

# eREACH

11.1

January 2021



REA2021 July 5-9 moved into online format  
Deadline to respond to the REA2021 CFP is upon us!  
Help us by holding a Facebook Birthday fundraiser  
and much more inside

## REA2021 Moves Online

We lament that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to rage on. There is no clear path where we can see that holding an in-person annual meeting will be safe and accessible to large numbers of our members. For that reason the Steering Committee of the REA Board has decided to move our annual meeting—which had already been moved from November of 2020 to July of 2021—into a fully online space.

The meeting will take place from July 5th to 9th, as previously planned, but we will spread out the various sessions into multiple time slots so as to make it possible for people to engage multiple sessions even given time zone challenges. Stay tuned for more information!

## REA2021 Program Theme

As scholars and practitioners of Religious Education (RE) and as members of the Religious Education Association (REA), we approach teaching and learning as a holistic endeavor, and that is what often sets our work apart from other theological and religious fields. Taking the etymology of Religion and Education seriously, we engage people's wholeness beyond their cognition for gaining information. As an organization, we have recently held annual conferences with themes on coexisting, encountering, imagination,

(un)masking violence, religious identity formation in a global age, and others, which clearly show our commitments to the wholeness of people and the world. We educate people not only to understand justice but also to live justly with compassion. In other words, the cognitive, emotional, physical, gendered, sexual, and spiritual dimensions of human nature and experience are inseparable and intricate parts of every education anchored in religion. This holistic nature of our discipline, combined with the deeply contextual nature of e-ducare/e-ducere enterprises, now urgently calls us to delve into critical dialogues and studies on human sexuality and gender identities. What and how do we teach about being a holistic and religious person in the age of:

- the growing global #MeToo movement;
- the news of sexual abuse by religious leaders;
- the conflicts and divisions of religious institutions over LGBTQIA+ issues;
- the increasing hate crimes against people with non-heteronormative gender identities;
- the surging and resurging hypermasculine developmentalism?

REA2021 invites participants to critically engage gender and sexuality as a fundamental way to pursue holistic religious teaching and learning with the awareness of the above and other situations that many of our contexts face.

Concretely, by addressing three general areas, I hope we can deepen scholarly discussions to generate pedagogical frameworks for constructive gender and sexuality discourse for various religious contexts:

- pedagogies to help facilitate informed conversations on often avoided, misunderstood or contentious topics related to sexuality and gender identities;
- pedagogies to confront institutionally suppressed recognition of sexual and gendered violence in order to open a way for just healing;
- pedagogies to create the space of healing and restore the wholeness of people and communities from trauma.

Some guiding questions and possible topics include but are not limited to the following. Please know that this list is provided not to force you to choose among them, but to show you expansive examples you can engage with the theme:

- Pedagogical models and strategies to frame constructive conversations on body, sex, sexuality and gender identities in non-judgmental and defensive ways
- Meaning of embodied religious learning as it relates to the body and human sexuality
- Human body and sexuality as a text/context of learning and divine experiences
- Religious education in hypermasculine/post-hypermasculine developmentalism eras and settings
- Religious education undoing heteronormativity
- Sex education in religious contexts
- Religious education and the #MeToo movement
- Healing pedagogy for victims and communities of sexual abuse within religious institutions
- Queering and queer religious pedagogy

- LGBTQIA+, non-binary and fluid gender identities – issues and contributions to religious education
- Queer anthropology for teaching and learning in religious contexts
- Religious education as a bridge-builder for communities in conflict over LGBTQIA+ issues
- Healing rituals, arts, and embodied pedagogy for sexual and gender/gendered violence survivors and communities
- Religious education with/for survivors of intimate partner violence
- Religious education in the context of state-sanctioned sexual violence, e.g., comfort women, rape victims of war and in refugee camps
- Religious education in conjunction with recovery from PTSD and moral injury
- Contemplative pedagogies for healing
- Performative pedagogies and healing

Various fields of study have done a great deal of critical research on gender and human sexuality in general, and on sexual violence, trauma and healing, LGBTQIA, and queer studies in particular. Through inter-, cross- or transdisciplinary conversations with these other fields, religious educators are invited to further define and explore concepts in a more holistic way that honors human wholeness. We can also shed light on gaps in the work in other fields.

I understand that these are topics that are uncomfortable, difficult, or not encouraged ones, depending on contexts. What I hope and ask is that you will avoid taking sides and, instead, explore the issues at stake, hold space for those in need, discuss topics with human wholeness in mind, and share healing and generative religious education models and approaches with one another.

