

Association for Bahá'í Studies–North America
 30th Annual Conference
 “Religion and the Evolution of Consciousness”

10–13 August 2006
 San Francisco Airport Marriott
 San Francisco, California, USA

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Important Information

Conference Badge. Your conference badge is your “ticket of admission” to all sessions. You must wear it to attend conference sessions. The security personnel will not allow admittance to anyone without a badge.

Security. The security personnel are there to assist you. Please follow their instructions at all times. They can be identified by red ribbons on their badges.

Promptness. The schedule of sessions is very full. To give equal time to the speakers, the sessions must begin on time. We request your cooperation in arriving promptly.

Cell Phones. The ringing of mobile telephones in the audience is very disruptive to a presentation. Please turn off your cell phone or put it in “silent” mode while you are in the conference sessions.

The Children’s and Junior Youth Program. (Children must be preregistered to attend.) The Children’s Program, for ages 5 to 15, is being held in the Monterey, Santa Barbara, and Santa Clara Rooms on the 2nd Floor. Parents may drop off children at their program 15 minutes before the adult session starting time. Parents are asked to pick up their children promptly at the close of each session and for the lunch breaks. (Meals are not included in the children’s program.) The times for Children/Junior Youth sessions are

Thursday, 10 August	9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Friday, 11 August	9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Saturday, 12 August	9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, 13 August	9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

The program of children’s activities is available at the Conference Registration Table. Parents are required to sign a Medical Information and Emergency Health Care Release form and return it to the Children’s Program coordinators.

The Conference Bookstore is operated by the Bahá'í Distribution Service in the United States. The bookstore is located in the San Ramon Room on the 2nd Floor and offers a wide selection of books and materials, including books and CDs by authors and artists presenting at the conference, and Bahá'í jewelry. Hours of operation are

Thursday, 10 August	2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Friday, 11 August	9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, 12 August	9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Sunday, 13 August	9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Evaluation Forms. The ABS Executive Committee asks for your assistance in filling out the conference evaluation forms in your conference kit. **There will be a draw, and five people will receive a one year free membership in the Association. Complete the bottom portion of the form and place it in the box at the registration table.** Your feedback is very valuable to us in our continuing efforts to improve the Conference.

Membership. In support of the Association's membership drive, we ask you to encourage your friends and Spiritual Assemblies to join the Association. Please use the membership form enclosed in your conference kit. More forms are available at the Conference Information Table.

Audio Recordings. Conference plenary sessions will be recorded and will be available for purchase on audio CD. An order form is included in your conference kit and additional forms are available at the Conference Information Desk. Please fill out the form with your credit card number and the CDs will be mailed to you after the conference.

Lost and Found. Lost and found articles should be reported to the Conference Registration Table. After the close of the conference, any items not picked up will be turned over to the hotel.

Prayer Room. The 8042 Room, on the 8th Floor, has been set aside for prayer and meditation from Thursday to Sunday, 8:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m.

SPECIAL FEATURES AT THE CONFERENCE THIS YEAR

Evening Coffeehouse. After each evening's program there will be two coffeehouses where conference attendees can socialize and enjoy listening to live music until midnight. Performing artists at the conference are encouraged to sign up to perform at these events. A sign-up sheet will be available near the Conference Registration Table. The coffeehouses will be located in the Bayside Ballroom in the Lobby level and the Junior Ballroom on the 2nd floor.

"Office Hours" Meet the presenters at office hours. Check the information board in the Conference Registration area.

Thursday, 10 August 2006

9:00 - 12:30 a.m. Simultaneous Breakout Sessions

Bayside II

Science and Religion I: Alternative Health

Convenors: STEPHEN FRIBERG and RON SHIGETA

Chairs: SANDRO D'AMICO and GRETA D'AMICO

- 09:00 - 9:40 Anatomy of the Spirit Revisited: A Bahá'í Contribution to Energy Medicine INGRID HAUCK
- 09:50 - 10:30 When Anger Burns the Liver: The Mind-Body Connection Versus Mainstream Therapeutics JOSEPH NGA
- 10:40 - 11:20 Spirituality and Health Outcomes NEDA RAFATI
- 11:30 - 12:10 The Ego and The Soul IBRAHIM AMANAT

Irvine

Exploring Scholarship

Organizer: PROGRAM CHAIRS

- 09:00 - 10:30 Special Discussion on Bahá'í Scholarship for Youth and Young Adults
ABS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
- 10:40 - 12:30 Redefining Religion: A Collaborative Bahá'í Scholarship Workshop
HOLLY HANSON, ROXANN STAFFORD, CORIN VICK, and REBECCA VICK

