

# The Bulletin

## 2013/14

The Canadian Society of Biblical Studies  
La société canadienne des études bibliques

Volume 73  
Paul S. Evans, Editor

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The Bulletin is an annual publication of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies / La société canadienne des études bibliques.

Membership Information: The annual fees for membership in the CSBS/SCÉB are:

	Regular	Dual
Full	\$82.00	\$50.00
Student, Contractual	\$35.00	\$20.00
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A limited number of individual issues of the Bulletin may be purchased for a handling charge of \$10.00 each, payable to the CSBS/SCÉB. Requests should be sent to the editor at the address above.

The CSBS/SCÉB website address is <http://www.ccsr.ca/csbs/>

CN ISSN 0068-970-X

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**From Chess to Scruples: Changing Paradigms  
in Biblical Scholarship and the Games We Play**

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You suspect you are getting old when you have seven grandchildren, and have stowed beside the couch a production entitled, “Once a Pawn a Time”—an illustrated game-board with story-book manual for children ages 5 through 10. I am a less-than-mediocre chess-player, but it is incumbent on me to pass on the tradition of my grandfather, who taught me to play. Though I am keen that my grandchildren learn chess, I suspect that they might, in a few years, prefer another game that we still have stashed upstairs with my youngest daughter’s as-yet-unclaimed effects. It is the game “Scruples”—our version is in French, and so is spelled “Scruples,” a legacy of our days in *la belle province*. Its full title is *Question de scrupules: le jeu du dilemme morale*.

A game of moral dilemmas—how very Canadian! Appropriate to our context here in Victoria, it is a home-grown Canadian game, conceived by Henry Makow in 1984, that has profited from high exposure on American television, both in Carson’s Tonight Show and the first season of Everybody Loves Raymond. As teens, my three girls loved to tease each other and their friends using its questions as a catalyst for deep embarrassment. No doubt they agreed with the producer’s explanation: “Scruples makes players sweat as they ask each other what they would do in a moral predicament.”<sup>1</sup> Perhaps, in deference to their mother’s scruples, they would not have admitted

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.scruplesgame.com/main.html>.

that the charm of the game is equally captured by the second descriptive sentence: “Luckily *no one has to tell the truth and there’s no right answer!*”<sup>2</sup>

Both Chess and Scruples depend upon the set-up of a fictive universe—the first by insight and the movement of pieces according to set conventions, the second by cunning improvisation and body language. Chess is more straightforwardly artificial, the final checkmate wholly dependent upon an exercise of the mind operating within the rules of the game. During our first game together, my five year old grand-daughter was sorely tempted to swipe my Queen off the board manually, because she was provoked by that player’s power: I had to explain that she had to help her chessmen orchestrate the Queen’s demise! A good chess player knows that the game is both (artificially) violent, and stubbornly impersonal: she must set her face clearly towards the demolition of pieces, and away from the sensibilities of the opponent. This battle is not staged directly between the two players, who may well be fast friends, but takes place on the board; and the game simply cannot proceed if you keep letting your opponent take back her infelicitous moves. In contrast, Scruples relies upon the fuzzy edge between the game and the players’ real world. Though it can be emotionally violent, it is communal, and works best with several players; it is not combat “one-on-one,” though I suppose it could devolve into that. Moreover, it involves rather impertinent questions: “When cleaning up, you find your teenager’s diary. Do you read it? Yes, No or depends?” One hopes to get an answer that will admit you into the psyche of your opponent, but the one being interrogated is allowed subterfuge. In all this interrogation, group-think is a key ingredient. Indeed, one of the purposes of the game, says producer Milton Bradley, is to “inspire... stimulating conversation and laughter” and to “get to know people in unexpected ways.”

In one sense, Chess mirrors the conventions of a classic novel, where the narrator is absolutely self-effacing, but Scruples is more like the film “Spaceballs.” Some of you may admit to

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

enjoying one of the many scenes in that ribald film where the actors play with the frame—for example, when one ingenious crew member fast-forwards the tape of their drama in a VHS machine in order to decide what they should do next, and the whole company ends up stalled, staring at themselves, who are staring back at them, in the “now-now” moment. The boundary between fiction and “reality” is humorously permeable.

These two games may, I think, be taken as emblematic of the paradigm shift that has occurred in our field—indeed, in the humanities in general, as that naughty book about a cutting edge English department, *The Lecturer's Tale*, reveals.<sup>3</sup> So I am confronted with yet another indication of aging: reflection upon how things have changed. My first disorientation by the shift that we have all witnessed took place in November 1990, when I attended my first SBL meeting, offering a taste of the thesis that I was to defend in April 1991, entitled “The Ladies and the Cities.” My focus was upon female symbolic figures identified with Jewish and Christian faithful communities in four apocalypses: it was meant to be a wholly literary analysis showing the varying emphases upon identity in the four works, and the hope for transformation generally found in apocalypses. My respondent, the inestimable Tina Pippin, was not captivated: perhaps it was the non-PC “Ladies” in the title that caught her attention. (Certainly, that term was queried later by Sheffield editor Philip Davies; until he expressed concern, in my naiveté I had assumed that everyone would read “lady” as nobility, not in terms of the dismissive colloquial label!)

But Tina was not quibbling over mere words: for her, the very scope of analysis, examining a classical meme of sovereignty, was unethical because it sought to be descriptive rather than critically prescriptive or explicitly political. As such, it did not tackle the figures in terms of the status of women or the violence that these texts may perpetuate as they portray women in their hierarchically-storied worlds. Our dialogue that morning remained

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<sup>3</sup> James Hynes, *The Lecturer's Tale A Novel* (New York: St. Martin's Picador, 2001).



carefully respectful, mostly within the parameters of the old chess paradigm, as though we were detached opponents. Yet, her premise was at odds with our demeanour: my choice of literary game, in contrast to hers, had brought us to the threshold of academic scruples. The unspoken truth was that we were not simply engaging in a discrete academic debate disconnected from ideological and theological commitment: in Tina's estimation, that commitment should have been foregrounded, whereas for my purposes, it was better left unspoken. Though our exchange still breathed the rarefied air of neutral analysis of the subjects at hand, the dark nimbus of engagement hung over us, threatening to impede our discussion. Since 1990, that cloud has now burst, experienced as refreshment in some situations, but as a torrent of subjectivism in others.

In this paper, I aim to unpack some of the implications of this paradigm shift, reminding us of both strengths and weaknesses in the old paradigm, and evaluating the potential and danger evident in various expressions of the new approach, amidst the plurality that we call Biblical Studies today. As a handy gauge, we will consider presidential addresses beginning in the late 80s, since, as Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza has put it, these are "a ceremonial form of speech" that frequently "seek ... to reflect on the status of the field by raising ... methodological questions" and that often "attempt ... to chart the paradigm shifts or decentering processes in biblical scholarship which displace the dominant ethos of research but do not completely replace it."<sup>4</sup> To three presidential addresses we will also add three significant papers, heeding their particular and varied methods, but with an eye also to a general movement (or awareness of this movement) from object to subject, from assumed neutrality to engagement, from objective

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<sup>4</sup> Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza "The Ethics of Biblical Interpretation: Decentering Biblical Scholarship," 1987 Presidential address to the SBL. Online: <http://disseminary.org/seminar/ethbible/archives/ESF.pdf>. The address originally was published in *JBL* 107 (1988): 3-17, and is reprinted in *Presidential Voices: The Society of Biblical Literature in the Twentieth Century* (ed. Harold W. Attridge and James C. VanderKam; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006). The present paper references the online version throughout.

demonstration to practical implications. Our place in these ongoing conversations means that we care about these substantive matters, though some more philosophically minded may want to debate what happens when we train our focus subjectively rather than upon our subject matter! I will not engage in the latter question here, but concentrate rather upon the viability of our continued conversations, amidst the current dangers and opportunities in place for our ongoing work together. In light of this, we will ask of the papers two groups of questions closely attached to the creation and preservation of our dialogues:

1. *What ethos predominates?* Are the scholarly endeavours normally characterized as playful or serious, and with what result? Further, does the author more often *show* than *tell*, or vice versa?
2. *What common ground is available* to the debating or conversing scholars under each paradigm? And does the approach foster scholarly community or, on the other hand, lead to polarization, even balkanization?

In the wild array of intentions, approaches, interest and implications, it is difficult to know which kind of taxonomy will best serve. Even in selecting pertinent examples, I have seen myself as a kind of Psyche in the granary, who for the sake of love must heed Aphrodite's command to sort them all by sundown—or, in less than an twenty pages! Seeing no canny ants to help me out, and wary of imposing a chronological order that might wrongly imply a smooth evolution in our discipline, I will organize our six examples by general impulse: the propaedeutic, the pragmatic and (what I will call) the “programmatic.” These are, of course, tendencies rather than mutually exclusive modes, since we are all concerned with pedagogy, with the “so what” of our work, and with the intricacies of the material at hand.

