

Spring 2019



THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST HISTORY AND HERITAGE SOCIETY BULLETIN



Conrad Wright Lecture at General Assembly 2019

“The Heathen World and America’s Humanitarian Impulse” by Dr. Kathryn Gin Lum

The Unitarian Universalist History and Heritage Society invites you to join us at General Assembly in Spokane, Washington for the Conrad Wright Lecture. This year’s lecturer is Dr. Kathryn Gin Lum, Associate Professor of Religious Studies in collaboration with the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity at Stanford University in California. The lecture will take place on Thursday June 20, 2019, 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM in the Davenport Grand - Grand Ballroom C.

Dr. Gin Lum is the author of *Damned Nation: Hell in America from the Revolution to Reconstruction* from Oxford University Press (2014). In *Damned Nation*, Gin Lum explores how the widespread belief in hell shaped Americans’ perceptions of themselves and the rest of the world during the first century of nationhood. She is the co-editor with Paul Harvey for a volume *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Race in American History* by Oxford University Press (2018). She is currently working on a third book, tentatively titled *The Heathen World and America’s Humanitarian Impulse*, for Harvard University Press. Her Conrad Wright lecture draws from her research for her third project.

In her lecture, Stanford Professor Kathryn Gin Lum explores how the concept of “heathen” seems to be an antiquated category and yet it has had long-lasting implications. Lum shows how heathenness has operated as an essential foil against and through which Euro-Americans have defined themselves as a progressive, humanitarian people in this year's Conrad Wright Lecture.

The first annual Conrad Wright lecture was given in 2008 by J.D. Bowers on Joseph Priestley and English Unitarianism in America. Past lecturers have included Charles Capper, Christopher Cameron, Megan Marshall, James Ishmael Ford, and Tisa Wenger.

Dr. Nicole Kirk will introduce Dr. Gin Lum. The UUA bookstore, located in the exhibit hall, will host a book signing for Dr. Gin Lum’s first book, *Damned Nation* **immediately after the lecture**.



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY



FROM YOUR JOURNAL EDITOR, KATHLEEN PARKER:

This message begins with a big thank you to all of you for your membership in UUHHS and for your investment in all that we do to investigate, preserve, and promote our Unitarian Universalist history! A big part of what we do is to provide a venue to encourage and publish the UU research that so many of our friends are pursuing. Of course, one of those venues is our annual journal. The next journal – Volume 42 – is being published as I write this message and will soon be on its way to you!

Before I say more about that, I would like to remind you to **PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOUR ADDRESS HAS CHANGED** since our last mailing! It is a bit disheartening to put our 350+ journals in the mail and then see as many as 20 of them returned. You can very easily let us know if you have moved – just send an email to: membership@uuhhs.org. We are happy to re-send your journal if the first mailing is returned, but it will be better for you and for us if we have your current address from the start! Thank you!

We are excited to say that Volume 42 of the journal features a special section of articles on Universalist history. The first article offers the late eighteenth-century story of a Quaker from Philadelphia, Christopher Marshall, who became a publicist for Universalist writings, much to the dismay of his Quaker co-religionists. The second article shows the genealogical sweep of Universalist beginnings in South Carolina, identifying the founding members as those who migrated out of myriad faraway locations and religious backgrounds. A third provides glimpses into the ministries of three Universalist ministers – Reverends George Rogers, Quillen Shinn, and Richard Smith – whose work in the state of Alabama spanned the period from the Civil War era to the brink of World War I. In the fourth article, we learn of several Universalist ministers descended from a family of German iron-makers living in Waleska, Georgia. A grandson, Rev. Almon Strain, famously debated a Baptist minister, Rev. J.J. Porter, in Fellowship, Mississippi in 1907 on the question of punishment after death.

Two additional articles feature Unitarian ministers who demonstrated great love for Unitarianism in the first half of the nineteenth century. Neither William Ichabod Nichols, who served as president of the AUA (1837-1844), nor Mordecai De Lange, who journeyed as a Minister-at-Large to fledgling societies on the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers (1847-1850) and helped establish the Western Unitarian Conference, followed the theological way of the Transcendentalists. Both adhered to the traditional Unitarian teachings of Channing, their considerable and admirable work little remembered in our history.