12:30 - 1:30

Lunch Break

1:30 - 5:00 p. m. Simultaneous Breakout Sessions

Newport Beach

Bioethics and Health Sciences I

Convener: ELIZABETH BOWEN

- 1:30 - 2:10 The Dichotomy of HIV/AIDS Policy and Practice in China SANDRA BEAN
- 2:20 - 3:00 Racial Disparities in Health: Striving for Equity ROBERT KIM-FARLEY

Bayside III

Education I: Thoughts on Higher Education

Convener: KAMILLA BAHBAHANI

- 1:30 - 2:10 Spirituality Expressed through Art: Some Examples within and without the Bahá'í Faith ANNE GORDON PERRY
- 2:20 - 3:00 The Furutan Academy: Seeking Excellence in Studying the Bahá'í Revelation HAROLD ROSEN
- 3:10 - 5:00 From a "Nominal Civilization" to a "Genuine Civilization of Character"
PIERRE-YVES MOCQUAIS, HOSSAIN DANESH, and GORDON NAYLOR

Irvine

Psychology I

Organizer: PROGRAM CHAIRS

- 1:30 - 2:30 Are Education, Religion, Politics, Sciences, and Psychotherapy Keeping Up with Current Times? NOSSRAT PESESCHKIAN

Irvine

Marriage and Family

Organizer: PROGRAM CHAIRS

2:40 - 3:40 An Open-Source Curriculum for Marriage Education

JOY WIECZOREK and RON SHIGETA

3:50 - 4:30 The Multiple Nature of Commitment in Bahá'í Marriage DANIEL LORD

Anaheim

Peace and Conflict Studies

Convener: TRIP BARTHEL

1:30 - 2:10 Religion and the Ethics of Reconciliation in Post-Conflicted Communities:

A Southern African Perspective SYLVIA KAYE

2:20 - 2:50 1992 and the Lesser Peace TRIP BARTHEL

3:00 - 4:00 Golden choices: A Spiritual Guide to Practical Decisions: Virtues and Principles in Ethics SHAMIL FATTAKHOV and TRIP BARTHEL

4:10 - 5:00 Peace and Conflict Business Meeting

Bayside II

Science and Religion II: Evolution and the Bahá'í Faith

Convener: STEPHEN FRIBERG and RON SHIGETA

Chair: COROUSH MEHANIAN

1:30 - 2:10 The Selfish Gene @ 30 RON SHIGETA

2:20 - 3:00 Evolution, Intelligent Design and 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Explanations of Origins
STEPHEN R. FRIBERG

3:10 - 3:50 Revelation and Creation: An Expanding Field of Consciousness

WILLIAM BARNES

4:00 - 6:00 Science and Religion Business Meeting

Bayside I

Study of Religion I: Exploring the Text

Convener: PETER TERRY

1:30 - 2:10 Plato, the Triune Brain, and the Five Aspects of Spirit: an Analogy for
Deepening on the Bahá'í Cause JOHN RICHARD DAVIDSON

2:20 - 3:00 Context and Consistency: Moving Towards a Universal Understanding of
the Bahá'í Teachings SALMAN BASHIR OSKOOI

3:10 - 3:50 From Intelligent Design to Unity of Nations – Understanding Evolutionary
Processes in Our Universe BAHMAN NADIMI

4:00 - 4:40 Discovering “the Mysteries of Divine Providence” SHAHROKH MONJAZEB

5:00 - 7:00 *Dinner Break*

Thursday Evening

Grand Ballroom

7:00

Plenary Session

Official Conference Welcome

Conscience: Reestablishing the Union of Consciousness and Religion
JOHN GRAYZEL

8:30

Break

Bayside Ballroom

9:30 - 11:30

Coffee House

Junior Ballroom

9:30 - 11:30

Coffee House

Friday, August 11 2006

Grand Ballroom

9:00

Plenary Session

Devotions

Church and State in the Bahá'í Faith: Questions, Controversies, and Approaches ROSHAN DANESH

Musical Interlude EMAN ISADIAR, classical piano

Consciousness of Global Ethics BEHROOZ SABET

11:45

Lunch Break

2:00 - 5:30 p.m. Simultaneous Breakout Sessions

Bayside I

Arts II: Art in Society

Convener: ANNE PERRY

1:30 - 2:00

Arts Business Meeting

2:00 - 2:40

Creating Connection: A Paradigm for Developing Bahá'í Artists and Their Arts DRUZELLE CEDERQUIST