1. First, then, for the Propaedeutic

As illustrative let us take the two noble Adeles: Yarbrow Collins of apocalyptic and American fame, and our own beloved Reinhartz, of Johannine and silver screen repute! The works to be studied are a paper from 1984 (“‘What the Spirit says to the Churches’: Preaching the Apocalypse”)<sup>5</sup> and a presidential address from 1998 (“Scripture on the Silver Screen”).<sup>6</sup> The fourteen-year gap between them neatly discloses the shift to which I am referring, even when we account for differentials of interest and cultural context. Yarbrow Collins addresses the problematic obscurity of the Apocalypse for those who are not “fundamentalists,” crafting a syncretistic method, and reassessing theological evaluations of the book— all this with “the ultimate intention” to equip preachers addressing the churches.<sup>7</sup> Adele Reinhartz similarly explains her “pedagogical” penchant for collecting uses of the Bible in film:

I hoped that my students would be so convinced of the relevance of the Bible to film, and, by extension, to other aspects of popular culture, that they would in turn be convinced of the Bible’s centrality to western thought and culture. I even imagined that the experience of close reading and exegesis of biblical texts would so invigorate these students that they would eagerly pursue the study of the Bible for its own sake.

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<sup>5</sup> Adele Yarbrow Collins, “‘What the Spirit says to the Churches’: Preaching the Apocalypse,” *QR* 4.3.69-84.

<sup>6</sup> Adele Reinhartz forwarded me a manuscript copy of her address, “Scripture on the Silver Screen,” (hence I offer no page numbers when I cite this article). It is, however, available in the 1998/1999 edition of *The Bulletin* (Canadian Society of Biblical Studies, volume 58). The original presentation was accompanied by film clips, and was a memorable experience for those of us who were present! Many of her insights are also available in the book that (it seems) grew out of her presidential address, *Scripture on the Silver Screen* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), and I will give explicit references to this source.

<sup>7</sup> Yarbrow Collins, “What the Spirit Says,” 70-71.

Both of our colleagues have in mind a particular audience that might profit from their travail—non-fundamentalist homilists in the first case and students in the second. Yet their work is by no means wholly pragmatic, for they concentrate closely upon the matter at hand, whether the literary structure and implied theology of the Apocalypse, or the use of the Bible in film. Indeed, their analyses are so extensive that we forget the *cui bono* and are caught up in what they unveil.

This leads us to our first group of questions about ethos, tone, and showing versus telling. The first paper is more sober than the second, as we might expect in an essay intended to be made scholarship available to preachers— an audience combined, no doubt with academics who retain interest in the Church. (The piece appears in the United Methodist journal *Quarterly Review*, in a volume edited by Gene Tucker and entitled *Focus on Apocalypticism*.) Despite these high stakes, Yarbrow Collins maintains an easy tone and keeps her aims modest. At times we hear the authorial voice “telling” about historical context and even ethics, as one editor’s ‘call-out’ box demonstrates: “If the demonic is seen only in the other, self-deception occurs.”<sup>8</sup> Mostly, however, she is content to let the text make its own mark, showing the influence of the “new literary” school of Eliot and others that has percolated down into our field. (You also know you are older when ‘percolate’ is not yet a dead metaphor and evokes the smell and sounds of early mornings as a child!)

We see the “text-in-itself” approach as she describes the genre, plot, structure, symbolism and characters in indicative, present and nearly reified terms: “there are,” “is apparent,” “can be distinguished,” “the book does not belong...to the genre.”<sup>9</sup> Interconnected with this is a foray into deep structuralism and the “expressive” nature of the Apocalypse, apparent through its mythological symbolism and structural repetitions. Alongside text-immanentist moves, Yarbrow Collins retains a concern for authorial intent, for the temporal constraints of the seer’s own era, and for

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 78.

how the mythological language “would have been understood” in its first hearing. Insofar as the recovery of intent prevails, we encounter “telling” alongside the “showing.” In a piece directed toward preachers, we might expect that the stance of neutrality would be dropped, but this is not the case. It is true that the author occasionally embraces her readership by disclosing what is meant to be a shared ethos; however, her authority depends upon the expectation that it is precisely scholarly dispassionate analysis that will aid those (like pastors) who are more engaged: the liberal ideal of biblical studies as the modest handmaid to theology is evident here. Her purpose is sober (but not grandiose), the stance neutral (but not so as to miss her audience).

In contrast, Adele Reinhartz’s work is, as befits its cinematic subject, somewhat more playful—though many of the films she surveys are deadly serious, even dark. Though “telling” is necessary to her interpretative commentary, “showing” —quite literally!—predominates. Those of us who heard the paper as a presidential address were thoroughly engaged, since it was moved along by no less than 25 clips from films as varied as “Sling Blade” and “Jésus de Montréal.” The verbal commentary, too, does more showing (in narrational fashion) than telling, and frequently lets us draw our own conclusions. She aims to bear out her initial assumptions: first, that movies not only reflect but also *shape* our views, norms and attitudes, and many have therefore pressed the Bible into the service of this for cinema; second, that the general public is so Biblically illiterate it cannot evaluate how contemporary films use (or misuse, or deliberately abuse) biblical material. She includes films where the Bible functions as a significant prop, where Scriptural allusions (or misquotes) are employed and where the plot is dependent upon or complicated by biblical narratives and characters.

Her moves from showing to telling are made in a tentative fashion, with phrases such as “perhaps” and “we are never told.” Even the final rhetorical appeal, to re-assure her colleagues about the relevance of biblical studies and value of biblical literacy, is not explicitly pitched. Rather, she allows film to make this point,

concluding with an ironic clip that “convey[s the] message most clearly.” In an ambiguous fashion, we learn (her own words) how “the Bible serves as a resource for everyone....to try to understand him or herself, find a paradigm for his or her own situation, and try to figure out where he or she stands in the world.”<sup>10</sup> But this explicit summary of intent (taken from the 2003 book rather than the presidential address) strikes the ear as more sermonic than Adele’s typical mode of discourse, which is suggestive rather than instructive, and redolent of our collusion with her and the films we are watching together.

This leads us to our second group of questions concerning common ground and the fostering of scholarly community. Both of our friends are well attuned to their readers, and the context in which they write. Yarbro Collins bases the common ground upon a shared need—to find ways of reading the Apocalypse that avoid fundamentalist error—and upon the assumption that analysis of the Apocalypse is as worthwhile to the Church as the academy. She outlines the peculiarities in the apocalyptic genre that render it resistant to traditional historical criticism, and then initiates her readers into literary method and deep structuralism. With her, we gather around the text, without neglecting the older historical concerns: common ground is the text itself, seen in its historical and literary context. There is a certain safety here, as faith issues lurk in the background, but remain tangential: the scholar does her work, and includes us in this, but (mostly!) leaves the readers to do the “application.”

There is, of course, an initial implicit point of exclusion—her analysis is NOT for those who might be considered “fundamentalist,” since they do not perceive difficulty in interpreting the biblical text, and have their own coherent (if mistaken) approach to it. Further, there may be one or two cracking points for the community being fostered by Yarbro Collins’s address—the first, where we are asked to accept the insights of deep-structural language as expressive of a universal

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<sup>10</sup> Reinhartz, *Scripture on the Silver Screen*, 113.

and fundamental reality<sup>11</sup> that is not “completely idiosyncratic...[but] rooted in ...subjective experiences;”<sup>12</sup> and the second, when the first-century perception of “insurmountable opposition in the world as we know it”<sup>13</sup> and marginalization are connected with twentieth-century liberation theology. Not all may share the author’s tacit acceptance of this political theology or of the philosophical/sociological foundations for structuralism. Curiously, the author critiques liberal methods of interpretation as inadequate at the beginning of her essay, only to re-establish them at the end, when she concentrates upon “experience.” This emphasis upon experience may produce a final point of exclusion, even for readers who are not fundamentalist (however this is meant to be defined). What about those who do not consider the symbolism of Revelation to be based solely upon subjective experiences to be shared, but who acknowledge these as coming from and pointing to the One who is “both the beginning and the end”? Most will agree that the symbols, plot, and deep structure of the Apocalypse are expressive; some will insist that to radicalize this insight is to miss those things in the book that remain “referential”—that is, pointing beyond human experience for its own sake. In the main, however, the common ground remains the text itself (and the assumption that this text is significant for life). Moreover, the safe space for discourse offered on this playing field is considerable, and the community that Yarbro Collins fosters extends graciously beyond the bounds of professional academics to those pastors who are prepared to do the literary and historical work with her.

