



Reflecting on education and politics  
Highlights of the upcoming November meeting  
Details for St. Louis  
and more inside

## Are we losing the language of faith? Some thoughts on education and politics



In the European religious education (RE) research of the last thirty years, language is a hot topic. It is argued that young people and their educators have lost their religious mother tongue. Precious words and concepts handed down by tradition to express the “ultimate concerns” of life are no longer meaningful. The spontaneous correlation between revelation and experience has evaporated. Bible stories are irritating, church liturgy is strange, and bearing witness to a life of faith is weird. Secularization has changed the worldview of many contemporaries, at least in Europe.

The communication of faith (in RE) however is not only an issue of expressing one’s faith in a linguistic format. It is also about being “safely attached,” being anchored in an experiential and hermeneutical space of trust and care. S/he who believes is able to decenter from the self and dedicate oneself to an other. RE is in this respect an exercise in learning to see “oneself as another” (Paul Ricoeur), in changing perspectives

and expanding horizons – and being challenged to become a “new” human being, a person of trust, care, respect and resilience. Briefly: a person of faith.

Having faith in the meaningfulness and trustworthiness of reality – being sure that one is not deceived by reality and that it makes sense to decenter and dedicate – is the deepest foundation of every education, not only in RE. In his *Truth and Method* Hans-Georg Gadamer quotes Hegel in this respect: education understood as “Bildung” “consists in learning to allow what is different from oneself and to find universal viewpoints from which one can grasp the thing, ‘the objective thing in its freedom’, without selfish interest” (H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, London, Sheed and Ward, 1975, p. 14). The complexity of education in general and RE specifically lies in the fact that this basic trust experience can only be expressed and reinstalled in and through language.

When looking (often with consternation!) to the political context of these days, it is my contention that the misuse of language and the loss of faith are going hand in hand. Political leaders (sic!) create an atmosphere of distrust by using aggressive language. Populist speech is often filled with hate and disrespect. The world seems to become disillusioned – harsh in language and cold in engagement – losing not only the reliability of courteous language but also the ultimate faith and trust in a good society.

“How to educate children and young people to live together in a socially peaceful and personally flourishing way in such a counter-productive environment? How to be critically aware of the (positive and negative) impact of religious and non-religious worldviews on our educational efforts?” In writing up my presidential address last year “it became clear to me that, more than ever before, the reasons for hope need to be consciously collected, reflected and enacted by teachers and educators who are really prepared and able to make a difference in the long run” (in *Religious Education* 112:3, 199).

This year’s conference will help us on an even deeper level to reflect “learning in encounter” as a way of dealing with experiences of trust and respect and as a way of expressing these experiences in respectful language and concepts. It all starts with courtesy and then creating room for “linguistic hospitality” (Paul Ricoeur), offering one another the richness of our languages of faith. And in doing so I believe we will rediscover the one language of faith – faith in the ultimate meaningfulness of reality. Will it become “a common faith” (John Dewey)? I hope so. Together with you.

**Bert Roebben**

*2017 President of the REA*

## Join us in St. Louis in November



This year's conference holds several innovations that we believe will lead to a richer, more complex engagement with encounter. As in years past, there are four plenary spaces in the schedule, but unlike in years past these are organized as rich experiential engagement. Mualla Selçuk's presidential address will be introduced through the music of one of her colleagues, Dr. Fatih Koca, who is the leader of Bismallah (the Divinity faculty music group at Ankara University).

The second plenary will be led by local "artist" De Andrea Nichols, a St. Louis-based social practice designer and lecturer who helps changemakers nationwide develop creative approaches to the social, civic, and racial justice issues that matter most to them and their communities ([deandreanichols.com](http://deandreanichols.com)). Given our location in St. Louis, and the last several years of activism and engagement around justice and policing, this plenary session will invite participants to think creatively and constructively about learning encounters that seek justice.



Our third plenary will begin in brief narratives from four scholars who have explored encounter in a variety of ways in their work, leading into a larger conversation with the







gathered group. The four are Deborah Court, Bar-Ilan University; Damayanthi Niles, Eden Theological Seminary; Thomas Reynolds, Emmanuel College at the University of Toronto; and Martin Thurner, University of Munich.

