core question: What is the appropriate relationship between church and state, religion and politics? The relationships go two ways. Since much has been said about how the state influences the church, the focus will be on how the church should (or shouldn't) influence the state, and how our religion should (or shouldn't) influence our politics.
4:00-5:30 p.m.	<b>The Humanities, the Environment, and Christian Faith: Examining the Work of Willis Jenkins, Norman Wirzba, and Wendell Berry</b> Professor Lucas J. Sheaffer, Boyer 131 This presentation articulates the role of interdisciplinary humanities in the public and religious square of environmental concerns and argues that environmental issues are no longer only a matter of science, but also of politics, religion, writing, and social practice. Jenkins, Wirzba, and Berry provide a template for humanistic public engagement with environmental issues. They combine as an effort to establish the environment as a main concern for American Christians and to renew our understanding of the natural environment's relationship to salvation and ethics. Food for Thought: How Faith Influences Our Choice of Food, sponsored by Sustainable Agriculture in the Agape Center, Brandon Hoover (Agape Center), Francis Eanes (English/Peace and Conflict Studies) This panel will explain the work of Messiah's community garden which provides food for its members and Messiah's dining services, and will suggest further steps that the Messiah community can take to develop and deepen its commitment to sustainable agriculture. The students will share their stories about how their faith influences what they eat and will field questions and facilitate discussion about the role of faith in promoting sustainable agriculture.
7:00 – 8:15 p.m.	<b>FACULTY LECTURE SERIES</b> Boyer 131 Christian America and the Kingdom of God, Dr. Richard T. Hughes, Senior Fellow in the Ernest L. Boyer Center and Distinguished Professor of Religion. Hughes will summarize and read from his forthcoming book, Christian America and the Kingdom of God, scheduled to be released by the University of Illinois Press in June of 2009. This book measures the idea of "Christian America" by the only idea in the New Testament that even remotely corresponds to the idea of a Christian nation, namely, the biblical vision of "the kingdom of God." Following an extended examination of the idea of "the kingdom of God" in both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, the book finally concludes that the notion of "Christian America" is fundamentally an oxymoron that undermines the integrity of the Christian faith on the one hand, and the integrity of the nation on the other. This book offers examples from the length and breadth of American history, culminating with the presidency of George W. Bush.
8:30 p.m.	<b>FILM SERIES</b> Boyer 137 (Parmer Cinema) Theology and the State "Struggle for the Soul of Islam: Inside Indonesia" (2007) 60 minutes Indonesia is home to more Muslims than the entire Middle East combined—more than 210 million. Paradoxically, the coming of democracy to Indonesia in 1998 was a factor in the rise of Islamist violence and terrorism. As Ulli Abshar-Abdalla of the Liberal Islam Network says, "This freedom is not [only] for the good guys, but also for the bad guys." This conflict between Indonesia's long tradition of tolerance, and the dramatic rise of Islamist forces, makes it a unique test-site for how Islam should be understood—perhaps the most critical conflict of our age.
<b>Thursday, February 26</b>	
4:00-5:30 p.m.	<b>CONCURRENT FACULTY-STUDENT COLLOQUIUM/FACULTY LECTURES</b> The Public Square Goes Cyberspace: Social Networking's Role in Creating Awareness & Building Organization-Publics Relationships, Dr. Nance McCown, Rachel Crownover, Michael Holmes, Kelly Malefy, Dominic Morrone, Erin Ramsey, DJ Sabaluskay, Kati Siconolfi, Brittany Tasch, Liza Tompkins, Boyer 131 The COMM426 (The Public Relations Campaign) student team will present a synopsis of their semester's work, demonstrating how sharing faith through promoting like-minded organizations (such as CURE International) in cyberspace's public square can have an impact globally. The student team will explore issues related to the public square in cyberspace.
8:00-9:15 p.m.	<b>KEYNOTE ADDRESS</b> Brabaker Auditorium Who's Afraid of American Religion? Dr. Alan Wolfe, Director of the Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life and Professor of Political Science, Boston College. More and more these days, one hears worries that a theocracy of some sort is about to be established in the United States. Dr. Wolfe will argue against such an idea on three grounds: first, separation of church and state is still alive, at least in part because it offers such strong benefits to religion. Second, the lack of any one majority religion makes it impossible for any one religion to serve theocratic ends. Third, the way Americans practice their faith tends to be non-dogmatic and non-confrontational, and this too works against the possibility of a theocracy. Dr. Wolfe is a noted public intellectual who is well known for his work on American Politics and Religion. He has researched, written, taught and lectured extensively on the subject of Politics, Morals, American Religion and Democracy, and the role of the Public Intellectual. With numerous books to his credit, he contributes regularly to a number of journals, newspapers, and magazines. He currently chairs a task force of the American Political Science Association on "Religion and Democracy in America." He also serves on the advisory boards of Humanity in Action and the Future of American Democracy Foundation, and is on the president's advisory board of the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities. In the fall of 2004, Professor Wolfe was the George H.W. Bush Fellow at the American Academy in Berlin.
<b>Friday, February 27</b>	
4:00-5:30 p.m.	<b>PLENARY SESSION AND CLOSING RECEPTION</b> Boyer 131 Talk-back session on the Keynote Address and the Symposium Theme. Panelists: Dr. Robin Collins (Philosophy), Dr. Richard Crane (Theology), Dr. Robin Lausermann (Politics), Dr. Jean Corey (English).
<b>Saturday, February 28</b>	
8:00 p.m.	<b>THEATRE</b> Miler Auditorium Performance of Blue Lias Claudia Stevens; Music by Allen Shearer Sponsored by the School of the Arts, The Center for Public Humanities Central Pennsylvania Forum Actor-musician Claudia Stevens performs her newest one-person musical play that brings to life a controversial and colorful figure of Victorian England, the brilliant and eccentric fossil hunter Mary Anning. The play exposes the lively community of naturalists competing in the war of ideas about the history of life on earth - and seeking to claim credit for Mary's dinosaur discoveries.



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