The same concern for the community of scholars (and beyond) is evident in the work of Adele Reinhartz, though the changing conventions of scholarship have, by the time of her presidential address, opened up the windows in what used to be a more hermetically sealed academic house. We gather with her around the movies themselves, and chummily evaluate how these

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<sup>11</sup> Yarbro Collins, “What the Spirit Says,” 73.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

films use the Bible or even subvert it. Another common ground is the exegesis of contemporary society, the “reading” of the films that read the Scriptures for an indication of current symbols and values. Just as the Bible is used as a window to pop culture in the films, so the films become windows to pop culture for those of us who specialize in the Scriptures. Due to the twinned subject matter—Scripture and film—and the concern for education (both of students and society), her address provides ample meeting ground for academics and professors in Bible, across their various interests and formations.

The focus is naturally outward looking, rather than introspective. Still, at the end of the 90s, in the newly blossoming post-modern climate, this author had no need artificially to obscure her own connection with the sacred text, a stance that she presumes is shared by at least some of her colleagues: “for many of *us*, the Bible is *a powerful personal resource*. The movies attest to the Bible’s role in shaping the ways in which we tell our stories, mold our heroes, understand our experience, imagine our future, and explain ourselves to ourselves.”<sup>14</sup> Indeed, it is with this personal note that she moves into her conclusion, evoking pathos in a convincing way, and reminding us how we are each, in some measure, shaped by this sacred collection. Even more embracing of the “we” is her light touch in enjoining the concluding paraenesis:

While popular movies generally convey a positive view of the Bible and its role as sacred scripture, we as students and teachers of biblical literature should worry about those for whom popular culture is a primary vehicle of biblical knowledge. Our mission, should we choose to accept it, is to help our students to an educated reading of the text against which movies and other popular representations of the Bible may be tested.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Reinhartz, “Scripture on the Silver Screen,” n. p.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.



Is this “mission impossible,” or something about which academics in scriptural studies can be hopeful? Only time will tell! The “should” language employed here (“we...should worry”) indicates a serious concern on the part of our colleague; yet the invitation is issued with aplomb, and, like Adele Yarbro Collins, with full awareness of our modest impact as scholars upon contemporary society. Both demonstrate a propaedeutic concern, but do not focus wholly upon this. Their subject matter balances, and at some points outweighs, the practical.

## 2. The Pragmatic

This is not the case, I think, with our next set of offerings, which I have entitled ‘the pragmatic.’ No one in the field of biblical studies is unaware of the influential 1987 presidential address of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, “The Ethics of Biblical Interpretation: Decentering Biblical Scholarship” and the strenuous advocacy found in her publications since that time. In that address, she reminded us of earlier shifts that had taken place: the first discerned by Frank Porter in 1908, who spoke of a new freedom from the Bible’s earlier authority, so that scholars could perform historical-critical readings of the Bible alongside other books.<sup>16</sup> By Porter’s own time, this first shift had been so firmly established that Porter could go on to envisage a new naïveté, where, chastened by historical-criticism, the power of the Bible might yet still be felt. This third movement, considers Schüssler-Fiorenza, has been indeed fulfilled in the literary-hermeneutic paradigm (that very paradigm which we have seen in operation among our two Adeles). However, this now itself requires decentering by “a fourth turn”—a paradigm shift that “relinquish[es] its rhetorical stance of value-free objectism and scientific Methodism,”<sup>17</sup> focusses upon critical connection, and occupies itself with rhetorical-ethical concerns.

Schüssler Fiorenza’s riff has been adopted as the

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<sup>16</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, “The Ethics,” 1-2.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

foundation for the more playful yet still-earnest challenge of Joseph A. Marchal, who in 2006 disturbed the SBL community with a forum piece entitled “To What End(s)? Biblical Studies and Critical Rhetorical Engagement(s) for a ‘Safer’ World.” His premise is that “Biblical studies at its best” works “across disciplinary questions and academic domains to address matters of public relevance.”<sup>18</sup>

With both of our colleagues there are at least two things in view—first, a desire to decenter “scholarly investigation”<sup>19</sup> and the “supposedly neutral and value-free stance” (M); second, a belief that the community of Biblical scholars not only is responsible to the larger political/social sphere, but has power in shaping it. The pragmatic, then, dominates. We see this in Schüssler Fiorenza’s ostinato of imperatives — “*must* learn,” “has the *responsibility*,”<sup>20</sup> “*must* acknowledge,” “*should* provide”<sup>21</sup> — as she calls us to a “public deliberative discourse.”<sup>22</sup> In Marchal, too, the ‘so what?’ dominates: we “*must* continuously question to what ends we interpret,”<sup>23</sup> This is key, insist both scholars, to ethical scholarship, since the scholarly community—especially that part of it which deals with the Bible— still possesses authority<sup>24</sup> in society, an authority that demands this “pragmatic approach” (Marchal’s own term!).<sup>25</sup> Well then, how does this approach shared by Marchal and Schüssler Fiorenza take shape, both in terms of ethos or tone, and in mode of discourse (show or tell?)

It will have become apparent already that for Schüssler Fiorenza what we do as Biblical scholars is no laughing matter. We are not mere observers of the text, of historical reality or of an

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<sup>18</sup> Joseph A. Marchal, “To What End(s)? Biblical Studies and Critical Rhetorical Engagement(s) for a “Safer” World,” *SBL Forum*, n.p. [cited June 2006]. Online: <http://sbl-site.org/Article.aspx?ArticleID=550>.

<sup>19</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, “The Ethics,” 7.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>23</sup> Marchal, “To What End(s)?” n.p.

<sup>24</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, “The Ethics,” 7.

<sup>25</sup> Marchal, “To What End(s)?” n.p.

epistemic truth; rather, since everything is perspectival, we are involved in “constructing... worlds and symbolic universes” that are “competing,”<sup>26</sup> but not necessarily mutually exclusive. We are, indeed, involved in a significant game of “double ethics” that must weigh not only the meaning(s) of the text but also how these meanings might be used in our own culture.<sup>27</sup> Responsible scholars must elucidate not only the text and historical contexts, but also “the ethical consequences of political functions of biblical texts... in... contemporary sociopolitical contexts.”<sup>28</sup> Our questions and presentations are to be shaped by an awareness of substantial concerns: ‘womyn’s’ position in the world “traipsing along at the tail end of the procession”<sup>29</sup>, the shameful silence of our colleagues on political and social issues of import,<sup>30</sup> the oppressive objectivist stance that has protected the status quo,<sup>31</sup> the use of the Bible for dehumanization,<sup>32</sup> scholarly refusal to recognize plurality and voices at the margins, and the threat of right-wing political fundamentalism and biblical literalism in society.<sup>33</sup> Those who prefigured her “turn” to the ethical dimension are described as “important” participants who have “consistently raised issues” and thus made “serious inroads” into the significant task at hand.<sup>34</sup>

What might amount, in other scholars’ hands, to a kind of creative play—that is, the possibility of cross-disciplinary study—is articulated in earnest and with a sober moral dimension. For some this “opening up” might amount to an infusion of imaginative delight into our field, but for Schüssler Fiorenza, it becomes part of the “enterprise” by which biblical studies becomes “a significant participant in the global discourse seeking justice and well-being

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<sup>26</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, “The Ethics,” 13.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 13-14.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>29</sup> Here the author cites V. Woolf’s *Three Guineas* (Schüssler Fiorenza, “The Ethics,” 3).

<sup>30</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, “The Ethics,” 7.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 4.

for all.”<sup>35</sup> The address closes by looking forward to the day when the suggested repositioning has taken place, and considers that the implications are “far-reaching and invigorating.”<sup>36</sup> In this earnest presentation, “invigoration” is about as close as we get to playful; Schüssler Fiorenza is playing for keeps, as she and considers our work essential to public life, for good and for ill. As she states with even more resolve in her later book, *Rhetoric and Ethic*, “It does not suffice to know the world as it is; what is crucial is to transform and change it;”<sup>37</sup> this we can do, she insists, when we embrace and participate in her newly envisaged *politeuma*, “a radical democratic Wisdom-Spirit-center of global dimensions.”<sup>38</sup>

The same purposefulness is maintained in Marchal’s work, a decade later. Surprisingly, he does not think that the turn called for by Schüssler Fiorenza effectively has occurred, and deems it “still a paradigm rarely considered by biblical studies.” (Tracing movements in the history of a discipline is a little like finding patterns in the clouds: much depends upon what one is looking for.) It seems to me the academy has indeed for the last twenty years been in the midst of a decisive turn, a turn perhaps broader than the project set by Schüssler Fiorenza, but certainly hospitable to her approach, because “connected” scholarship has become the norm. This is reflected in that Marchal’s piece was publicized so widely on the SBL website, despite its brevity, and received a good deal of attention. We might also measure the success of the new approach in Marchal’s ability to sit a little less tightly in the stirrups than his mentor: the turn has been rounded and the horse is in full canter. Along with friendly exhortations to his colleagues (“Will need to be;” “we cannot afford to ignore”),<sup>39</sup> Marchal is also easy in cross-disciplinary discourse and indulges in a few sly puns (“practice safer texts,” and “textual intercourse.”)<sup>40</sup> Yet the tone

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>37</sup> Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *The Power of the Word: Scripture and the Rhetoric of Empire* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 3.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 193.

