

## ***HORIZONS in Religious Education Books Series***

Report to the Board of Directors of the  
Religious Education Association

October 22, 2018

The purpose of the *HORIZONS in Religious Education* is to publish “manuscripts defining key directions in the field of religious education.” The series embodies the commitment of the Religious Education Association to interfaith, intercultural, and international conversations. Preference is given to newer scholars with consideration of edited books by established scholars where the work of newer scholars is also included.

**Publications** – In the 2017-2018, one new book was added to the series, *ARM IN ARM WITH ADOLESCENT GIRLS: EDUCATING INTO THE NEW CREATION* by Emily A. Peck-McClain of Wesley Theological Seminary. The first in the series to focus on youth and young adults, Dr. Peck-McClain’s book uses ethnographic interviews with young women in conversation with biblical study to offer an approach to adolescent religious education for the empowerment. We are delighted to add this book to the series that now includes four books.

At present, three other manuscripts have been provisionally accepted for publication. Each of the authors is working with a mentor assigned by the *HORIZONS* co-editors and is making progress. One is on the education of children, another on working with young adults who are disaffected from religious institutions, and the third on education and religious imagination.

As a reminder, the *HORIZONS* board only accepts for publication final manuscripts. The process includes a review of a manuscript, provisional acceptance with suggestions for editing (sometimes substantial), assignment of a mentor to work with the author, and regular review of the progress of the manuscript.

During the year, we have reviewed five other manuscripts. One of these has been provisionally accepted with editorial work. That author is considering options. Also, we have had conversations with others about potential projects.

**Sales** – As was determined by the REA board in the founding of the series, *HORIZONS in Religious Education* is to be mission driven. REA provides the initial cost for the publication of a manuscript with Wipf & Stock and shares profits with the authors. As was expected, the series is breaking even with a small profit for REA. The best-selling manuscript has been the first *GOD BEYOND BORDERS* (over 500 copies). It has been used in several classes attending to approaches to interfaith religious education. The others have also been used in classes.

The board has identified an issue about sales that we need to discuss with the REA membership. There have been few sales to college and seminary libraries. Historically, regular sales of religious education books to institutional libraries has exceeded 600 copies, often mirroring institutional subscriptions to our journal *RELIGIOUS EDUCATION*. At present, this has

not occurred, we need to explore options, perhaps a REA package, where libraries are notified of publications and can simply subscribe to the series.

Our books are sold on the Wipf and Stock site ([www.wipfandstock.com](http://www.wipfandstock.com), search *HORIZONS in Religious Education*), on sites like the Book Depository which offer global sales ([www.bookdepository.com](http://www.bookdepository.com), again search *HORIZONS in Religious Education*), and on other sites like Amazon.

**Issues for the *HORIZONS* board** – As the series is expanding, we have identified issues which the *HORIZONS* board will address.

1. Assisting younger authors move from a dissertation manuscript to a publishable manuscript – Honestly, dissertations are written for a faculty committee and then for the field. Too often the style does not communicate broadly. The providing of mentors for authors is an important response to this reality.
2. Expanding the charge of “defining key directions in the field” beyond that of dissertations – We are convinced that *HORIZONS* can assist our field with conversations about interfaith, international, and intercultural religious education. We need to see that the series reflects and expands the diversity of emerging leaders in our field. One suggestion we are exploring is providing a session at the 2019 REA to explore directions in the field and provide support for germinating ideas among newer scholars.
3. Book purchases from REA members and institutional libraries as well as use in classes.
4. The scope of the series – The REA board defined that “preference” be given “to newer scholars” with the possibility of publishing “edited manuscripts by established scholars” that included “work of younger scholars.” The *HORIZONS* board is committed to this agenda of giving younger scholars a boost into publishing. Nevertheless, senior scholars continue to raise the concern that options for publishing are substantially decreasing. We know that this is the case and note that the REA may need to have conversation about enlarging options for publishing and academic dialogue in the field.
5. The development of a web/social media presence for *HORIZONS* – While there is a Facebook site for *HORIZONS*, none of the co-editors is skilled at social media “advertising.” We would appreciate assistance in enhancing our site.

**Transitions on *HORIZONS* Board** – Originally Dean Blevins, Elizabeth Caldwell, and Jack Seymour were given the task of shaping the *HORIZONS in Religious Education* series and developing its procedures. As a part of this agenda, an editorial board with term limits was established in 2017 (with members possibly serving for two three-year terms on the board). Membership on the board is generated by the co-editors of the series with confirmation by the publications committee of REA. While Dean, Lib and Jack continue to work with the series and review manuscripts, they are passing on the work of the series to other leaders. This signals the maturity of *HORIZONS* and the essential place it is taking in the ongoing work of the REA.

Below is a list of the proposed membership to take effect at the REA meeting in November. *(Those who are new to the board or who have shifted roles are listed in italics.)*<sup>1</sup> We thank the out-going members of the board (Anne Wimberly in the class of 2018 and Sondra Matthaei and Siebren Miedema for the past class of 2017) for their service and hope they will continue to participate as needed in the process of reviewing manuscripts. We thank those new members for joining in this work.

**Class of 2019**

Jack L. Seymour, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, co-editor  
*Dori Grinenko Baker, The Fund for Theological Education*  
*Elizabeth Caldwell, Vanderbilt Divinity School*  
Deborah Court, Bar Ilan University

**Class of 2020**

Mai-Anh Le Tran, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, co-editor  
Dean G. Blevins, Nazarene Theological Seminary  
N. Lynne Westfield, Drew University School of Theology  
Maureen O'Brien, Duquesne University

**Class of 2021**

*Hosffman Ospino, Boston College, co-editor (moved from class of 2019)*  
*Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, Association for Hispanic Theological Education*  
*Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook, Claremont School of Theology*  
*Boyung Lee, Iliff School of Theology*

**Retiring Class of 2018**

Elizabeth Caldwell, Vanderbilt Divinity School, co-editor  
Dori Grinenko Baker, The Fund for Theological Education  
Anne Streaty Wimberly, Interdenominational Theological Seminary

**Former Class of 2017**

Dean Blevins, co-editor, Nazarene Theological Seminary  
Sondra Matthaei, St. Paul School of Theology  
Siebren Miedema, Vrije University

Submitted by Jack Seymour, October 2018

---

<sup>1</sup> Jack Seymour will continue to chair the co-editors in the 2019 year transitioning mid-year to Mai-Anh Tran who will then serve as chair in 2020. To provide board continuity and leadership, the assumption is that the new co-editors, Mai-Anh Tran and Hosffman Ospino will serve for two three-year terms. Another new co-editor will need to be nominated for the class of 2022. Note also that to provide enough reviewers, board membership has expanded to from three to four persons per year.