I look forward to fruitful conversations!

*Boyoung Lee*

REA2021 Program Chair



## REA2021 Call for Proposals Deadline is January 31st

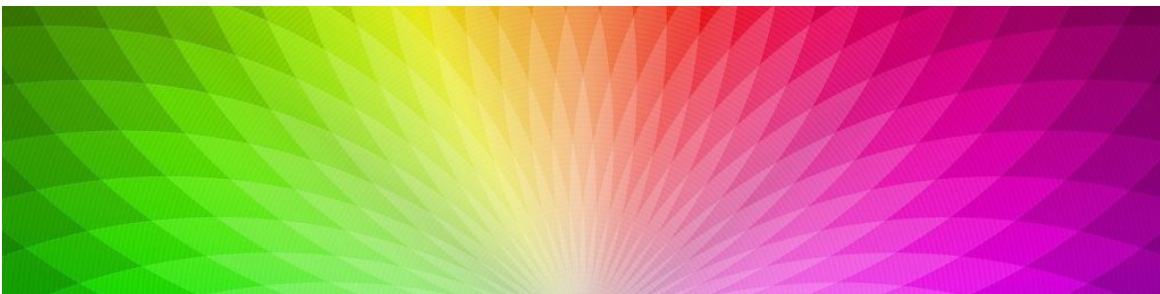
The deadline to respond to the [REA2021 Call for Proposals](#) is January 31st. The Call has been available for months at the conference website, and anyone can respond to it, whether you are a member or not. Once the peer review process is complete, however, and if your proposal is chosen, you must be a member to present.

We encourage you to consider responding, even at this late date. Please keep in mind that there are three types of proposals.

**Research Interest Group (RIG).** A finished paper of publishable quality is presented and discussed among a group of conference participants. If your proposal is accepted, the final paper must be submitted by May 14th in order to be prepared for and posted in the REA Annual Meeting Proceedings. It is important to note here that if you are a graduate student seeking a travel award, you **MUST** propose a RIG paper or Collaborative Session to be eligible.

**Collaborative Session.** A group of three to four scholars may propose to build a breakout session (1.5 hours) in which they model collaborative academic inquiry around a particular topic related to the theme. Research and practical wisdom may be shared through a panel presentation, a dialogue or interview, or other modes of embodied engagement. Preference is given to sessions that bring together scholars who embody diverse cultural perspectives, methodological approaches, or religious traditions in their research.

**Posters.** Posters are a place to present emerging research, research-in-progress that may lead to a publishable paper, or current practices and programs. A poster presentation will allow the author to meet and speak informally with interested participants pertaining to research done, still continuing, or in preparation, thus stimulating the exchange of ideas and networking opportunities. This format offers an opportunity for both established and newer researchers. To facilitate conversation across levels of expertise, established members in the field and in the organization will be invited to briefly respond to each of the posters. A presentation using words, graphs, charts and/or tables on a poster (space 90 cm wide and 120 cm high) for display and discussion will take place during a prominent time slot at the conference.



## REA Advisory Council report

Presented below are some major themes from the most recent advisory council meeting, which was held during our online Fall Gathering.

- What could only be done in a virtual meeting?
- Accessibility of the meeting. There was a low barrier to attend (free) and to manage work/life.
- International participation is a plus for all members.
- Small groups and connection times allowed for members to get to know each other.
- There was a loss of the retreat feel. Multi-tasking and motivation to stick with the conference are more difficult because of the accessibility.
- What to keep in mind for the meeting in July 2021?
- July in person may not be able to happen! Design with a hybrid in mind. Even if members are able to travel domestically in the US that does not mean international members will be able to or want to travel.
- Record sessions for asynchronous engagement.
- Accessibility: closed captioning, translation (if on zoom), etc.
- Paper and panel sessions: it was refreshing to engage in work as opposed to listening to members read papers. Create space to engage each other's work.
- Create space for connection.
- What are some markers that the guild has demonstrated a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access within the guild?
- Acknowledgment that there is a difference among the members, and that commitments to diversity and justice are not all the same.
- The lengthened commitment of the board through training.
- Clear communication about the process towards DEIA, a definition of who the guild is, and who the guild seeks to include.



I want to express my gratitude to everyone who showed up for the advisory council meeting during our virtual gathering in November. The advisory council is made up of volunteers from the guild's committees and the broader membership. If you would like to serve on the advisory council, the only requirement is attending the meeting. All are welcome.