<sup>39</sup> Marchal, “To What End(s)?” n.p.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

remains sermonic. We are warned against the “dominating ends to which biblical argumentation [is] employed” and cautioned that “to adopt a supposedly neutral and value-free stance...is not a bulwark and boon for academics, but a destructive lapse into complicity....”<sup>41</sup> We are exhorted to be vigilant concerning the misuse of the Bible, and to use transdisciplinary means both to inform ourselves and to move towards a “safer” use of the Bible. In our enlightened hands and with pragmatism in place, texts that are “frightening” and “potentially hazardous” might become “possibly life-affirming.”<sup>42</sup>

In both cases, the project is serious, and because of the advocating quality of Schüssler Fiorenza’s address and the watchdog quality of Marchal, we are *told* far more than we are *shown*. (Yet, Schüssler Fiorenza’s work is itself a model to “show” what a connected critic looks like, and Marchal has taken her cue). Solemn paraenesis is the major mode, although at times this cedes to cross-disciplinary glimpses that add entertainment value. It is difficult, however, to delight in a task that is so focused upon duty—the “need to be critically reflexive, evaluative, and pragmatic,”<sup>43</sup> as Marchal puts it.

Such a serious movement for transformation is bound to cause collateral damage. To be sure, there is common ground forged for biblical scholars, especially in the extensive work of Schüssler Fiorenza, whose readers and respondents may gather around history, literary analysis, and (for many) the conviction that our disciplines should touch down in common life. On the other hand, while both writers are keen for community and seek to embrace communities beyond biblical studies, polarization is inevitable. After all, the purpose is to decenter the old paradigm along with any who still cling to it— especially those, as Schüssler Fiorenza puts it, who “have internalized [its] oppression.”<sup>44</sup> Our colleagues are alert to the power of communities, even academic

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, “The Ethics,” 16.

ones, ‘to loose and to bind’ and for them the often-unacknowledged enemy is the pretence of neutrality.

Paradoxically, the more the biblical studies academy follows them into the turn, the more their *new* paradigm is invigorated to foster or restrict scholarly endeavour. If the discipline is governed by “deliberative and constructive discourse oriented towards the present and the future”<sup>45</sup> will there be room left for those antiquarians among us who want to describe the past or the text in itself, for those who emphasize the “alien character of biblical materials,”<sup>46</sup> or for those who consider the deliberate laying aside of (at least some) presuppositions to be the prerequisite to learning something new? Is there a place for those who practice a hermeneutics of welcome or sympathy amidst those who define a scholarly stance as quintessentially suspicious? Though multiplicity is encouraged, the diversity inherent in *Scruples* cannot include those who persist in Chess—unless the chess figures are emblazoned with the player’s commitments, the castles turned into bungalows, the knights’ special movements regularized, the pawns given more power, the bishops defrocked and the kings and queens rei(g)ned in. It is true: “Interpretive communities such as SBL [and CSBS] are not just scholarly investigative communities, but also authoritative communities... [that] possess the power to ostracize or to embrace, to foster or to restrict membership, to recognize and to define what “true scholarship entails.”<sup>47</sup> This will continue to be the case while more scholars round the corner of the new “purely deliberative”<sup>48</sup> turn. In the past, inability to find adequate common ground usually resulted in a quiet boredom, or the cessation of the game. With the “explicit articulation” that we are told is now “appropriate,”<sup>49</sup> conflict becomes more perilous!

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 13.

### 3. The Programmatic

Well aware of the current turn to the subject, and the new permission (or requirement) to be engaged readers, there are some scholars who emulate the Matthean scribe, bringing out of their thesaurus what is both old and new. Let us consider the 2007 CSBS presidential address of Mary Rose D'Angelo, "Imperial Interests, Biblical Interpretation and Canadian Content,"<sup>50</sup> along with the superb 2009 essay by Richard Hays, "Here We Have No Lasting City": New Covenantalism in Hebrews."<sup>51</sup> In both cases, as we expect by end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, the subjective voice is familiarly adopted, though each author does this in a different manner. Mary Rose D'Angelo begins by building a bridge from her American persona to her Canadian experience, reflecting upon a course she taught in Vancouver, and the interest among Canadian biblical scholars for empire and imperialism. While praising the CSBS for fostering this interest, she considers herself "not competent" to survey either the history of Canadian biblical scholarship or the Canadian experience with imperialism. Her self-abnegation is not borne out by the thoughtfulness of what follows! Of course, her focus is more narrow than the whole gamut of CSBS study, and specifically joins the first century world of empire with scholarly endeavours—a scholarship that in the past neglected the study of empire, but more recently has recovered it in the work of select Canadian academics whose aims were by no means antiquarian. She offers judicious and trenchant observations with an eye to the motives for and implications of the scholarship that she is analyzing. Along the way, we are treated to the occasional dash of puckish humour—for example, "I can hardly avoid recognizing that the CSBS has been subject to a long-term

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<sup>50</sup> Mary Rose D'Angelo, "Imperial Interests, Biblical Interpretation and Canadian Content," *The Bulletin* 2007/8 (Kingston, ON: Canadian Society of Biblical Studies), 1-21.

<sup>51</sup> Richard Hays, "Here We Have No Lasting City": New Covenantalism in Hebrews" in *The Epistle to the Hebrews and Christian Theology* (ed. Richard Bauckham *et al.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 151-173.

infestation of expatriate American scholars.”<sup>52</sup> The tone is sensible but not studied, and while she does not ignore her social location (and ours), she focusses upon the matters at hand.

As for Richard Hays’s essay, I have recommended it to senior students as a prime example of how self-reference can be used not simply to disarm the reader, but to facilitate the argument. In contrast to D’Angelo’s historical, social and political concerns, Hays concentrates upon the literary and the theological, while acknowledging political implications of his work. He begins with both a political and a theological question: “Does the Letter to the Hebrews articulate a supersessionist theology?”<sup>53</sup> His first page jumps directly into the fray, but with wit. We are amused when his example of the earlier dismissive scholarly consensus concerning Hebrews turns out to be drawn from his own work: “I make this accusation with some confidence, because these quotations are taken from a book called *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*.”<sup>54</sup> He goes on to refer to himself in the third person, asserting that he must now “subject Hays’s [earlier] judgment to critical scrutiny.”<sup>55</sup> This coy confession encourages the intransigent reader to reconsider his or her presuppositions about the text and supersessionism. Thus, with ethos inversely established, Hays goes on to outline his project. First, he will discover how the writer to the Hebrews, in eight exegetical arguments, artfully uses new covenantalism and typology to carry forward the heritage of Israel, both sustaining that heritage and transforming it. Then, he will attempt to construct, rather than “duck”<sup>56</sup> a theological reading of a text that some have considered incoherent.

His method, then, is “show” (the eight exegetical arguments) and “tell” (the theological implications), whereas Mary Rose D’Angelo reverses this procedure. In *her* first part, she

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<sup>52</sup> D’Angelo, “Imperial Interests,” 6.

<sup>53</sup> Hays, “Here We Have,” 151.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 152.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.



mainly “tells” (with some illustrations) about the “eclipse of Rome,” the CSBS scholars (E. P. Sanders, Terry Donaldson, Peter Richardson and others) who put it back on the map, and the dialectic of resistance and accommodation; then, in a second section, she “shows” through literature, numismatics, archaeology and other visuals, how ancient Jewish and Christian self-presentation interacted with Roman imperial propaganda. Both scholars, even while they are telling, also show: D’Angelo, for example, describes the visual vestiges of imperialism in the national iconography of Germany, Britain, France and America;<sup>57</sup> Hays describes scholarly disagreement in terms of a “broader ...landscape,”<sup>58</sup> and places before his readers’ eyes “the embarrassingly palpable act of sprinkling...human blood around in the *heavenly* sanctuary.”<sup>59</sup> Their approaches are programmatic in that they have an argument to sustain, of which they give indication from the onset: this remains their focus. Yet the reader is not forgotten, nor is the social, theological or ideological location of the author wholly obscured. These are disclosed without a trace of self-importance, and in both cases with some humour. The ethos is work-manly and work-womanly, even while delight in the subject matter and even a little play are not ruled out of court. Scholarly tasks are given their due, but it is recognized that fashions come and go, and opinions sometimes change, for good reason. Indeed, Hays’s final move, to align both the letter to the Hebrews and his own critical work with Fish’s “self-consuming artifact,”<sup>60</sup> challenges the scholarly mind to avoid self-satisfaction with its own projects. We are urged, in the end, to place the enterprise of biblical scholarship in at least a penultimate position. The charm of both Hays and D’Angelo springs from their ability to see what we do in perspective, and acknowledge that our work retains a “game-like” character.

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<sup>57</sup> D’Angelo, “Imperial Interests,” 3-4

<sup>58</sup> Hays, “Here We Have,” 153.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 172.

