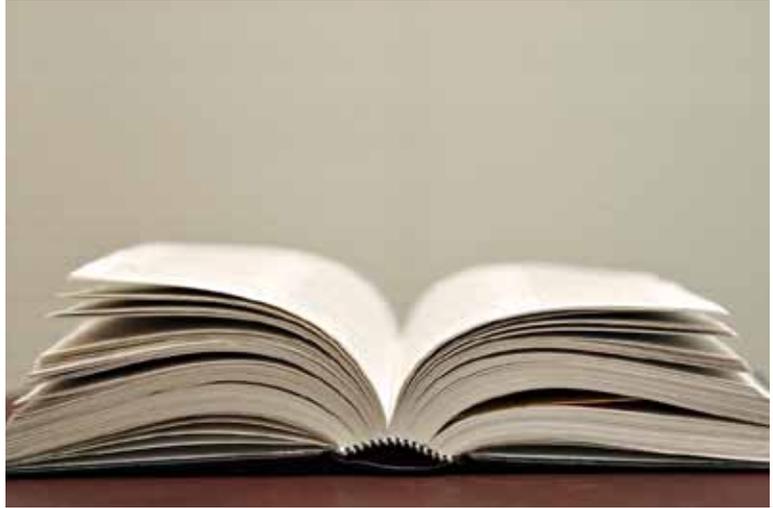


# Six new Luce scholars named

The Association of Theological Schools and The Henry Luce Foundation, Inc., have named six scholars as Henry Luce III Fellows in Theology for 2014–2015. Supported by grants of up to \$75,000 each, the Fellows engage in year-long theological research projects and present their findings for publication. The 2014–2015 Fellows constitute the twenty-first class of scholars to be appointed since the inception of the program in 1993, bringing the total number of Luce Fellows to 142.



## The 2014–2015 Fellows are as follows:



**Euan K. Cameron**  
Union Theological  
Seminary  
*The Biblical View of World  
History 1250–1750: Rise,  
Refinement, and Decline*

Professor Cameron's study addresses the pre-modern understanding

of world history in the Christian West and the role that scriptural texts and scriptural exegesis played in that understanding. It will involve close critical reading of key texts in multiple European languages from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries and will compare the way that they cited and referred to passages of prophetic and apocalyptic Scripture for insights into the (perceived) divine plan in history.

Cameron will address particularly the so-called praeterist reading of prophecy, where ancient prophecies were read in the light of subsequent historical events, in order to "authenticate" the exegesis of a cryptic text, the authority of the sacred text

itself, and Christian apologetic in general.

The project will also explore the role played by the Protestant Reformation and Catholic reform in fostering debate about history, as a means to authenticate the claims of the rival religious confessions between c. 1520 and c. 1700.

Cameron will test the hypothesis that the quest for chronological accuracy in the "critical Renaissance" of the late sixteenth century was inherently self-defeating: it showed the impossibility of achieving precision and ultimately discredited this way of reading Scripture.



**Peter J. Casarella**  
University of Notre Dame  
*God of the People: A Latino/a  
Theology*

Dr. Casarella notes that, at least since St. Paul's speech at the Areopagus, the message of Jesus Christ has been transmitted in

translation. Paradigms of translation, developed, for example, by Paul Ricoeur and others are both linguistic and ontological. According to Casarella, in the Latino/a experience of life and the God of life, both forms of translation are constantly in play. There is no one Latino/a translation of “God.” Moreover, there is no single Latino/a mode of signification that captures the diverse forms of *mestizaje*, transnational narratives, and mixtures of bilingual and bicultural existence brought together in this shared identity. Professor Casarella argues that the Latino/a names of God (e.g., *Dios, Diosito, Jesús, el Señor, Padrecito*) bespeak a theological question that Pseudo-Dionysius, St. Thomas Aquinas, Nicholas of Cusa, Fray Luis de León, and Diego Valadez ably formulated. A Latino/a theology of divine names, however, foregrounds the beauty of popular Catholicism and the struggle to achieve, in the words of Isasi-Díaz, just a little bit of justice (*un poquito de justicia*). Casarella argues that these issues sometimes get lost in translation or relegated to the remedial domain of English as a Second Language. His study will bring the contemporary process of translating God back into the center of theological reflection.