These articles are followed by a number of interesting and provocative book reviews, the first four of which make up a forum of reviews on Mark Morrison-Reed's latest work, *Revisiting the Empowerment Controversy*. We hope these reviews will lay the seeds for effectively helping us become more inclusive and self-aware UUs. Additional reviews showcase recent books on UU and liberal religious history that underscore the social justice questions we face today.

We hope you will enjoy Volume 42 of the journal! We know you will appreciate the work done by our authors to produce such interesting and meaningful insights into our history!



PRESIDENT'S POST

UUHHS will again have a table in the Exhibit Hall at General Assembly this year. I encourage you to stop by and chat with some of our board members and others who volunteer each year to help out. (You'd be welcome to join them. Just sign up.)

Besides books and journals for sale (some deeply discounted and even free!), the most important thing we do institutionally at GA is encourage new and renewing members. Frankly, the last year or two we have been running worrisome deficits. We are a membership organization, and as costs have risen our numbers have not kept up.

If you are presently a member of the Society you can help us in two ways, one easy - the other a little more difficult. The first is to make sure your own membership is up to date. (June 30 each year is when memberships expire.) Second, think about your friends, colleagues and other associates. Among them are likely to be individuals who are interested in both our movement and our history.

There will be membership brochures available at the table, both for renewing and new members. Take an extra or two and invite your acquaintances to join.

If each of our present number of members found someone new, we would double our membership. Certainly, that is better than having to cut back. As our current Treasurer likes to say: "Each one ask one."

Won't you?

Earl Holt

EarlHolt@aol.com



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****HAVE AN INTERESTING HISTORIC UU FIND THAT YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH UUHHS?***

Please send any submissions about your local UU history and heritage to the UUHHS newsletter! Send all submissions to newsletter editor, Phoebe Cos at phobekates16@gmail.com by October 1st. We look forward to hearing your stories!

A Note from the UUHHS Journal Editor

By Kathleen Parker

It's January again, and I hope you are looking forward to the spring 2016 volume of our *Journal of*

Unitarian Universalist History! This issue is coming together on schedule and should be in the mail to

you, per usual, by April! Four outstanding articles of original research are included, highlighting the ways in which Unitarians from disparate walks of life and far-flung locations gave shape in the nineteenth century to the liberal religious vision they claimed as their own. The first article, by James

Trent, explores the influences that affected Samuel Gridley Howe working as a young physician in

Greece during the 1820s. Despite troubling questions we may have about Howe in later life, this history

offers new understanding of his early reform years. A second article, by Mary Johnson, tells the story of

a pre-Civil War minister in Alton, IL, who went on, after fighting in the Union army, to become a newspaper editor in the West. A third article, by military historian Peter Karsten, offers a focus we have not seen lately: the ethical dilemmas faced by Unitarians in government employ in the nineteenth

century -- a soldier dealing with the Mexican War; and jurists dealing with the Fugitive Slave Act,

corporate liability under the law, and other questions of conscience. The fourth article, by Kathleen

Parker (your editor), examines the Social Gospel ministry of an 1890s minister in Pittsburgh, PA, as he

struggled to minister with "moral enthusiasm" in an industrializing city. These articles promise to illuminate our understanding of what it meant to be a Unitarian in these nineteenth-century cases, and

they may inspire us as we face our own questions of conscience today. The articles are followed by