How, then, do these two establish common ground for scholars who will debate or converse with them? Do we discern here a fostering of scholarly community, or a catalyst of polarization and balkanization? The subject matters chosen by our two friends are certainly such that the latter dynamic would be possible, even likely! Empire and supersessionism are topics that raise the stakes in scholarly debate, bringing to the fore ideological and theological commitments. D'Angelo helpfully rehearses the earlier antics of our guild in typing NT documents (and parabiblical books, too) as either "Jewish" or "Hellenistic," for good and for ill. Hays knows full well the potential tension between Jewish and Christian scholars, and between so-called liberals and conservatives over the issue of two-covenant schemes or otherwise.

They both step carefully, while holding their ground—D'Angelo in her untrammelled critique of imperial totalizing claims and their seductions, and Hays in his suggestion that the text presents itself as a means "to lead the reader beyond its own rhetoric to an encounter with the living God."<sup>61</sup> With D'Angelo, many will be intrigued by the side-by-side examination of 4 Maccabees and the Pastorals with regards to imperial virtues; some will want, perhaps, to question whether "accommodation" would have been the noun used by these communities for their desire to "match, indeed exceed, Roman family values."<sup>62</sup> Does the choice of this word "accommodation" already skew our appreciation of the charisms of "Rebecca's children" so that we applaud only their resistance to norms and not their continuance and deepening of them? But D'Angelo's manner of presentation invites rather than rules out such dissent: she would not even silence those who question her argument that, as we match our contemporary context to the NT world, "we're the Romans in this picture."<sup>63</sup> Similarly, there are many who, including Mary D'Angelo would insist against Hays that covenantal nomism in Hebrews does *not*

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<sup>61</sup> Hays, "Here We Have," 170.

<sup>62</sup> D'Angelo, "Imperial Interests," 20.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

“alleviate the continuing problem of supersessionism,”<sup>64</sup> Though I am not among these, I suspect Mary Rose would say to Richard that the typological schema of Hebrews is in itself damning. Both scholars, however, clearly cherish a community of inquiry that includes Jewish, Christian and other friends—as do we all! D’Angelo reminds us of the significant CSBS self-definition studies that concertedly made the “effort to look at Jews and Christians side-by-side.”<sup>65</sup> Hays does not speak of such things explicitly, but in the last theological paragraphs of his paper makes it clear that he cherishes our common conversations.

In his conclusion, Hays points to the “self-subverting tendencies.... in Hebrews”<sup>66</sup> and uses the language of welcome, repeating thrice the phrase, “[r]eaders of Hebrews are invited to consider the problem....” In these three conclusions, surprising tensions in the text are showcased, details that question widely-held assumptions —first about “the relationship between the finite and the heavenly,” second about “the connection between sacrifice and forgiveness,” and thirdly about “the relation between Israel’s God and self-satisfying religion.”<sup>67</sup> It is in the second point that we see Hays’s sensitivity to community. As he describes the first and the third paradox, he explicitly spells out their implications. He concludes that in the first place, “[p]erhaps the heavenly world is not so non-material as we thought” because in Hebrews there is “a short-circuiting of Platonic assumptions.”<sup>68</sup> He concludes in the third place by a long paragraph that illuminates how “Readers drawn into this dialectical discourse...will find themselves challenged, destabilized and ultimately transformed;” indeed we are moved “beyond triumphalism.”<sup>69</sup> But in the second case, Hays refrains from cashing out the paradox, and does not clarify. Aware of a readership that is ambivalent and divided concerning sacrifice

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>66</sup> Hays, “Here We Have,” 170

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 170-172.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 172.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

and its relationship to forgiveness, and especially that does not agree upon the text's presentation of the Messianic high priest who is also the sacrificial victim, he refrains from a conclusion here. Hebrews may offer a paradox that "short-circuits the categories of the Mosaic covenant"<sup>70</sup> but Hays is not about to say *how* it does this, at least not overtly: in deference to the sensibilities of the readers, he leaves this to us, to fill out for ourselves, if we will.

In this omission, we see one of the results of the games that we are now playing. Hays knows that we are no longer, as a community, involved in scholarly Chess—though he has certainly spent a good deal of time demonstrating the exegetical subtleties of the biblical text, and rejoicing in these. Part of the art of *Scruples* is to know where restraint is helpful, and where it will prevail better than out-and-out revelation. The character of ongoing conversation to which we are committed will sometimes indicate that we should take a leaf from Hays's game-book, and do likewise.

The laudable characteristics that we have seen in all six scholars whose works we have toured today are of help in guiding us as we play out the newer paradigm, in which we assume more self-disclosure, more engagement and more explicit connection with our own real-life context. We have seen in our two Adeles an exemplary attention to historic and textual (or cinematic) detail, an ability to be self-critical, and a generosity in embracing those not naturally "in our guild." There is in these two both a cheerful optimism about our work, coupled with a sobriety with regards to its limitations. In Schüssler Fiorenza and Marchal we have seen a commendable (even fierce!) connection with the world and a concern that our work make its mark beyond its usual habitat. In D'Angelo and Hays we have seen exemplary argumentation joined to sheer delight in the scholarly project, and the reminder not to take ourselves quite so seriously. There remain for us still several fruitful venues for meeting, across our ideological, theological and confessional divides—still there are the text, the artefacts and the history, even if we must remove the veil of neutrality; there are also the myriad approaches and methods, the potential of which we

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

may discuss and debate together; and there is the world “before” the text, in which we live, which we envisage differently, and about which we hope.

#### 4. What Kind of Game?

Where, then, do we go from here? There is great potential in the present situation—its openness to inter-disciplinary conversation (and pilfering!), its acceptance of play alongside serious questions, its attention to presentation as well as substance, to implications along with analysis, and its permission for us not to hide our commitments at all times. Along with this, there are drawbacks: the welcome of inter-disciplinary approaches and the welter of new ideas may tempt us to the faddish, or ephemeral. Again, attention to the pragmatic may transform the text, or historical analysis, into a pretext for something else, if we forget the liberty afforded in the text-for-its-own-sake approaches. Finally, deeper knowledge concerning the commitments of those with whom we disagree may make for polarization, our desire to marginalize our interlocutors, or a lack of civility in our discourse. As he or she “plays for keeps,” the closer association of the scholar with his or her pet project may make it difficult for opponents to continue in association once the panel discussion is over. All of these dangers lurk. Can some of the chastening virtues of the older approaches be retained alongside our new-found freedom? Are we astute enough to notice where the newer approaches exert their own hegemony, and lend themselves to the balkanization of our community? I think so.

Finally we reach the end, and may, apocalypse-style, return to “the frame.” Friends, I have given in. I was the last of my friends to get a cell phone—about 5 years ago. And just this week, I have put aside my inexpensive and trusty old Nokia (without a flip cover) for a Smart-phone. In perusing the “Play Store,” to add games to my Exhilarate, I found this advertisement: “Historically old games remain a perennial favourite. Chess Free for android.” So maybe chess, because of its nature, will not wholly give way to

postmodern shenanigans like *Scruples*. Meanwhile *Scruples* is promising to bring out in October 2013 its “Perennial edition,” advertised as “a new timeless edition of *Scruples* featuring the very best questions from seven previous editions with many new moral dilemmas for the present.” But is an ageless version of *Scruples* a contradiction in terms? I wonder! As Wikipedia puts it, “Due to the cultural aspect of the moral dilemma questions, *Scruples* was updated every five years.” Like *Scruples*, our disciplines may require constant updating, but the value of past wisdom should never be under-estimated. In the end we may, with apologies to the apostle Paul, be tempted to declare: *Scruples* is fun, but Chess never fails!

**Minutes of the 2013 CSBS  
Annual General Meeting**

University of Victoria  
Victoria, BC  
June 2, 15:30 – 17:00

**In Attendance:** Chelica Hiltunen, Edith Humphrey, Keith Bodner, Mark Boda, Emily Wilton, Paul Evans, James Tucker, Michael Johnson, Ehud Ben Zvi, Gary Knoppers, Mary Louise Mitchell, Alex Damm, Jannes Smith, Claude Cox, John F. Horman, Bill Morrow, Lissa Wray Beal, Brian Irwin, Stanley E. Porter, Wally Cirafesi, Mark A. Leuchter, Christine Mitchell, John Kloppenborg, Alan Kirk, Marion Taylor, Glen Taylor, Paul Spilsbury, Gary Yamasaki, Steven R. Scott, Steve Black, Callie Callon, Michelle Christian, Ian Brown, Steven Muir, Tony Burke, John L. McLaughlin, Tyler Williams, Robert Derrenbacker, Dirk Büchner, Kyung Baek, Shawn Flynn, Nicola Hayward, Dietmar Neufeld, Louis Jonker, Ken Ristau, Zeba Crook

1. **Approval of the Agenda + Business Arising** (John McLaughlin / Francis Landy, carried)
2. **Approval of the Minutes of the Last Annual General Meeting, June 1, 2008** (Chelica Hiltunen / John McLaughlin, carried)
3. **President's Report (Edith Humphrey):**
  - Special guest Patricia Dold, editor of SR, provided an update on the journal and the latest from SAGE publishing (including author archiving and related initiatives) and an encouragement for CSBS members to submit articles.
  - Thanked the members of the Executive for their work on behalf of the Society.