*Patrick Reyes*

REA Vice President, and Chair, Advisory Council

## REA Pop-up Teaching & Syllabus Prep in Trying Times

Recently, we have been receiving emails and questions regarding resources for some of the various happenings in the United States such as continued online learning, a global pandemic, economic crisis, political upheaval, and racial injustice. Several scholars and practitioners gathered in a "pop-up zoom" session on January 25th to engage these questions. They spent time discussing teaching practices and syllabi during trying times like these, and contributed to our ongoing [member-driven resource page](#). REA is committed to continuing to support informal as well as formal discussions about pedagogy in these days. If you have an idea or a set of questions you'd like to engage members around, please contact [Mary Hess](#) our networking coordinator to discuss ways forward.

## Facebook Birthday Fundraisers

Make your 2021 birthday a Religious Education Association one!

A week before my birthday, Facebook reminded me that I can use the occasion to promote a fundraiser for a preferred non-profit. Considering the current need for educators who can promote innovative research to change religious discourse and practices within faith communities and society at large, I thought about the mission of REA with no hesitation. Facebook provided me an easy way to make a financial contribution to this association leveraging the resources of family and friends.

On the day of my birthday, I set a goal of \$400.00 which I achieved within a week. In the process, I learned some strategies that helped me use the Facebook tool effectively. I would like to invite you to establish a social media fundraiser to benefit the work of REA on your next birthday using the Facebook fundraiser tool. You can search for "Religious Education Association" and in the list of options select Religious Education Association Inc. (Walnut Creek, CA) with our logo. I recommend that you follow these steps:

- Add a description to your fundraiser page stating why the work of the REA is important to you. Personalized requests are more effective.
- Set a modest goal in relation to your number of Facebook friends. You want to make it substantial enough to motivate potential givers but not too large to deter people from making small donations. A normal range for a fundraising goal supporting a "professional association" will be from \$100 to \$500.
- Once you set the fundraiser, be the first one to donate a small amount. This "seed" donation will motivate others to give.
- Post the fundraiser the night before your birthday serving as a reminder to friends of what to expect as they share their good wishes the next day.

- Every morning after your birthday, for about a week, re-post the fundraiser so that it moves to the top of your friends' feed.
- The day after your birthday, click the "invite" tab on the fundraiser page. Look through your list of friends and identify potential donors. Click the invite tab beside each name you consider to be a potential donor and they will receive a notification about the fundraiser from Facebook.

•On the third day of your birthday campaign, send messages to family members and close friends with a direct ask saying how much you want to see them contributing to the fundraiser. You can even suggest the amount they should give (I asked a couple of friends to give \$5.00 and asked family members to donate \$10.00 each. To no surprise, they exceeded those amounts).

•Close your fundraiser after one week, whether you have reached your goal or not, and send a note of appreciation to each person who contributed on your behalf.



Join me in this special campaign to support the work of REA and the emerging cadre of scholars making a difference in academia and throughout religious communities. I look forward to seeing the results of your effort as you celebrate another year of life. We look forward to recognizing your birthday and contribution in a public form. Meanwhile, happy birthday to you!

*Jose Irizarry*  
Chair, REA Advancement Committee

## Resources

From time to time we've highlighted specific resources that have been made available from the **Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion**. Long time REA member Lynne Westfield is now the director of the Wabash Center, and in the past year she vastly increased the production of podcasts, webinars, and other "to the moment" resources. The Wabash Center [resources page](#) on their website is a treasure trove of materials, and we highly recommend it.

"[Let's talk: Facilitating critical conversations with students](#)" is a new resource guide published by **TeachingTolerance**, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center in the United States. This guide is full of concrete guidance and thoughtful conversation

prompts for engaging school students across a wide range of challenging topics. The guide is free, and easily accessible (although give it a few minutes, as it's well designed and graphically rich, so takes a while to download).

**ReconcilingWorks** is an organization that serves Lutheran congregations and nonprofits, and which makes available a huge array of resources for engaging LGBTQIA+ issues in faith communities. Their educational resources are free, online, and thoughtfully constructed to nurture engagement across the often divisive terrain of sexuality and Christianity.

**New Ways Ministry** is an organization that educates and advocates for justice and equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) Catholics, and reconciliation within the larger church and civil communities. Their website is full of connecting links and educational resources.

The **Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion**, supported by the Pacific School of Religion in California, hosts a number of resources on these issues that connect across multiple faith communities.

The **Human Rights Campaign**, also based in the US, hosts a number of educational resources across a broad range of issues, including but not limited to religious communities.

