2010 Graduates

Meagan Ashcroft, MA

2009 Graduates

Evan Radford, BA Honours

Evan completed an Honours degree in RLST at the University of Regina in 2009 under the supervision of Darlene Juschka. He is currently pursuing his studies at York University. He recently gave a paper at the IAHR in Toronto, 2010.

2007 Graduates

Carla Blakley, MA

I graduated from the University of Regina in 1990 with a BA in Religious Studies and in 2007 with an MA in Religious Studies. In between these degrees I did an MDIV at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary and was ordained as a Lutheran Pastor in 1995.

I am currently one of the three pastors at Christ Lutheran in Regina, SK. I am currently working to queer the hetero-sexist flavor of the church and promote inclusivity for GLBTI folks. I am involved with Missing Women initiatives and chair the advocacy committee of the Regina and District Food Bank. The U of R., specifically the Religious Studies Dept., has been such a gift... opening doors of understanding and enabling you to explore your own prejudices while learning and expanding your understanding of the world and your place in it. I have thoroughly enjoyed the class work but even more so the interaction with the Profs and other students, each person having their own fascinating story to bring to the table.

--submitted: 2007

Diane Zerr, BA

Diane is currently pursuing an MLIS at Dalhousie University.

2006 Graduates

Laura Sauder, BA Honours

Laura graduated with an MDiv from Emmanuel College in 2009. She was the recipient of the Percy Prize Memorial Prize in Books; the Toronto Korean United Church Scholarship in Christain Ethics; the Abernathy Award in Elective Work in Ethics, the T.B. Kilpatrick Scholarship in Systematic Theology; and the Alfred Fernes Binnington Award. She plans to go to Saskatoon for a year of courses to prepare for ordination in the Lutheran tradition.
2005 Graduates

**Theresa Hannah-Munns, BA Honours**

Recipient of SSHRC Master's Award

**Kirsten Hansen, MA**

Admitted to the PhD program at Concordia University.

**Glen Kannigan-Fairen, MA**

I graduated from the University of Regina in 2006 with a MA in Religious Studies (2003 BA Honours in RLST). I'm now in my second year of a PhD at the University of Toronto, also in Religious Studies. Looking back on my experience in Regina, I have to say that it was one of the most enjoyable times of my life. In particular, my MA cohorts (both the students and my advisors) provided me with one of the most engaging and thought provoking environments that anyone could hope for. It was this community that helped shape my academic career and (hopefully) have made me a better scholar. Glen was the recipient of SSHRC Master's Award.

-submitted: 2007

**UPDATE**: Congratulations to Glen Fairen on the publication of *As Below, So Above: Apocalypticism, Gnosticism and the Scribes of Qumran and Nag Hammadi*, Gorgias Press, 2009. Glen completed an MA in RLST at the University of Regina under the direction of Bill Arnal in 2006.

**Nick Schonhoffer, BA Honours**

Admitted to the PhD program at the University of Toronto

**Carmen Webb, MA**

I graduated with a BA Hons. in RLST (minor WMST) in 2003 and with Interdisciplinary Masters (RLST/WMST) in 2005. I am enrolled in the doctorate at the UofC in RLST. I am currently studying Buddhist retreats for women in the United States. This study examines the shape and content of such retreats with special attention to the diversity of religious backgrounds and affiliations of attendees and the level of sycretism that these retreats exhibit. Cultural
changes resulting in women's increasing ability to travel and to determine where their money will be spent is also considered. Further, the concept of retreat behaviour and gender as forms of cultural performance are considered. Beyond this study I am also very interested in issues of theory and method in the study of religion, innovation in religions, women in religion, syncretism, immigrant experience in the North American religious milieu, religious tourism, and pilgrimage, among other things.

Looking back on the U of R one of the things I most appreciated about my time there was the availability and warmth of faculty and the sense of collegiality between students and professors. Faculty exhibited an enthusiasm for student success and a concern for student well-being that created both a pleasant and stimulating atmosphere that promoted learning and relationship building. submitted: 2007)

Carmen was the recipient of SSHRC Master's Award and received an SSHRC Doctoral Award.

2003 Graduates

Stephanie Balkwill, BA (Honours)

Admitted to the PhD program, McMaster University, 2010.

Admitted to the Chinese Language and Literature Program at Shandong University in Jinan, China.

Alicia Pomazon, MA

Congratulations to Alicia Pomazon for completing her PhD dissertation *Neighbors and Strangers” Herman Cohen and Protestant Biblical Criticism*, at McMaster University (2010).

Kirsten Folk, BA (Honours), MA

I graduated from the University of Regina in 2003 with a BA, Honours (double major in Religious Studies and Anthropology through Campion College). In 2005, I completed my MA degree in Religious Studies at McMaster University. My area of study was religion and the social sciences with a specific interest in the anthropology of religion, illness narratives, and healing. After finishing my degree, I moved abroad and I am currently teaching English in Japan on the JET Programme. The Religious Studies Department at the U of R created a great environment for students. Since the U of R is a smaller university, the faculty were always able to help students and provide guidance.