- General invitation for interested members to attend the AGM of the CCSR, of which CSBS is the largest society.
- Student prize winners were thanked, and those in attendance were encouraged to invite students to submit papers.
- A review of funding issues with the Congress, and other budgetary restrictions facing CSBS. Efforts will be made to create a special fund whereby members can make donations to offset travel costs for student presenters. Various points were raised about drawing from existing CSBS endowments, as well as potentially contacting both the Congress leadership and Members of Parliament to express concerns over funding issues. The idea of matching funds or partnerships were also raised.
  - Motion: To authorize the Executive to investigate the various possibilities of funding and then proceed as they see fit (Steven Scott / Paul Evans, defeated).
  - Motion: That the executive develop a proposal governing the use of endowment for travel funds to bring to next year's AGM, in consultation with endowment committee (Paul Spilsbury / Glen Taylor, carried).

**4. Membership Secretary (Alex Damm)**

- Gratitude was expressed to Bob Derrenbacker for past and present support.
- 26 new membership nominations, with those present invited to stand. Every new member was accepted and warmly welcomed into CSBS.
- An update was provided on membership renewal, and a reminder will be emailed to those who have not yet renewed to do so, thus providing CSBS with a much needed increase in revenue.

**5. Executive Secretary's Report (Keith Bodner)**

- Gratitude was expressed to Phil Harland for his support.
- Faculty were urged to encourage the submission of student papers.



**6. Student Liaison Officer's Report (Chelica Hiltunen)**

- The Student lunch involved 20 student members, who enjoyed a quality presentation on “Pedagogical Perspectives: How to Assess Student Learning for Religious/Biblical Studies Courses,” with thanks expressed to those who served on the panel.

**7. Vice-President's Report (Mark Boda)**

- Book awards were presented, beginning with the recipient of the F. W. Beare Award, Lincoln H. Blumell, *Lettered Christians: Christians, Letters, and Late Antique Oxyrhynchus* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2012) – and the R. B. Y. Scott Award, Keith Bodner, *Jeroboam's Royal Drama* (Oxford, 2012).
- Nominations for two Executive positions: the V-P position Dietmar Neufeld (Bill Morrow / Edith Humphrey, carried) and a second three year term for Zeba Crook (John McLaughlin / Bob Derrenbacker, carried).

**8. Programme Coordinator's Report (Zeba Crook):**

- 64 papers (63 in 2012; 59 in 2011): 37 Hebrew Bible, 19 New Testament, 8 post-NT -17 student attendees, with 14 presenting papers (~32 student papers in 2012) -As of now, there are no special sessions or seminar scheduled for next year, with the possible exception of Sean Freyne session. There is room for two or three more. Given the CSBS' high publication record, detailed proposals are welcome.
- Non-member Participation Proposal was presented for discussion and potential ratification (Zeba Crook / Mark Boda).
  - Motion: to do away with the practice that limits non-member participation in seminars and special sessions. However, this move is accompanied by two caveats: 1) when presented with more seminars or special session proposals than can be

accommodated in a year or series of year, proposals that rely on member participation will be preferred (in other words, we retain the spirit of the previous policy), but where there is no competition, a proposal relying heavily on non-member support would be assessed on the same merits as all proposals are assessed; 2) invited non-members would not have to pay the CSBS membership, but they would have to pay the Congress registration fee (which of course, we do not govern).

- Amendments were proposed for a Caveat 3 (stressing the participation of scholars with noted expertise) and to Caveat 1 (“with the scholarly quality being equal”). Motion carried.

**9. Communication Officer’s Report (Paul Evans)**

- If any members are not receiving emails, they should update their file with membership secretary Alex Damm.
- Members are encouraged to let Paul know about publications.
- Jurists for the book prizes were thanked for their labour.

**10. Treasurer’s Report (Alex Damm)**

- An update was provided on grants and related travel monies, with a reiteration of the importance of membership dues and annual renewal.
- Bank balance is quite good, although donations are slightly lower. Several members have generously donated, and should be thanked.
- Read through report (attached).
- Motion to adopt the Treasurer’s Report (Alex Damm / Bob Derrenbacker) carried.

**11. Adjournment (Mark Boda / Tyler Williams)**

(The minutes were prepared by Keith Bodner, June 2013)

**CANADIAN SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL STUDIES**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**AUGUST 31, 2013**

**(Unaudited)**

Review Engagement Report

Statement of Financial Position

Statement of Operations

Statement of Changes in Fund Balances

Statement of Cash Flows

Notes to the Financial Statements

Schedule of Restricted Funds

**ROBERT W. R. BISHOP**  
**Chartered Accountant**

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13308 Crescent Road, South Surrey, BC V4P 1K4

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REVIEW ENGAGEMENT REPORT

To the Directors of  
**Canadian Society of Biblical Studies**

I have reviewed the statement of financial position of Canadian Society of Biblical Studies as at August 31, 2013 and the statements of operations, changes in fund balances and cash flows for the year then ended. My review was made in accordance with Canadian generally accepted standards for review engagements and accordingly consisted primarily of enquiry, analytical procedures and discussion related to information supplied to me by the Association.

A review does not constitute an audit and consequently I do not express an opinion on these financial statements.

Based on my review, nothing has come to my attention that causes me to believe that these financial statements are not, in all material respects, in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

*“Robert W.R. Bishop”*

November 5, 2013

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

**CANADIAN SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL STUDIES**

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at August 31, 2013

(Unaudited)

	General Fund	Restricted Funds	ESCJ Fund	2013 Total	2012 Total
<b>ASSETS</b>					
Cash	\$ 22,597	\$ 516	\$ -	\$ 23,112	\$ 20,654
Accounts receivable (Note 4)	920	-	-	920	1,129
Investments (Note 5)	-	132,977	-	132,977	129,083
Funds held by CCSR (Note 6)	-	-	11,753	11,753	11,753
	<u>\$ 23,517</u>	<u>\$ 133,493</u>	<u>\$ 11,753</u>	<u>\$ 168,763</u>	<u>\$ 162,619</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>					
Accounts payable	\$ 5,847	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,847	\$ -
Deferred revenue (Note 4)	920	-	-	920	1,129
	<u>6,767</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,767</u>	<u>1,129</u>
<b>FUND BALANCES</b>					
Unrestricted	16,750	-	-	16,750	18,825
Restricted	-	133,493	11,753	145,246	142,665
	<u>16,750</u>	<u>133,493</u>	<u>11,753</u>	<u>161,996</u>	<u>161,490</u>
	<u>\$ 23,517</u>	<u>\$ 133,493</u>	<u>\$ 11,753</u>	<u>\$ 168,763</u>	<u>\$ 162,619</u>

APPROVED BY THE BOARD:

\_\_\_\_\_ Director

\_\_\_\_\_ Director

**CANADIAN SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL STUDIES**

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

For the Year Ended August 31, 2013

(Unaudited)

	General Fund		Restricted Funds		ESCJ Fund	
	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012
<b>REVENUE</b>						
Membership dues	\$ 15,388	\$ 15,961	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
SSHRC travel grant	-	4,755	-	-	-	-
CSBS dinner	2,861	4,050	-	-	-	-
Congress registration	1,440	1,045	-	-	-	-
Subscriptions and other	-	750	-	-	-	-
Donations	-	-	4,865	6,007	-	-
Investment income (Note 5)	-	-	5,080	9,754	-	-
	19,689	26,561	9,945	15,761	-	-
<b>EXPENSES</b>						
Accounting and audit	5,073	5,076	-	-	-	-
Bank charges	250	40	-	-	-	-
Computer software	416	95	-	-	-	-
Congress expenses	311	2,038	-	-	-	-
CSBS dinner	2,778	4,222	-	-	-	-
Dues and memberships	2,603	2,431	-	-	-	-
Executive travel	6,177	3,435	-	-	-	-
Member travel	3,506	4,755	-	-	-	-
Office, printing and postage	369	276	-	-	-	-
Student awards	-	-	1,500	1,407	-	-
Subscriptions	6,147	6,466	-	-	-	-
	27,629	28,834	1,500	1,407	-	-
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>						
	\$ (7,940)	\$ (2,273)	\$ 8,445	\$ 14,354	\$ -	\$ -

**CANADIAN SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL STUDIES****STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES**

For the Year Ended August 31, 2013

(Unaudited)