There are many places to access policy statements about sexuality and education across various global contexts. This document seeks to provide an overview of sexuality education standards across the **European Union**.

There was a major gathering under the auspices of the **World Council of Churches** held just this month (on the 26th of January) engaging questions of the role of faith-based organizations in international affairs, and it focused directly on issues of gender equality and gender justice. You can find videos from the symposium and other resources online.

**Generation Equality Forum**, sponsored by the UN Women organization, is a civil society-centered, global gathering for gender equality, convened by UN Women and co-hosted by the governments of Mexico and France. Many of its resources are available on their website.

## Member News

**Dave Csinos**, our journal's book review editor, has been granted tenure and promoted to the level of associate professor beginning July 1, 2021 at the Atlantic School of Theology.



**Aaron Ghiloni** has been appointed as Director of the St James' Institute in Sydney, Australia. St James' Institute offers a robust adult education program dealing with “questions of faith, belief, religion and spirituality in the public square.”

Past REA president **Mualla Selçuk** received the very prestigious award, The Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany. The investiture Ceremony took place 9 October 2020 at the German Embassy in Ankara. This honorable recognition emphasizes the very distinctive character of inter-religious encounter between different cultures and the value of the work she has helped to lead the REA in doing together.



As always, we appreciate receiving news of new books, other publications, advancement in your organization, and other member news. Please send information to our networking coordinator, Mary Hess.



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

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Mualla Selçuk (photo from [Deutsche Vertretungen in der Türkei](#))

Boyung Lee (<https://www.iliff.edu/faculty/boyung-lee/>)

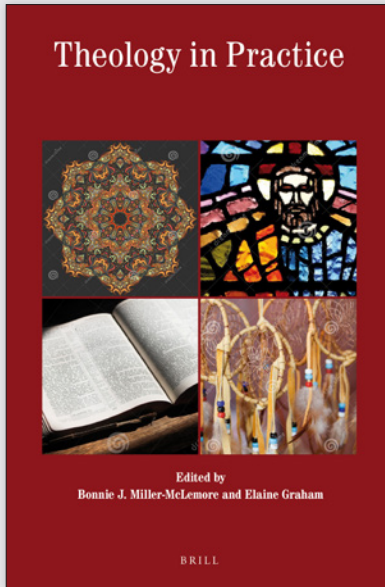
Patrick Reyes (<https://theoed.com/patrick-reyes>)

Jose Irizarry (<http://www.ecclesio.com/conversation-schedule/conversation-partners-2011-3/responder-bios/jose-r-irizarry/>)

# Theology in Practice

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*Theology in Practice* extends the horizons of the discipline and scholarship of practical theology. It promises to enrich the academic discourse and supply material of interest to scholars and professional graduate students. Books in the series will be in conversation with scholarship in the discipline and reflect engagement with diverse voices in the field (e.g., gender, race, international). They will feature developments in the theories of practice, experience, culture, and action that define the discipline, while also attending to the close study of lived faith and theologically significant practices. Authors will range from senior scholars presenting mature research to young scholars pursuing promising fresh avenues. The series is also open to edited volumes on emerging topics. Audiences will be practical theologians and other interested scholars and graduate students in established and emerging geographical, institutional, and religious contexts.

### Call for Manuscripts

For more information regarding the series and possible submissions please contact Brill's Acquisitions Editor for Theology and World Christianity, Tessel Jonquière (mail to: [jonquiere@brill.com](mailto:jonquiere@brill.com)).

ISSN: 2352-9288  
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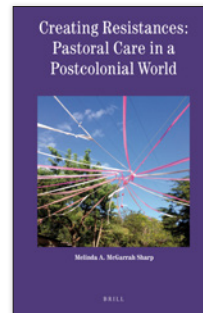
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 ISBN 9789004413221  
 Price € 68 / US\$ 78  
 E-ISBN 9789004413238  
 E-Price € 132 / US\$ 152  
*Theology in Practice*, 8

## Collaborative Practical Theology

*Engaging Practitioners in Research on Christian Practices*

**Henk de Roest**, Protestant Theological University, Groningen

*Collaborative Practical Theology* documents and analyses research on Christian practices conducted by academic practical theologians *in collaboration with* practitioners of different kinds in Christian practices all around the world. These practitioners include professional practitioners, everyday believers, volunteers and students in theological education. The book offers rationales for setting up joint investigation groups with different 'communities of practice', describes a wide range of collaborative research strategies and methods and also has a clear eye for their limitations. In Christian practices faith is mediated, enacted and nurtured. The aim of the book is to improve the utility of theological research on these practices. It communicates the vision that academic research is for the people of God in today's world.

