

# Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations

---

---

A peer-reviewed e-journal of the Council of Centers in Jewish-Christian Relations

Published by the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning at Boston College

## Editors' Introduction

Ruth Langer and Kevin Spicer

Volume 5 (2010)

<http://escholarship.bc.edu/scjr/vol5>

Welcome to Volume 5 (2010) of *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations*. This year's feature topic is titled "Boundaries and Border Crossings." In this context, we have invited a multi-disciplinary discussion of how Jews and Christians have developed and maintained their separate identities and how, in the modern world, they have built bridges between their religious traditions. We will continue to accept submissions for publication in this issue through September 2010, but of course, no such conversation is ever closed.

Indeed, the conversation on this issue began with an article published in Volume 4. Dvir Abramovich's "[Jesus-Believing Jews in Australia: Celebrate Messiah as a Case Study](#)" provided a detailed investigation of a community of Messianic Jews in Melbourne, Australia based on extensive archival research and interviews with the people involved. Messianic Judaism presents for many a contemporary challenge to the established boundaries that define Jewish and Christian identities. Their "border crossing" is not always well-received, especially by Jews. Understanding the tensions raised by and others like it is important for our contemporary dialogue.

The initial upload of this issue begins with a series of papers presented at a session of the Christian Systematic Theology Section, called "The Torah and the Continuity of Scripture in Jewish Christian Dialogue" at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting in November 2008. These papers engage with Michael Wyschogrod's famous call for Jews who have become Christians to understand themselves as still obliged to observe the commandments of the Torah. The authors propose ways that Christians can recover theological space for Torah observance and thus cross the "boundary" established by the early Church in the process of the partings of the ways. The first paper of this series, by David Rudolph, offers a theology of Messianic Judaism, i.e.,

of a Torah-observant Christianity that understands itself to remain Jewish, arguing for its place within the spectrum of Christianity. Holly Taylor Coolman suggests a reading of Aquinas that allows Christ and Torah to be inseparable theological categories; however, she argues that for Christians to take on full Torah observance in Jewish manner would be to negate the significance of Christ as Torah. The third paper, by Jodie Boyer Hatlem and Doug Johnson Hatlem, critiques Christian theological traditions that made observance of Torah commandments heretical and advocates, in contrast to Coolman, that this might become an appropriate expression of faith for gentile Christians. Finally, Adam Gregerman responds to these papers, adding a dialogical presence to this session.

We anticipate that this symposium will be joined by several peer-reviewed articles addressing our special topic. In addition, the proceedings of at least two other conferences appear in whole or in part in this initial upload, along with several important book reviews.

Four items of business:

- We remind our readers of our call for papers for Volume 6 (2011) on "[Constructing Saints and Heroes](#)," found on the sidebar of the journal's homepage. We especially invite articles that address this question from a variety of disciplines, such as history, theology, sociology or anthropology. We encourage our readers to alert their colleagues to this upcoming volume and to consider submitting to it.
- We remind our readers of the outstanding invitation to submit responses to published papers.
- We announce the appointment of Adam Gregerman as our new book review editor, replacing Leonard Greenspoon and Eugene Fisher, whom we thank warmly for their service. Adam has energetically

undertaken his new role and we very much look forward to working with him. He can be reached at our permanent address for the book review editor, [scjrbks@bc.edu](mailto:scjrbks@bc.edu).

- Finally, we bid a sad farewell to Dr. Audrey Doetzel, NDS, who has served as managing editor of *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations* almost since its inception. We thank her for her dedicated work in developing the journal and in handling the technical aspects of its publication. We also will miss her wise guidance which draws on her decades of engagement in Christian-Jewish relations. She will be sorely missed. We welcome in her place Dr. Camille Fitzpatrick Markey as our new managing editor. She will now be the person behind the [scjr@bc.edu](mailto:scjr@bc.edu) email address, managing the publication aspects of the journal and working with the rest of the editorial team. We look forward to many years of fruitful collaboration with her.