	General Fund		Restricted Funds		ESCJ Fund	
	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012
<b>BALANCE, OPENING</b>	\$ 18,825	\$ 13,998	\$ 130,912	\$ 123,658	\$ 11,753	\$ 11,753
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	(7,940)	(2,273)	8,445	14,354	-	-
<b>INTERFUND TRANSFERS</b>	5,865	7,100	(5,865)	(7,100)	-	-
<b>BALANCE, CLOSING</b>	\$ 16,750	\$ 18,825	\$ 133,493	\$ 130,912	\$ 11,753	\$ 11,753

**CANADIAN SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL STUDIES**

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the Year Ended August 31, 2013

(Unaudited)

	General Fund		Restricted Funds		ESCJ Fund	
	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012
<b>CASH PROVIDED BY (USED FOR)</b>						
<b>OPERATIONS</b>						
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$ (7,940)	\$ (2,273)	\$ 8,445	\$ 14,354	\$ -	\$ -
Unrealized change in market value (Note 5)	-	-	(8,198)	(10,018)	-	-
Changes in non-cash working capital:						
Accounts receivable	209	(1,129)	-	-	-	-
Investments	-	-	4,304	2,417	-	-
Accounts payable	5,847	-	-	-	-	-
Deferred revenue	(209)	1,129	-	-	-	-
Interfund transfers	5,865	7,100	(5,865)	(7,100)	-	-
<b>CHANGE IN CASH</b>	<b>3,772</b>	<b>4,827</b>	<b>(1,314)</b>	<b>(347)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>CASH, OPENING</b>	<b>18,825</b>	<b>13,998</b>	<b>1,829</b>	<b>2,176</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>CASH, CLOSING</b>	<b>\$ 22,597</b>	<b>\$ 18,825</b>	<b>\$ 515</b>	<b>\$ 1,829</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>



## CANADIAN SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL STUDIES

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

August 31, 2013

(Unaudited)

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION

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Canadian Society of Biblical Studies is an unincorporated non-profit organization, the purpose of which is to stimulate the critical investigation of the classical biblical literatures, together with other related literature, by the exchange of scholarly research both in published form and in public forum.

The Society is a registered charity and is income tax exempt.

#### 2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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##### (a) Basis of Presentation

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles ("GAAP") applicable to a going concern and do not include any adjustments that might be necessary should the Society be unable to continue to realize its assets and discharge its liabilities in the normal course of operations. The Society is dependent upon membership dues, grants, donations and income from investments to support it as a going concern. While the Society has been successful to date in securing such sources of revenue, there can be no assurance that it will be able to do so in the future.

##### (b) Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported in the financial statements. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

##### (c) Fund Accounting

Canadian Society of Biblical Studies follows the restricted fund method of accounting.

The General Fund accounts for the operation and maintenance of the Society. This fund reports unrestricted resources.

Various restricted funds account for endowment resources that have been donated for specific purposes. These donations are invested and the income earned thereon is used for grants, prizes and other awards in accordance with donors' wishes.

The ESCJ Fund (Etudes/Studies in Christianity and Judaism) is a publication subsidy program managed through the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion ("CCSR") -- see Note 6.

##### (d) Capital Assets

No value is accorded to capital assets for reporting purposes. Capital asset purchases are charged as an expenditure in the year of acquisition.

## CANADIAN SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL STUDIES

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

August 31, 2013

(Unaudited)

#### 2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES, continued

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(f) Revenue Recognition

Contributions related to general operations are recognized as revenue in the General Fund in the year services are performed or related expenses are incurred. The Society's share of Congress net revenues is recorded in the General Fund in the year of receipt. Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the appropriate restricted fund. Investment income earned by the restricted funds is recognized as income of the designated fund.

(g) Donated Materials and Services

Donated materials and services are recognized only when their fair value can be reasonably estimated and the materials and services would be paid for by the Society if not donated.

During the year ended August 31, 2013 the value of donated materials and services recorded in the accounts was \$nil (2012 - \$nil).

#### 3. CHANGES IN ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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Accounting Standards for Not-For-Profit Organizations

Effective September 1, 2012, the Society adopted the recommendations of CICA Handbook Part III "Accounting Standards for Not-For-Profit Organizations". This Part establishes accounting and financial statement presentation and disclosure standards for not-for-profit organizations. The adoption of these recommendations has not had a material effect upon the Society's financial statements.

#### 4. DEFERRED REVENUE

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As at August 31, 2013, the Society was owed \$920 by the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences ("CFHSS") in connection with Congress 2013 (2012 - \$1,129). These amounts are shown in the financial statements as deferred revenue.

#### 5. INVESTMENT INCOME

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	2013	2012
Realized investment income (loss)	\$ (3,118)	\$ (264)
Unrealized change in market value of investments	8,198	10,018
Investment income	\$ 5,080	\$ 9,754

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## CANADIAN SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL STUDIES

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

August 31, 2013

(Unaudited)

#### 6. FUNDS HELD BY CCSR

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As at August 31, 2013, the amount of \$11,753 was held on behalf of the Society by the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion. Of this amount, \$3,141 was designated for the ESCJ program and \$8,612 was designated for the UM Book Series.

#### 7. CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

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The Society's objectives when managing its capital are to safeguard its ability to continue as a going concern in order to pursue its stated purposes.

The Society manages its capital structure and makes adjustments to it in light of changes in economic conditions, the risk characteristics of underlying assets, and the availability of financial resources. The Society is dependant upon external revenue sources in order to fund its activities.

The Society is not subject to any externally imposed working capital requirements or debt covenants.

#### 8. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

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##### (a) Classification of Financial Instruments

The Society's financial instruments consist of cash and cash equivalents, accounts receivable, investments in marketable securities, and accounts payable and accrued liabilities. The Society does not have any hedging instruments.

The Society classifies its cash and cash equivalents, and investments in marketable securities as held-for-trading, which are measured at fair value. Accounts receivable are classified as loans and receivables, which are measured at amortized cost. Accounts payable and accrued liabilities are classified as financial liabilities, which are measured at amortized cost.

##### (b) Fair Values

The carrying amount of cash and cash equivalents, accounts receivable, and accounts payable and accrued liabilities each approximate their fair values due to the short-term maturities of these instruments. The fair value of investments in marketable securities is based on quoted market prices.

##### (c) Credit Risk

The Society's accounts receivable do not expose the Society to significant credit risk. The Society has no history of bad debts.

## CANADIAN SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL STUDIES

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

August 31, 2013

(Unaudited)

#### 8. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS, continued

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(d) Foreign Exchange and Interest Rate Risk

Because the Society's functional currency is the Canadian dollar and all current operations occur within Canada, the Society is not exposed to significant foreign exchange risk. The Society has no debt and so is not exposed to significant interest rate risk.

(e) Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Society will not be able to meet its financial obligations as they fall due. The ability of the Society to settle its financial obligations with cash depends upon the level of income it derives from its investments and the continued support of its members through dues and donations.

**CANADIAN SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL STUDIES**

SCHEDULE OF RESTRICTED FUNDS

For the Year Ended August 31, 2013

(Unaudited)

	General Endowment	Student Research	RBY Scott Award	N Wagner Award	Publication Fund
<b>CAPITAL</b>					
Balance, opening	\$ 28,828	\$ 1,283	\$ 19,843	\$ 10,321	\$ 3,646
Donations	2,560	105	1,000	-	200
Expenditures	-	-	-	-	-
Interfund transfers	-	-	-	-	-
Balance, closing	31,388	1,388	20,843	10,321	3,846
<b>INCOME ON HAND</b>					
Balance, opening	5,098	366	3,273	2,106	869
Investment income	1,313	58	887	450	163
Expenditures	-	-	(500)	-	-
Interfund transfers	(1,839)	(122)	(1,050)	(733)	(296)
Balance, closing	4,572	303	2,610	1,823	736
<b>FUND BALANCE, CLOSING</b>	<b>\$ 35,960</b>	<b>\$ 1,691</b>	<b>\$ 23,453</b>	<b>\$ 12,144</b>	<b>\$ 4,582</b>

	Beare Award	Craigie Lectureship	Founders' Prize	Jeremias Prize	Total
<b>CAPITAL</b>					
Balance, opening	\$ 12,197	\$ 17,002	\$ 10,066	\$ 10,864	\$ 114,050
Donations	1,000	-	-	-	4,865
Expenditures	-	-	-	-	-
Interfund transfers	-	-	-	-	-
Balance, closing	13,197	17,002	10,066	10,864	118,915
<b>INCOME ON HAND</b>					
Balance, opening	2,011	1,330	239	1,570	16,862
Investment income	554	742	439	474	5,080
Expenditures	(500)	-	(250)	(250)	(1,500)
Interfund transfers	(592)	(594)	(123)	(515)	(5,865)
Balance, closing	1,472	1,477	305	1,279	14,577
<b>FUND BALANCE, CLOSING</b>	<b>\$ 14,669</b>	<b>\$ 18,479</b>	<b>\$ 10,371</b>	<b>\$ 12,143</b>	<b>\$ 133,492</b>