2:50 - 3:30

Saneh (Fashioner), The Origin of the Arts JALALIYYIH QUINN

3:40 - 4:40

The Motivating Power of Beauty: A Spiritual Perspective
BARBARA RUYS

- 4:50 - 5:30 From Homer to Whitman: Laying the Poetic Foundation for the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh PAYMAN DEGHANI
- Anaheim* **Indigenous Studies**
 Convener: LITTLEBRAVE BEASTON
 1:00 - 2:00 Indigenous Studies General Meeting
 2:00 - 3:00 Confluence of Spirituality: The Compatibility of Bahá'í Principles and Native American Beliefs NADEMA AGARD
- Anaheim* **Law and Governance**
 Organizer: PROGRAM CHAIRS
 3:10 - 3:50 The Infallibility of the Universal House of Justice: A Bahá'í Dialogue PETER TERRY
- Anaheim* **Business Ethics and Management Science**
 Convener: NOUSHA ETEMAD
 4:00- 4:30 The Inherent Moral Assumptions of an Undergraduate Study of Economics REED HARVEY
 4:40 - 5:40 Redefining Success: Applying Spiritual Values in Business NOUSHA ETEMAD
 5:50 - 6:30 Business Ethics and Management Science Business Meeting
- Suite 4096* **Communications**
 Convener: AMROLLAH HEMMAT
 5:30 - 6:30 Communications Business Meeting
- Bayside III* **Development of the Bahá'í Community**
 Organizer: PROGRAM CHAIRS
 2:00 - 3:00 Learning to Grow: Education and the Five Year Plan NAZANIN ZARGARPOUR
 3:10 - 3:50 Ruhi, Pedagogy, and Experience VICKI ABEL
- Bayside III* **Race Unity and Intercultural Issues**
 Convener: CAMILLE HENDERSON
 4:00 - 4:40 Achieving Racial Unity: Walking the Spiritual Path with Practical Feet CAMILLE HENDERSON
 4:50 - 5:20 Transforming a College Climate Through Diversity Initiatives PAULA A. DREWEK
 5:30 - 6:30 Race Unity and Intercultural Issues Business Meeting
- Salon A/B* **Philosophy**
 Conveners: IAN KLUGE
 2:00 - 2:30 The Word: Transformation Through Devotions with reference to Neuro-Linguistic Programming PHILLIP TUSSING
 2:40 - 3:20 Buddhism and the Bahá'í Writings: Ontological Explorations IAN KLUGE

<i>Salon A/B</i>	Philosophy / Women and Gender Studies: Joint Session Convenors: IAN KLUGE and ÉLIZABETH WRIGHT
3:30 - 4:10	In Search of the Maid of Heaven or Ungendering the Deity JOAN BARDEN
4:20 - 5:00	Between Equality and Difference: Creating a New Vision of Political Action MARTHA ABSHER
<i>Suite 5096</i>	
5:00 - 6:00	Philosophy Business Meeting
<i>Newport Beach</i>	Publishing Organizer: Program Chairs
2:00 - 3:00	Publishing in <i>The Journal of Bahá'í Studies</i> : A Session for Prospective Authors NANCY ACKERMAN
3:10 - 4:40	Religion Publishing for the Trade: The American Market, What Consumers are Reading, and Opportunities for Bahá'í Scholars LEE MINNERLY, TIM MOORE and TERRY CASSIDAY
<i>Bayside II</i>	Science and Religion III: Science and the Soul Convenors: STEPHEN FRIBERG and RON SHIGETA Chairs: CAROL SKRENES and STEPHEN FRIBERG
2:00 - 2:40	Science and the Soul ABDU'L-MISSAGH GHADIRIAN
2:50 - 3:30	Accident, Uncertainty, and Randomness in the Context of Complex Sustainable Systems SABA MAHANIAN and FARJAM MAJD
3:40 - 4:20	The Source of Who We Are: Reflections on the Harmony of Science and Religion DAVID T. WELLMAN
<i>Irvine</i>	Study of Religion II Convener: PETER TERRY
	A. Re-thinking Religion I
2:00 - 2:40	The Covenant as Responsiveness SUSAN MANECK
2:50 - 3:30	How Religion Became Cool: Spiritual Currents in North America DAVID DIEHL AND RON SHIGETA
	B. The Lives of Central Figures I
3:40 - 4:20	'Abdu'l-Bahá as Teacher: An Overview MISSAGH ZIAEI
4:30 - 5:10	The Unquenchable Lights of Divine Guidance: Some Notes on the Station and Function of the Shí'í Imams OMID GHAEMMAGHAMI
<i>Marina Del Ray</i>	Women and Gender Studies (see Friday session with Philosophy) Convener: ÉLIZABETH WRIGHT
4:30 - 5:30	Business meeting
5:30 - 7:30	<i>Dinner Break</i>

Friday Arts Evening

Grand Ballroom

7:30

Plenary Session

Presentation of the Association for Bahá'í Studies Awards of Excellence to STEPHEN R. FRIBERG and WENDY M. HELLER

Arts Gala

Opening music and prayers RED GRAMMER
Classical Jazz Performance CHRIS FRENCH
Remembering the Master ANNE PERRY
Music DEVON GUNDRY and KELLY SNOOK
Music RED GRAMMER