fourteen fine book reviews that should spark



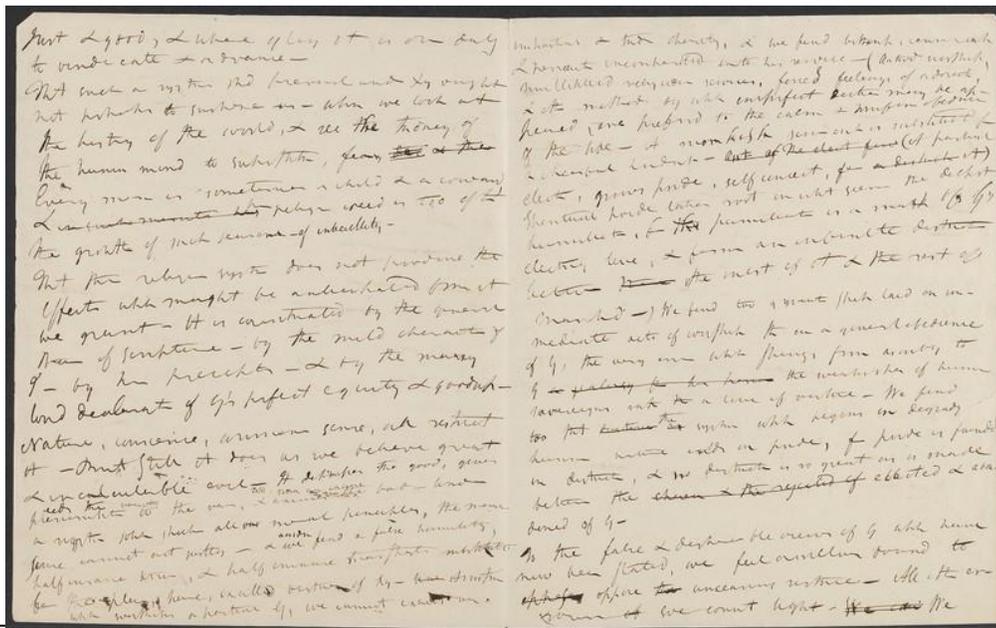
Newly Digitized: The Papers of William Ellery Channing

Two hundred years ago, on May 5, 1819, Unitarian minister William Ellery Channing spoke at a Baltimore church and delivered what would be described nearly two centuries later as probably the most important Unitarian sermon ever preached anywhere.

Now, the unpublished drafts of that seminal sermon are available for the first time digitally, for researchers and anyone else around the world to view.

Nearly 4,500 pages of material in the archival collection of Channing’s papers held at Andover-Harvard Theological Library have been made widely available through a digitization project with Harvard Library. Gathered in two collections (available here and here), his papers bring together his sermons, correspondence, writings, and photographs, as well as his Baltimore sermon and its unpublished drafts.

“The newly digitized papers of William Ellery Channing are a great gift to Unitarian Universalist scholars everywhere,” says Dan McKanan, Ralph Waldo Emerson Unitarian Universalist Association Senior Lecturer in Divinity at HDS. “As we celebrate the bicentennial of Channing’s Baltimore sermon—the manifesto of the Unitarian movement—we can now read Channing’s handwritten drafts of that sermon alongside letters to urban reformer Joseph Tuckerman, pacifist Noah Worcester, women’s rights activist Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, and many more. We can also peruse memorials written by his friends, records of his ministry at Federal Street Church, and even receipts for his salary! I hope that all Channing lovers will enjoy this treasure trove—and help us decide what we should digitize next.” *(Continued on page 5)*



Gathered in two collections (bMS 100 and bMS 480), Channing's papers bring together sermons, correspondence, writings, and photographs, totaling nearly 4,500 pages of material. Included in the sermons are two of Channing's drafts of "Unitarian Christianity". **To learn more, visit the Harvard Divinity Library at the links below:**
bMS 100: <https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/12/resources/6353>
bMS 480: <https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/12/resources/947>



(*Newly Digitized, Continued from page 4*) In 1819, Channing gave the landmark Baltimore sermon, “Unitarian Christianity,” which upon publication sold thousands of copies. It was during this sermon, delivered at the ordination of Jared Sparks in 1819 at the new liberal church in Baltimore, that Channing decided to snatch the label of Unitarian from those who would degrade it and to claim it proudly as his own, according to the Unitarian Universalist Association.

HDS’s Andover-Harvard Theological Library enlisted the help of Harvard Library Imaging Services to complete the month-long digitization process, which started with a conservation and imaging review followed by the preparation of materials to make them “camera ready.” Once the materials were prepared and the necessary metadata for the digital objects created, the materials were photographed at copy stands designed for the efficient capture of loose and bound materials. Following a quality assurance review, the digital images were deposited into the Harvard Library’s Digital Repository Service and the online finding aid updated.