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- \_\_\_\_\_. "Tyre, a Ship: The Metaphorical World of Ezekiel 27 in Ancient Judah." *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 125 (2013): 249-62.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Judean Pillar Figurines and Ethnic Identity in the Shadow of Assyria." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 36 (2012): 259-78.
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#### **Dissertations/Theses Completed**

- Baergen, Rene. *Re-Placing the Galilean Jesus: Local Geography, Mark, Miracle, and the Quest for Jesus of Capernaum*. Ph.D. diss., University of St. Michael's College, 2013.
- Conway, Mary. *The 'New Perspective' on Appraisal: Evaluation in the Book of Judges as Revealed by the Narrative Appraisal Model*. Ph.D. diss., McMaster Divinity College, 2013.
- Ristau, Ken. *Reconstruction Jerusalem: Persian Period Prophetic Perspectives*. The Pennsylvania State University, 2013.
- Keiser, Jeffrey. *The Sign of the Apostle: Galatians 1-2 and the Poetics of Colonization*. Ph.D. diss., McGill University, 2013.
- Land, Christopher. *The Integrity of 2 Corinthians from a Linguistic Perspective: Is There a Text in These Meanings?* Ph.D. diss., McMaster Divinity College, 2012.
- Last, Richard. *Money, Meals, and Honour: The Economic and Honorific Organization of the Corinthian Ekklesia*. Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, Dept. for the Study of Religion, 2013.
- Reid, Duncan Graham. *Miracle Tradition, Rhetoric, and the Synoptic Problem*. Ph.D. diss., University of St. Michael's College, 2013.
- Warren, Meredith. "My Flesh is Meat Indeed:" *Theophagy and Christology in John 6:51c-58*. Ph.D. diss., McGill University, 2013.

### **Appointments, Promotions, Awards, Honours**

- Ascough, Richard. Full Professor, Queen's University.
- Batten, Alicia. Associate Professor, Conrad Grebel University College, University of Waterloo.
- Dallaire, Hélène. Professor of Old Testament, Denver Seminary
- Dutcher-Walls, Patricia. Dean of the Faculty and Chief Academic Officer, Vancouver School of Theology.
- Humphrey, Edith M. Appointed to Board of Paradosis Center for Theology and Scripture; Appointed to Board of the Pappas Patristic Institute (Holy Cross).
- Kalimi, Isaac. A Fellow of *Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts*, VLAC - Institute for Advanced Study, 2013; *Gutenberg Forschungsprofessor in Hebrew Bible and History of Ancient Israel*, Seminar für Altes Testament und Biblische Archäologie, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Germany; A Fellow of Gutenberg Forschungskolleg (GFK), University of Mainz, Germany.
- Knoppers, Gary N. John A. O'Brien Professor of Theology, University of Notre Dame (As of Fall 2014).
- Kovacs, Frank. Visiting Scholar, Department for the Study of Religion, University of Toronto.
- Maier, Harry O. Max Weber Research Fellowship, May-August 2013; Deutsche Akademische Austausch Dienst Stipendium, June-July 2014.
- Stovell, Beth M. Program Coordinator for the Undergraduate Program, Bachelors in Religious Studies and Bachelors in Religious Studies (Online); Program Coordinator for the Contemporary Biblical Scholars program, St. Thomas University, Miami, FL, (May 2013-present);
- Webster, Jane S. Lilly Endowment/Wabash Center Grant for leadership in the Colloquy on "Religious Commitments in the Undergraduate Classroom." (2012-2014).

**Research in Progress**

- Ascough, Richard S. Greco-Roman associations; 1 & 2 Thessalonians.
- Batten, Alicia. Commentary on Philemon (Wisdom Commentary Series, Liturgical Press); Commentary on James (Illuminations Series, Eerdmans); Dress in Antiquity (article).
- Baxter, Wayne. *We've Lost. What Now? Practical Counsel from the Book of Daniel* (soon to be published monograph).
- Bertone, John A. *Finding God in Scripture*, under book contract with Wipf and Stock, due for publication in 2015; *"Fellowship of the Spirit": Embedded In Community (2 Cor 13:14 and Phil 2:1)*.
- Boda, Mark. Judges; Ezra-Nehemiah; Psalms.
- Burke, Tony. Editor and contributor, *New Testament Apocrypha: More Non-canonical Scriptures* (volume 1 due early in 2015); Editor, *Forbidden Texts on the Western Frontier: Studying the Christian Apocrypha in North America. Proceedings from the 2013 York Christian Apocrypha Symposium* (due late 2014).
- Dallaire, H el ene. Commentary – volume on “Joshua” in *Hearing the Message of Scripture Commentary*. Edited by Daniel I. Block (Zondervan; submission by August 2016).
- Donaldson, Terence. Ethnicity and Identity Construction within Gentile Christianity (to 200 C.E.).
- Evans, Paul S. *The Book of Samuel* (The Story of God commentary series). The book of Chronicles.
- Karlj urgen Feuerherm. *Introducing Classical Hebrew through the Genesis Primeval Narrative*. Open-access publication. Versita. (Anticipated publication 2015).

- Flint, Peter W. *The Great Isaiah Scroll in Hebrew and English, with Variant Readings* (Eerdmans). [In preparation]; *The Great Psalms Scroll (11QPsa): A Complete Edition* (Dead Sea Scrolls Editions; Brill). [In preparation]; *The Book of Psalms: A New Edition, with Textual Notes and Commentary* (The SBL Hebrew Bible; Atlanta: SBL Press). [In preparation]; *Psalms and Hymns* (The Eerdmans Commentaries on the Dead Sea Scrolls 5; Eerdmans). [In preparation]; *The Additions to Daniel* (Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature (De Gruyter). [In preparation]; “Prayer of Nabonidus and Pseudo–Daniel (4Q242–245),” in James H. Charlesworth and Henry W. L. Rietz (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls. Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations: Pseudepigraphic and Non–Masoretic Psalms and Prayers* (The Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Scrolls Project 6; Mohr–Siebeck: Westminster–John Knox Press). [In preparation]; French edition of *Celebrating the Dead Sea Scrolls: A Canadian Collection*, ed., with Jean Duhaime (Médiaspaul Publishers). [In preparation]; *A Commentary on the Septuagint: The Book of Numbers* (Oxford University Press). [In preparation]
- Hiebert, Robert J. V. Critical edition of Greek IV Maccabees for the Göttingen Septuaginta series; Commentary on Septuagint Genesis for the Society of Biblical Literature Commentary on the Septuagint series; Articles on the Greek, Syriac, and Latin versions of IV Maccabees for *The Textual History of the Bible*, vol. 2: *Deutero-Canonical Scriptures* (Brill); Terminology of Exile and Restoration in the Septuagint.
- Humphrey, Edith M. Mediation and the Immediacy of God; Reclaiming Justification for the Eastern Church: The Language of Righteousness in Patristic Readings of the Apostle Paul; Reading Revelation “Inside Out”—an Un-commentary of the Apocalypse; Apocalyptic and Theoria in Paul.

- Irwin, Brian P. Covenant curses in Hebrew narrative.
- Levinson, Bernard M. and Jeffrey Stackert. *Deuteronomy and the Pentateuch*. Anchor Bible Reference Library (under contract to Yale University Press for 2015).
- Maier, Harry O. Theory and method in visual hermeneutic; Gender and space in the Pastoral Epistles and Irenaeus; Spatial geography in the study of the Gospel of John.
- McLaughlin, John L. Ancient Israelite Religion; Israelite Wisdom Genres.
- Middleton, J. Richard. Began participation in a three-year research project with nine other scholars from a variety of academic disciplines, including philosophy, the sciences, theology, and biblical studies, charged with developing a major interdisciplinary conference in 2015 with resulting book that addresses the intersection of evolution, the Fall, and original sin. The project, sponsored by the Colossian Forum on Faith, Science, and Culture, is funded by the Biologos Foundation; Literary-theological reading of 1 and 2 Samuel; The evolution of evil in the Primeval History; Suffering, silence, and lament in Job and the Abraham story.
- Miller, Daniel. Writing a book on magic in ancient Israelite society (working title: *Magic in Ancient Israelite Society: Theory and Practice*), to be published by Routledge Press.
- Penner, Ken M. *Isaiah: Introduction and Commentary on the Greek Text of Codex Sinaiticus* (Septuagint Commentary Series, ed. Stanley E. Porter, Richard S. Hess, and John Jarick; Leiden: Brill).
- Peters, Olutola K. Ethical Issues in the Apocalypse of John; The Lamb Imagery in the Apocalypse of John: What Lamb is This?
- Stovell, Beth M. *Minor Prophets I (Hosea-Micah): A Commentary* (The Story of God Commentary Series) (in progress); *The Meaning of Motherhood: Biblical and Theological Perspectives*. Wipf and Stock (in progress); *Traveling with a Passport: Keys to Interpreting Biblical Language*. Co-

written with Stanley E. Porter. InterVarsity Press (in progress).

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