--submitted: 2007
2002 Graduates

Michelle Folk, MA


I am currently enrolled in the PhD program in the Department of Religion at Concordia University where I continue to work in the area of India Studies. I have been awarded a 2007-08 Student Research Fellowship from Shastri-Indo Canadian Institute for research in India on a project entitled The Social Relevance of Medieval Women Saints for Contemporary Women. My goal is to trace women’s religiosity as a source of social activism in India. Using a sample of medieval women saints from Tamilnadu, I will investigate the hymns that they wrote, the hagiographies that their communities developed, and also the ritual activities associated with these women to determine their social relevance for women today.

My other research interests include: asceticism, constructions of the human body, hagiography, identity construction, narrative, and medieval Tamil Shaivism. I was fortunate to receive a 2006-07 Student Excellence Award from the Shastri-Indo Canadian Institute to continue my studies.

When I reflect on my time at the University of Regina and, more particularly, in the Department of Religious Studies, I think most about the relationships with my professors that I was able to develop as an undergraduate and graduate student. I was encouraged to develop a strong theoretical background and critical thinking that have helped me in my continued studies. My professors were also important mentors in the areas of research and teaching.

Michelle was admitted to the PhD program at Concordia University.

Yumiko Onozawa, MA

I received BA Honours with Honours in 1999 and my MA in Religious Studies in 2002. What are you doing now? Currently I am working toward a Ph. D degree at the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Calgary. My research interest is to examine how the act of teaching can be understood as salvation for bodhisattvas.

The University of Regina, especially the Department of Religious Studies, is the birthplace of my academic life. I spent the most comfortable seven years of my "childhood" there and received BA and MA. We often hear that the first several years of one's life are very important for establishing one's foundation as a human being. I believe that the "nourishment" which I received during the seven years has created the foundation on which I have walked on and with. The professors, the administrative coordinator, peer colleagues of the Department gave me
comprehensive gifts. They are compared to the three gifts according to Buddhism: 1) material gift, 2) gift of the teachings, and 3) gift of fearlessness. Their material gift, in short, scholarship, made my life easier. In Buddhism, "material gift" includes compassionate activity. My school life, because of their care in a friendly manner, was enjoyable. Their gift of the teachings including suggestions, ideas, and discussions is imperishable and still nourishes me. Their gift of fearlessness has encouraged me keep working in academia but, more fundamentally, inspired me to stay in the country which is foreign to me. Buddhist practitioners receive all three gifts from people directly. The Department of Religious Studies, I believe, has people who possess the three gifts and wait for giving.

submitted: 2007

2001 Graduates

Wendy Schick, BA (Honours)

Wendy completed her MA (Religion and Culture) at Wilfrid Laurier University and teaches sessionally at the University of Regina

2000 Graduates

Brenda Anderson, MA

Brenda received her MA in 2000 and is pursuing a PhD at the University of Regina where she is an Instructor in the Gender and Women's Studies program.

Kimberly Beek, MA

Kim is currently writing her PhD thesis (2010).

I graduated in 1993, with a Bachelor of Arts Advanced in English Literature and in 2000, with a Master of Arts in Religious Studies

After spending a total of almost thirteen years as a Logistics Officer in the Canadian Forces specializing in Human Resources and Financial Administration, I have 'retired' to take up doctoral studies at McMaster University in Hamilton, ON. My academic work focuses on the development of Buddhism in North America, and more specifically, the emergence of a new Western literary genre of fiction known as "Buddhist fiction."

I consider my experience in the University of Regina Religious Studies Department a gift. Throughout both my undergraduate and graduate degrees I received attention, support, instruction and access to resources which allowed me to develop communication and critical thinking skills that are foundational in the many 'roles' I play(ed). This gift lasts a lifetime, not
only through my use of the skills I gained, but through the support I still receive from many of professors and staff of the small but lively Religious Studies Department who have taken an active role and interest in my further academic development. Seldom have I been as privileged to learn from those who embody the ideals they teach.

-submitted, 2007

**Benjamin Fleming, MA**

-admitted to the PhD program at McMaster University

**1995 Graduates**

**Adela Sandness, BA (Honours), MA**


I am presently Assistant Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. ([www.stfx.ca/people/asandnes](http://www.stfx.ca/people/asandnes)) I teach in the areas of Hinduism and Buddhism. My area of research is Vedic Studies, and, more specifically, the goddess Sarasvati and associated figures in Vedic tradition.

I continue to be grateful for my experience in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Regina. I was so well-mentored there, and the quality of teaching was so high, that this continues to shape the way I teach in turn, and I strive to meet the teaching standards that I myself witnessed there as a student. The strong sense of healthy community, and the supportive nature of that community, also continues to inspire me, and I work to develop such a community among my own students. Friendships that I formed there have lasted, and teachers I worked with have inspired not only core elements of my teaching and scholarly research, but also central ways in which I have grown as a person. I would recommend this program to anyone.

-submitted: 2007

**1991 Graduates**

**Mary Jesse, MA**

She is the Registrar at Luther college.