“As stewards of the official archives of both the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, and curators of the most comprehensive collection of Unitarian Universalist materials in the world, we at the Andover-Harvard Theological Library of Harvard Divinity School are very pleased to be able to make more and more of these collections available to the world through digitization,” said Douglas Gragg, HDS librarian. “Adding the papers of William Ellery Channing to a growing inventory of collections available online is a moment to celebrate. There is much more to come!”

Channing graduated from Harvard College in 1798, served on the board of the Harvard Corporation where he worked for the establishment of the Divinity School in 1816, and served as the pastor of the Federal Street Church in Boston from 1803 until his death in 1842.

—by *Michael Naughton*, Media Relations Coordinator, Harvard Divinity School
reprinted from the Harvard Divinity School website article dated May 3, 2019

The Historical Dictionary of Unitarian Universalism

The Historical Dictionary of Unitarian Universalism, Second edition by Mark Harris was published last year. The first edition was published in 2003, with a paperback version called *The A to Z of Unitarian Universalism* published in 2009. While this edition replicates much of the first edition, it builds on the 400 original entries, with 80 new entries, making a total of 480. Some of the features of the new library edition include a new, longer introduction and many updated entries. The 80 new entries highlight many important aspects of UU history. The original volume included few British entries, and this edition includes many important historical figures such as Beatrix Potter, Elisabeth Gaskell, and Anna Barbauld. A second feature is many new entries on Black Unitarian Universalists, especially recent theologians such as Thandeka, Bill Jones and Tony Pinn. Another aspect of our history that was not highlighted in the first edition includes important leaders from the 1970’s, and this edition includes biographies of Homer Jack, Connie Burgess and Joseph Fisher. You can find out about Edna Griffin, the Rosa Parks of Iowa, and Viola Liuzzo the only white woman killed in the civil rights struggles of the 1960’s. Finally, there are many living UUs including denominational leaders and other famous UUs, such as the actor Andre Braugher. All of these updates make this a volume that is a necessary addition to your library. It can be ordered online in hardback or ebook versions. Contact Mark Harris (themanse@rocketmail.com) for a 30% discount flyer.

Recap of Universalist Convocation

Since 1990, Universalists have held an annual convocation to continue the mission of learning and celebrating the heritage of the Universalist faith tradition. This year's convocation, held May 17 – 19 at Murray Grove UU Retreat center in NJ, was designed as the kick-off event for the upcoming 250th anniversary celebration of Rev. John Murray preaching his first Universalist sermon in America in 1770.

The program provided the attendees an opportunity to learn more about the early roots of American Universalism from three prominent UU ministers.

Early Voices of Universalism was presented by Rev. Dr. Elizabeth M. Strong, a third generation Universalist, a retired UU Minister of Religious Education and Minister Emerita of the First Parish UU Church in Ashby, MA.

Rev. John A. Buehrens spoke on **John Murray and his Impact on American Universalism**. Buehrens is a former president of the UUA (1993 – 2001) and is currently the senior minister of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco, CA.

Hosea Ballou and his Impact on American Universalism was the topic of Rev. Richard Trudeau, who was for 17 years the minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Weymouth, MA. Rev. Trudeau has been actively involved with the Universalist Convocation for 28 years and served as its President for four years.

The speakers' presentations will be published in pamphlet form. Ordering information will be made available on the Universalist Convocation website in July.

The convocation attendees also had an opportunity to see a live performance of *Love Notes*, a musical rendition of a timeless love story told through selected readings of love letters between John Murray and his American bride, Judith Sargent.

At the business meeting Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Strong was named the recipient of this year's Heart of Universalism award. The award honors an individual who exhibits the living spirit of Universalism.

The 2020 convocation will be held at Outlaw's Bridge Universalist Church, Seven Springs, North Carolina. The 2021 convocation will be held at Northwest Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Atlanta, Georgia. For more information, go to UniversalistConvocation.org.

LOVE NOTES



*The Love Letters of Judith Sargent
Murray and John Murray*

Directed by Rebecca Nice Parrone
Performed by Isabela Morales, John Burton, Alice Deanin and Herb Foster
Costumes by Lynn Whitney