Finally, our fourth plenary time will be given over to excursions to various local settings where religious encounters have been particularly vivid and/or transformative. There will also be one discussion that remains at the hotel, for those who may have physical challenges.

## Proposed changes to the bylaws

This newsletter article serves as one official notice of proposed revisions to the REA Bylaws, [the specifics of which are available on our website](#). When the REA Board of Directors proposes a change to our Bylaws, we follow the procedure outlined below.

*These Bylaws may be modified, amended, or altered by a two-thirds majority vote at any annual or special meeting of the Association, if the legal notice of such meeting in advance contains a statement of the proposed alteration, amendment, or repeal. (from Article X, Section 1 of the REA Bylaws)*

From now until the annual meeting we will observe a period of time during which members can ask questions or make comments to the Executive Secretary and or the Chair of the Board. Following this period we will conduct a vote at the annual meeting of the Association, as is permitted by our Bylaws. Approval of the proposed Bylaws changes requires a two-thirds majority of all votes cast in the election.

### Rationale for the proposed changes

At its March 2017 meeting, the REA Board of Directors approved [a draft of the changes proposed to the Bylaws](#) to correspond with current practices introduced since the last amendment in 2011. These contingent practices have increased the efficiency of the governance of the Association and the involvement of more members, beyond the Board of Directors, in carrying out the mission of the Association.

One major change, proposed by the Harper/Wornom Committee and introduced to the membership at the November 2016 annual meeting, is the restructuring of the Wornom Award from “an award to an organization or institution that has provided outstanding support and leadership to religious education” and the Harper Project from “an award to promote the values of inter-faith collegiality and religious education in the public arena through constructive programming, research, and regional networking,” instead to a project grant award. The policy for an occasional Harper Award “to outstanding leaders whose work across disciplines and fields of service has had a profound impact on religious education” will remain the same. Proposed changes are highlighted [in the revised Bylaws on the REA website](#).

Therefore, the Board recommends that members review [the highlighted changes in the Bylaws](#) in order to cast their informed vote at the annual business meeting on November 3, 2017, in St. Louis.

### **Use of consent agenda planned for annual business meeting**

The Board also decided in its spring retreat to move to the use of a consent agenda at the Association's annual business meeting. A consent agenda is a process whereby items which generally do not elicit much conversation are presented to the membership in advance of the meeting. Then, at the meeting itself, these items are clustered together in a format that makes clear that they are on the consent agenda. The chair of the meeting inquires of the membership if there are any items they would like moved from the consent agenda to the regular agenda, thus allowing for discussion of them. Any member may ask for something to be moved, and one request is all that is necessary for that movement. Any items remaining on the consent agenda are adopted in whole as they are presented.

This is a mechanism that makes it possible to move through items more quickly, thus creating more room for substantial discussion of items that truly require discussion.

At this business meeting, the proposed bylaws, the slate of nominees, and the various reports will be placed on the consent agenda. If you would like to nominate someone not on the slate, or if there are any questions for the bylaws revisions that have not previously been addressed, please respond to the chair's request at the meeting and ask that the item be moved to the regular agenda.

## The time is now: Sign up in Sched!

All of the sessions for our upcoming annual meeting are now detailed within the schedule at our website. Even if you signed up for sessions earlier in the fall, please take a look at the schedule now because there have been significant changes. Make sure that you are signed up for the sessions you want to attend. The papers, outlines, and other resources for breakout sessions are available now, and we urge you to prepare well in advance of the meeting by reading the papers.

There is also information in Sched about the various encounter groups which will be meeting the first morning of our conference. These are a creative innovation in our time together and intended to give us all a chance to meet in small discussions early in the meeting. Each small group will be limited to only 15 attendees, and these spaces will fill up quickly. Ensure that you can be a part of the encounter you are most interested in by signing up on Sched as soon as you know which one you want to participate in.

Not sure what Sched is? Take a look at our page about [selecting sessions with Sched](#).

## Seeking names for memorials

Please send [Mary Hess](#), our networking coordinator, the names of any REA members who have passed into eternal life since we last met. We will be sharing those names in a ritual litany following our evening banquet. We welcome longer memorials, which will be placed in the appropriate section of our website.

