

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

Report to the Board of Directors of the  
Religious Education Association  
October 2019

The purpose of *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** – Since our last meeting in November of 2018, two books were selected for publication. Both of these are in the final stages of editing and one will be sent to Wipf and Stock in October 2019. While both come from the Christian tradition, they deal with issues that are facing all religious communities.

- The first is by James Michael Nagle, *OUT ON WATERS: THE RELIGIOUS LIFE AND LEARNING OF YOUNG CATHOLICS BEYOND THE CHURCH*. A qualitative study of disaffiliated Catholics who continue to engage in religious thinking and commitment the book offers suggestions for expanding religious education into the public sphere.
- The second book is by Patrick R. Manning, *CONVERTING THE IMAGINATION: TEACHING TO RECOVER JESUS’ VISION OF FULLNESS OF LIFE*. This book provides a teaching model to re-engage religious imagination and gives examples of its use in religion classes and religious institutions.

### **Accomplishments –**

1. *Reviews* – During the year we have reviewed 5 manuscripts and proposals, giving the authors feedback for potential publication in *HORIZONS* or other series. Our decision to provide extensive feedback and guidance to authors has helped in the reshaping and strengthening of book ideas for potential publication.
2. *Mentoring* – Two additional books are being encouraged for future publication. Board members and a co-editor are working closely with each author. One is a biography of a leader in religious education and the other on the education of children. Our decision to provide mentoring has been a success helping authors successfully complete projects.
3. *Assistance for Promotion and Tenure* – As the *HORIZONS* board suggested last year, we have contacted board members who are department chairs and seminary deans to provide a letter of support for the *HORIZONS* series, focusing particularly on the review process and the scholarly nature of the series. These letters are held by the co-editors to be shared with authors as they are being reviewed.
4. *Marketing* – The books and the series are marketed on the REA website. An interview is held with each new author that is published in REACH. *HORIZONS* also has a Facebook page, where entries are added regularly. In addition, 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.

5. *A Reminder –*

- a. 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, regular review of the progress of the manuscript, and then final review and acceptance.
- b. In addition, while we are pleased to discuss initial ideas with authors, when an author proposes a book idea, we suggest the use of the proposal guide on the Wipf and Stock website (<https://wipfandstock.com/submitting-a-proposal>).

**Sales –** As was determined by the REA board in the founding of the series, *HORIZONS in Religious Education* is to be mission driven. REA invests in the series by providing the initial cost for the publication of a manuscript with Wipf & Stock. Profits are then shared with authors. While sales have been modest, all are selling. As of spring of 2019, the Kujawa-Holbrook book is the best seller having sold nearly 600 copies. The initial outlay has been repaid and royalties are being share. All of the other books are moving forward with royalty repayment to REA. Sales of 250 books are needed for the repayment to REA.

**Assistance needed from REA board –**

1. *Sales –* We would like to see much more robust sales of books. We have reports of the successful use of all the books in seminary and college classes. However, the use is still quite limited. Moreover, our colleagues are not ordering the books for school libraries. If REA colleagues would simply order the books for their school libraries, we would sell an immediate 300 copies of each book. We know that some do not because the books are included in online packages that schools purchase from education websites. Nevertheless, we think a formal effort needs to be made to encourage our colleagues to order these books for their libraries and use in classes.
2. *Sessions for New Books at REA –* We would request a conversation session at the REA for each new *HORIZON* book. That conversation would assist with the mission of the series – to define and discuss “key directions in the field of religious education.” Frankly, regularly providing a session at REA to highlight all new publications in religious education should be considered by the program committee.
3. *Session for HORIZONS Board at Next REA –* We request a session at the next REA so that the *HORIZONS* board can lead a conversation about publication in our field. While the number of religious publishers is decreasing, we all know that scholarly research and publication are essential for the advancement of our field. We want to engage our colleagues in a conversation about the state of and directions for research in our field.

**Continuing 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 – As we know, dissertations are written for a faculty committee and then for the field. Too often the style does not communicate broadly. We are pleased to provide mentors for authors whose book may enhance our series and to encourage the use of editors. We are also pleased to be able to make focused comments on proposals to assist in the refining of ideas for publications. We thank both co-chairs and board members involved in these mentoring projects.
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.

**Appreciation** – We thank the out-going members of the board for all their contributions to the series: Elizabeth Caldwell and Dori Grinenko Baker. As we all know, Lib has been an important presence in the launching of *HORIZONS* as she, Dean Blevins, and Jack Seymour served as the founding editors of the series. Dori also has been a member since the first board was established for *HORIZONS* and has reviewed manuscripts. We hope that both Lib and Dori will continue to read manuscripts and serve as mentors when needed. We also thank Mary Hess for the work she does through the website and Reach to promote the *HORIZONS* series. We also welcome those new members who will continue this work.

**Membership on *HORIZONS* Board** – Because of institutional claims on our co-chairs, we have shifted slightly the transition of chair of the editors. Jack will remain as chair through 2020 and then Hosffman will chair from 2021-2022 and then Mai-Anh from 2023-2024. Below is a list of our membership.

#### **Co-Chairs**

Jack L. Seymour, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary; chair of co-editors (through 2020)  
Hosffman Ospino, Boston College, co-editor (chair 2021 & 2022)  
Mai-Anh Le Tran, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, co-editor (chair 2023 & 2024)

#### **Class of 2018-2020**

Dean G. Blevins, Nazarene Theological Seminary  
N. Lynne Westfield, The Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Religion and Theology  
Maureen O’Brien, Duquesne University

**Class of 2019-2021**

Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, Association for Hispanic Theological Education  
Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook, Claremont School of Theology  
Boyung Lee, Iliff School of Theology

**Class of 2020-2022**

Deborah Court, Bar Ilan University  
Harold Horell, Fordham University  
Katherine Turpin, Iliff School of Theology

**Retiring Class of 2019**

Dori Grinenko Baker, The Fund for Theological Education  
Elizabeth Caldwell, Vanderbilt Divinity School  
Deborah Court, Bar Ilan University

Submitted by Jack Seymour, October 2019