**Melanie C. Ross**

Yale University Divinity School

*Varieties of Evangelical Worship: An American Mosaic*

Dr. Ross notes that American religious historians and sociologists describe

evangelicalism as a mosaic, kaleidoscope, or patchwork quilt—colorful metaphors that accentuate the movement’s internal complexity and theological plurality. In contrast, liturgical scholars’ descriptions of evangelical worship life are disappointingly monochromatic. Ross laments that journalistic and academic accounts alike seem to rely on the same stock photo: “middle-class worshipers, usually white, in corporate-looking auditoriums or sanctuaries, swaying to the electrified music of ‘praise bands,’ their eyes closed, their enraptured faces tilted heavenward, a hand (or hands) raised to the sky.”

As a liturgical scholar who regularly worships in evangelical churches, Ross rejects the reductionism and homogeneity of this snapshot. She claims that there is pressing need for new work that brings together the best of liturgical scholarship with the best historical scholarship on American evangelicalism, and puts both in conversation with the worship practices of contemporary congregations. Her project sets out to address this lacuna.



**Douglas A. Sweeney**

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

*Edwards the Exegete: Biblical Interpretation and Anglo-Protestant Culture on the Edge of the Enlightenment*

Scholars have long recognized that Jonathan Edwards loved the Bible. But preoccupied with his roles in Western “public” life and letters, and failing to see the public significance of his biblical exegesis, Sweeney notes that very little attention has been given to the thing Edwards himself took most seriously. According to Sweeney, the lion’s share of Edwards’s time during every week of his life was spent wrestling with the words of holy writ. To address this obvious gap, Sweeney plans to write a book on Edwards’ exegesis and its significance for Christian thought and intellectual history. After reconstructing Edwards’ lost exegetical world and describing his place within it, he summarizes the exegete’s four main approaches to the Bible (canonical, Christological, redemptive-historical, and doctrinal) and analyzes Edwards’s work on selected biblical themes that illustrate these four approaches—focusing on material that is emblematic of his larger interests as a scholar. Sweeney will compare Edwards’s work to that of his most frequent interlocutors and place it in the context of the history of exegesis, challenging preconceived notions about the state of Christianity in the age of the Enlightenment. Dr. Sweeney’s study will provide a helpful guide to Edwards’s exegetical work and also clear a path for later specialists to follow.



**Norman R. Wirzba**

Duke University Divinity School

*A Human Place in the World: The Meaning of Creation, Creatureliness, and Creativity*

Professor Wirzba's project will show that a Christian narration of the world

as "creation" and humans as "creatures" leads to a description of human life as a creative participation in God's sustaining and beautifying ways with the world. He will argue that modernity's narration of the world as "nature" (a stockpile of "natural resources"), and human subjects as unencumbered shoppers annexing the world, has led to the degradation, even desecration, of human habitats and communities. Conceived in three parts, the project first develops a Trinitarian account of creation that reveals the world's significance and meaning. It then shows that an account of humans as creatures calls into question the aims and priorities of the autonomous self as it developed in the industrial world. The project concludes with a description of Spirit-inspired human work and creativity that witnesses to the glory of God and makes possible more faithful and more beautiful modes of being-in-the-world. Wirzba's project is unique because it puts Nicene Christian theology in conversation with philosophical, environmental, and cultural critiques of modernity to achieve a compelling vision for the future of human life in the world.



**Christine Roy Yoder**

Columbia Theological Seminary

*Contours of Desire in Israelite Wisdom Literature*

Dr. Yoder's project examines the configuration of desire in Israelite wisdom literature (Proverbs, Job,

Ecclesiastes, Sirach, and Wisdom of Solomon). She notes that, in a manner unparalleled in the ancient Near East, Israelite sages sought to cultivate, moderate, and direct desire, particularly to wisdom. Yet what the sages mean by desire remains largely unexamined. The project will address a number of questions including, How do the Israelite sages describe and structure desire? What are desire's primary metaphors and objects? What do answers to those questions suggest about the role of desire in wisdom and wellbeing? Yoder's study demonstrates that the sages engage desire as an important and complex manifestation of biological need and discernment—a drive that may press the body like hunger, or be pulled into existence by something considered valuable for survival. Desire is thus "hardwired" in the body, perceptive, and teachable. Her project challenges dualistic (cognitive/emotional) notions of desire for wisdom currently assumed in biblical studies. It also has implications for contemporary interdisciplinary and theological reconsiderations of desire by presenting a biblical portrait that neither represses nor limits desire to sexuality or personal want. Rather, according to Yoder, the sages insist that desire is a primary way that people map the world and themselves in it. Care for its formation is vital for wisdom and human flourishing.