## We need volunteers

Lucinda Huffaker is looking for volunteers who are willing to give an hour or two of their time during the meeting to help us coordinate and manage various elements of our time together. We need people to take tickets at the door of meals, for instance, and to help direct people to various sessions. Volunteers are needed to support our materials display space, and to welcome people to the reception area. Please consider giving an hour or two to our shared work in this meeting. [Please email Lucinda to volunteer](#).

## Bring your books and other materials to showcase

There will be space available for you to display various materials you wish to bring to the attention of our association members. We cannot promise consistent supervision of

these displays, however, so please be alert to the chance that materials may walk away — and be thoughtful about leaving your colleagues' materials safely displayed for other people to enjoy as well.

## Bring layers of clothing and comfortable shoes

Weather in St. Louis in early November is quite variable -- sometimes going as low as 35°F at night, or rising to 65°F during the day. The St. Louis Union Station Hotel is a grand historic setting for our conference, and the hotel itself is quite large with a very long central court. It is worth bringing layered clothing and comfortable shoes for your time at our meeting.

## Resources

In this era of widespread disagreement, and in the US at least, of divisive polarization, several organizations have offered resources to engage such challenges. Auburn Seminary has [a website full of strategies for "bridging divides"](#). [The Better Angels organization](#) seeks to help people to engage conflict in transformative ways. [Living Justice Press](#) published books and other resources focused on supporting restorative justice and circle practice.

George Stuart has spent years writing new lyrics to common hymns sung in the Australian context. His site -- [Singing a New Song](#) -- offers full and free access to 650 different hymns.

[BimBam](#) is an online resource offering accessible videos, apps, and animated series that are "joyful, empowering introductions to Jewish ideas and life for kids & adults."

The NYTimes offers [a newsletter](#) full of informative pieces that engage issues of race and systemic racism.

## Member news

**Jennifer Ayres** is currently serving as President's Humanities Fellow at Emory University. While in residence at the Fox Center, she will be completing a book on the ecological conception of the human being as inhabitant, and the theological and educational practices required to cultivate this way of being.

**Ina ter Avest** announces her newest book, co-edited with colleague **Duncan Wielzen**: *Interfaith Education for All: Theoretical Perspectives and Best Practices for*

*Transformative Action* (Sense publishers). She notes that contributions in the book come from different countries all over the world and are written in English.

**Hye-Ran Kim Cragg** is pleased to announce her latest book, co-authored with **Mary Ann Beavis**: *What Does the Bible Say: A Critical Conversation with Popular Culture*, published by Wipf&Stock and available from [Amazon](#).

**Boardman Kathan** shares the news of the publication of his new book, *American Holy Days: The Heart and Soul of Our National Holidays*, available through [Wipf&Stock](#).

**Jennifer Mosher** is the director of the new Telos Project at Hellenic College Holy Cross.

**Bert Roebben** shares that he is excited to become the new Chair of Religious Education at the Faculty of Catholic Theology of the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn.

**Mualla Selçuk, Halis Albayrak and John Valk** are pleased to announce their latest book: *An Islamic Worldview from Turkey: Religion in a Modern, Democratic and Secular State*, which will be available [in the UK in November](#) and in the [USA/Canada in December](#)

**Judith Johnson Siebold** announces her new book, *Ten Lies Conservative Christian Women Are Told*, which she has written for emotionally battered women, available from [Amazon](#).

**Anne Wimberly** announces her new book on ministry with youth, co-written with **Sarah Frances Farmer**, *Raising Hope: 4 Paths to Courageous Living for Black Youth*. She invites people to review the book and support its use. It is available from [Cokesbury](#).



eREACH is a newsletter of the Religious Education Association, an Association of Professors, Practitioners, and Researchers in Religious Education.

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*Tom Reynolds* by Emmanuel College

*Martin Thurner* by University of Munich



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

A Website for Teaching & Research: [christianeducators20.com](http://christianeducators20.com)



**TALBOT**  
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
BIOLA UNIVERSITY

The “Christian Educators of the 20th Century Project,” funded by a grant from the Lilly Endowment, is a web-based database project that provides information on influential Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Christian religious education leaders of the 20th century to people all over the world for research and teaching purposes.