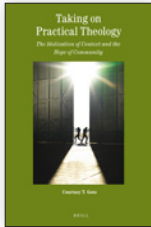


October 2019  
 Paperback (xii, 222 pp.)  
 ISBN 9789004412040  
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 E-ISBN 9789004412057  
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*Theology in Practice*, 7

## Creating Resistances: Pastoral Care in a Postcolonial World

**Melinda A. McGarrah Sharp**, Columbia Theological Seminary

Using intercultural stories and pastoral care scholarship, this book charts pathways through five resistances (not me, not here, not now, not relevant, not possible) to awaken creative pastoral care in a postcolonial world. McGarrah Sharp recommends practices that everyone can do: believing in each other, revisiting how histories are taught, imagining more passable futures, heeding prophetic poets, and crossing borders with healthy boundaries.



August 2018  
 Paperback (xx, 292 pp.)  
 ISBN 9789004349889  
 Price € 55 / US\$ 64  
 E-ISBN 9789004376076  
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*Theology in Practice, 6*

## Taking on Practical Theology

### *The Idolization of Context and the Hope of Community*

**Courtney T. Goto**, Boston University School of Theology

In *Taking on Practical Theology*, Courtney T. Goto explores the regnant paradigm that shapes knowledge production and that preserves power, privilege, and historic communal injury even as scholars intend to enlighten and transform communities.

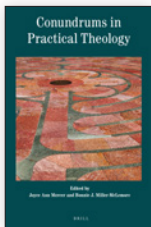


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 E-ISBN 9789004352902  
 E-Price € 105 / US\$ 122  
*Theology in Practice, 4*

## A Graceful Embrace: Theological Reflections on Adopting Children

**John Swinton** and **Brian Brock**, University of Aberdeen

This book significantly deepens the contemporary discussion of the theology and practice of adopting children. Both interdisciplinary and international, the volume offers a unique and uniquely insightful vision of Christian adoption that unites practical and theoretical perspectives.



September 2016  
 Paperback (x, 322 pp.)  
 ISBN 9789004324237  
 Price € 60 / US\$ 80  
 E-ISBN 9789004324244  
 E-Price € 60 / US\$ 80  
*Theology in Practice, 2*

## Conundrums in Practical Theology

Edited by **Joyce Ann Mercer** and **Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore**

In this landmark volume, internationally recognized scholars address with unheralded honesty key intellectual and practical conundrums that not only trouble practical theology but reflect biases and breakdowns in the construction of theological knowledge in academy and religious communities at large.



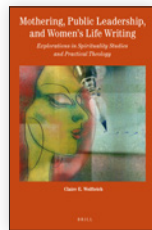
September 2017  
 Paperback (viii, 252 pp.)  
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 E-ISBN 9789004353183  
 E-Price € 99 / US\$ 114  
*Theology in Practice, 5*

## Missionary Positions

### *A Postcolonial Feminist Perspective on Sex Work and Faith-Based Outreach from Australia*

**Lauren McGrow**, Independent Scholar

*Missionary Positions* challenges common Christian assumptions about sex workers. Using feminist, postcolonial perspectives, interviews with pastoral practitioners and personal narrative, Lauren McGrow carves out a space for the dynamic theological agency and life complexity of sex workers to be acknowledged.



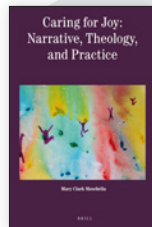
August 2017  
 Paperback (x, 208 pp.)  
 ISBN 9789004350663  
 Price € 49 / US\$ 57  
 E-ISBN 9789004350670  
 E-Price € 94 / US\$ 108  
*Theology in Practice, 3*

## Mothering, Public Leadership, and Women's Life Writing

### *Explorations in Spirituality Studies and Practical Theology*

**Claire E. Wolfeich**, Boston University

In *Mothering, Public Leadership, and Women's Life Writing*, Claire E. Wolfeich presents a series of case studies in Christian spirituality, bringing a theological analysis to mothers' autobiographical writing.



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## Caring for Joy: Narrative, Theology, and Practice

**Mary Clark Moschella**, Yale Divinity School

In *Caring for Joy: Narrative, Theology, and Practice* Mary Clark Moschella explores the lively narratives of five remarkable caregivers, offering theological wisdom and practical resources for scholars, counselors, religious leaders, and others who wish to live and move along more joyful, life-giving spiritual paths.

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