The website ([christianeducators20.com](http://christianeducators20.com)) provides biographical and bibliographical information on these leaders to assist others in understanding the development of Christian education in North America over this past century.

The project covers over 200 people who have helped shape Christian/religious education during this time period. The project has a peer-review board and will continue to be developed over the years to come. It is a rich resource for historical, philosophical, and theological research in the field of Christian religious education. A full list of those included in this project is on the reverse. A list of the writers who have graciously contributed to this project is on the website ([christianeducators20.com](http://christianeducators20.com)). The current list of those included in this project and authors is on the reverse.

## OVER 200 ENTRIES INCLUDE:

- Pictures of the subjects
- Biographical essays covering their lives
- Essays assessing their contributions to the field of Christian education
- Bibliographies of their publications and works about them
- Excerpts of their works demonstrating their ideas (where permission can be obtained)
- A beginning reading list for those who want to know more about them and their influence

## USING THE WEBSITE IN YOUR TEACHING AND RESEARCH:

**In Historical Foundations Courses:** Students can read about the lives and influence of 20th century leaders who have shaped the field of Christian education. They can better understand the context and life influences that shaped these leaders and their efforts. The bibliographies, excerpts, and recommended reading lists are a great aid for students’ research projects.

**In Theological and Philosophical Foundations Courses:** Students can examine how the theological and philosophical views of various 20th century Christian education leaders impacted their priorities and initiatives in educational ministry. Comparative analysis can be done of different traditions, and the influence of many can be traced in the lives and work of others.

**In Other Ministry Courses:** As differing perspectives on Christian education practice are addressed in courses, students can be introduced to the people who championed these views and helped bring about changes in how educational ministry was carried out. The modeling of the lives of these leaders can encourage your students to give their best in their ministry efforts.

## EDITORIAL BOARD

*The following people served as members of the Editorial Board for the “Christian Educators of the 20th Century” project from 2001 through 2010*

### WARREN BENSON

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (emeritus) and  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary – deceased

### HAROLD BURGESS

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### D. CAMPBELL WYCKOFF

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(senior advisor) - deceased

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

## 216 ENTRIES (OVER 200 ENTRIES COMPLETED)

[christianeducators20.com](http://christianeducators20.com)

Athearn, Walter Scott	Eakin, Mildred Moody	Huebsch, William*	Moore, Mary Elizabeth	Scott, Keiran
Aymes, Maria de la Cruz	Eavey, Charles Benton	Hughes, Jane Walford	Moran, Gabriel	Seymour, Jack
Babin, Pierre	Edge, Findley Bartow	Hunter, David	Morton, Nelle	Shaughnessy, Maureen*
Baumbach, Gerard	Eipers, Carole*	Irwin, Paul	Mulhall, Daniel	Sherrill, Lewis Joseph
Baxter, Edna M.	Elias, John	Isham, Linda	Munro, Harry C.	Shields, Thomas E.
Benson, Clarence Herbert	Elliott, Harrison S.	Jackson, Jonathan	Murch, James DeForest	Shockley, Grant S.
Benson, Warren	European Catholic Leaders*	Jahsmann, Allan	Murray, Jane Marie	Slater, Nelle
Berryman, Jerome	Jacques Audinet,	Jegen, Carol Frances	Murray, Richard	Sloyan, Gerard
Bethune, Mary McLeod	Georges Delcuve	Johnson, Ethyl	Nagel, Lee*	Smart, James D.
Betts, George Herbert	Marcel van Caster,	Joy, Donald Marvin	Nash, Joe	Smith, H. Shelton
Boojamra, John	Alphonso Nebreda	Jungmann, Josef Andreas	Navias, Eugene	Smith, Joanmarie
Borgman, Dean	Evenson, C. Richard	Kennedy, William Bean	Nelson, C. Ellis	Snyder, Ross
Bower, William Clayton	Fahs, Sophia Blanche Lyon	Kieschnick, Melvin	Nelson, John & Novak, Joseph & Vincent	Spalding, John Lancaster
Bowman, Locke	Ford, LeRoy	Klos, Frank	Ng, David	Stokes, Olivia Pearl
Bowman, Thea	Foster, Charles	Koulomzin, Sophie	Ng, Wenh In	Stonehouse, Catherine
Boys, Mary*	Fowler, James	Leach, Richard	Nichols, Paul	Strommen, Merton
Browning, Robert	Freire, Paulo	LeBar, Lois Emogene	Niebuhr, Hulda	Tarasar, Constance
Brusselmans, Christiane	Frye, Mariella	LeBar, Mary	Oduyoye, Mercy Amba	Thompson, Norma
Bryce, Mary Charles	Furnish, Dorothy Jean	Lee, James Michael	O'Gorman, Robert	Tidwell, Charles
Buckley, Francis*	Gaebelein, Frank Ely	LeFever, Marlene	O'Hara, Edwin V.	Towns, Elmer
Burgess, Harold	Gangel, Kenneth O.	Lindberg, Luther	Osmer, Richard	Tyms, James
Byrne, Herbert W.	Gardner, Freda	Link, Mark	Palmer, Parker	Un, Joon Kwan
Caldwell, Elizabeth	Getz, Gene	Little, Sara Pamela	Paradis, Wilfred*	Vieth, Paul Herman
Carpenter, Elizabeth	Gilbert, Kent	Loder, James	Parent, Neil	Vogel, Linda
Carter, G. Emmet	Gilmour, Peter	Love, Mary	Pazmiño, Robert	Walsh, Rosalia
Case, Adelaide Teague	Gobble, A. Roger	Lucker, Ray	Prendergast, Edith	Walters, Thomas
Catholic Philosophers of Education: 1900-1960	Goodwin, Bennie E.*	Lynn, Robert W.	Price, John Milburn	Ward, Ted Warren
Cavaletti, Sophia	Gorman, Julie	Manternach, Janaan & Pfeifer, Carl &	Rayburn, Jim	Warren, Michael*
Chamberlin, J. Gordon	George Alexander	Marks, Miriam	Reber, Robert	Weber, Gerard
Chave, Ernest John	Xenophon Diamond	Marthaler, Berard	Regan, Jane	Weigle, Luther Allan
Clark, Francis E.	George Nicozisin	Mason, Harold Carlton	Reichert, Richard*	Westerhoff, John H., III
Coe, George Albert	Ernest Villas	McBride, Alfred	Reu, Johann Michael	Williams, Dennis
Cope, Henry F.	Griggs, Don	McBride, Jack	Richards, Lawrence O.	Wimberley, Anne Streaty
Costas, Orlando	Grimes, Howard	McCluskey, Neil	Riley, David	Winters, Charles
Crain, Margaret Ann	Groome, Thomas	McClusky, Evelyn	Risley, Clate	Wyckoff, D. Campbell
Cully, Iris V.	Harris, Maria	McConnell, Taylor & June	Roberto, John	Wyrzten, Jack
Cully, Kendig Brubaker	Hartshorne, Hugh	McKenzie, Leon	Roloff, Marvin	Zanzig, Thomas
Daniel, Eleanor	Hater, Robert	Mears, Henrietta Cornelia	Rood, Wayne	Zuck, Roy B.
Darcy-Berube, Francoise	Henderlite, Rachel	Melchert, Charles	Russell, Letty M.	Zukowski, Angela Ann
DeGiacomo, James	Hendricks, Howard G.	Michel, Virgil	Ryan, Mary Perkins	
Dobbins, Gaines Stanley	Hofinger, Johannes	Miller, Donald	Sadlier, Mary Ann	<i>*Entries needing authors.</i>
Dooley, Catherine	Hofweber, Suzanne	Miller, Randolph Crump	Sandidge, Orneal C. Sargent,	<i>Applications available at</i>
Dozier, Verna	Homrighausen, Elmer G.	Mitchell, Ella P.*	Virginia	<i>christianeducators20.com</i>
Dunning, James	Horan, Michael	Mongoven, Anne Marie	Schaeffler, Janet	
Durka, Gloria	Horne, Herman H.	Montessori, Maria	Schmemann, Alexander	
Dykstra, Craig	Huebner, Dwayne	Moore, Allen	Schmidt, Stephen	