9:30

Break

Bayside Ballroom

9:30 - 11:30

Coffee House

Junior Ballroom

9:30 - 11:30

Coffee House

Saturday, 12 August 2006

Grand Ballroom

9:00

Plenary Session

Devotions

The Scholar and the Plan FARZIN AGHDASI

The Permanence of Change: Contemporary Sociological and Bahá'í Perspectives on Modernity HODA MAHMOUDI

11:45

Lunch Break

Irvine

Annual General Meeting of the Association for Bahá'í Studies–North America

1:00 - 2:15

All are invited to attend, to meet the Executive Committee, and to consult about the activities and future directions of the Association

2:30 - 6:00 p.m. Simultaneous Breakout Sessions

Salon A/B

Bahá'í History and Biography

Convener: SUSAN MANECK

2:30 - 3:10

Nazi Destruction of the German Bahá'í Community

DUANE L. HERRMANN

3:20 - 4:00

“Instant, Exact and Complete”: Popular Narrative and the Ideal of Obedience in the Bahá'í Community DAVID M. PIFF

4:10 - 4:50

The Secret of Divine Civilization and the Concept of Modernity

BEHROOZ SABET

5:00 - 6:00

Bahá'í History and Biography Business Meeting

Salon G/H

Bioethics and Health Sciences II

Convener: ELIZABETH BOWEN

4:30 - 5:10

Reflections on the Mind of the Physician DAVID R. SMITH

5:20 - 6:00

Spirituality and Ethics in Medicine and Public Health ELIZABETH BOWEN

Suite 4096

6:00 - 7:00

Bioethics and Health Sciences Business Meeting

Salon C/D

Education II: Intercultural Issues

Convener: KAMILA BAHBAHANI

2:30 - 3:10

Forbidden Dialogue: Religion and Multiculturalism in Education in Canada MARIE GERVAIS

3:20 - 3:50

In Search of Diversity: Applying Principles of Cluster Creation to Public Education Reform KENNETH CABOT

4:00 - 5:00

Current Research on Child Development: Bahá'í Implications

BELINDA HILL

5:10 - 5:40

Student Perceptions and Challenges in Implementation of an On-line Course for an Institution of Higher Education

IRSHAT MADYAROV and BARBARA LOEDING

Suite 5096

6:00 - 7:00

Education Business Meeting

Irvine

International Affairs

Convener: JEFFREY HUFFINES

2:30 - 3:30

The Search for Values in an Age of Transition JEFFREY HUFFINES

3:40 - 4:20

Capitalism's Relationship to World Poverty THEODORE R. BRETON

Suite 8024

4:30 - 5:30

International Affairs Business Meeting

Salon I/J

Psychology II

Organizer: PROGRAM CHAIRS

2:30 - 3:10

Healing the Soul: What Counseling Psychology and the Bahá'í Faith Offer and What Do They Have in Common TARAVAT OSTOVAR

3:20 - 4:00

The Community Model of Consciousness JUSTICE ST. RAIN

4:10 - 5:40

Portals to Spiritual Progress through Sacred Metaphor from The Seven Valleys by Bahá'u'lláh

MICHELLE THELEN-STEERE, TULI RODE, and SIAMAK MOTAHARI

Bayside Ballroom **Science and Religion IV: Neuroscience of Consciousness**
 Convenors: STEPHEN FRIBERG and RON SHIGETA
 Chairs: CAROL SKRENES and SAMIR KOIRALA
 2:30 - 5:30 CAROL SKRENES, SAMIR KOIRALA, DON HOFFMAN, and FARANEH
 VARGHA-KHADEM

Bayside I **Study of Religion III**
A. The Lives of Central Figures II
 2:30 - 3:10 Bábí Heroism and the Recovery of the Heroic JACK MCLEAN
 3:20 - 4:00 Bringing Heaven Home--Parallels of Ministry of Bahá'u'lláh and Jesus in
 the Gospel of Thomas JOHN STEERE
B. Re-thinking Religion II
 4:10 - 4:50 Religion: Detrimental? Optional? or Required?
 FARJAM MAJD and SABA MAHANIAN
 5:00 - 5:40 Daily Responsibilities: an Examination of the Bahá'í Lifestyle
 PAUL IVES BLAIR
 6:00 - 7:00 Study of Religion Business Meeting
 6:00 - 8:00 *Dinner Break*

Saturday Evening

Grand Ballroom
 8:00

Plenary Session

The 24th Hasan M. Balyuzi Memorial Lecture

Musical Performance
 JOHN DAVEY-HATCHER, tenor
 VIC SALVO, composer and accompanist

Rank and Station: Reflections on the Life of Bahíyyih Khánum
 JANET KHAN

Break

Bayside Ballroom
 9:30 - 11:30 Coffee House
Junior Ballroom
 9:30 - 11:30 Coffee House

Sunday, 13 August 2006

Grand Ballroom

9:00

Plenary Session

Devotions

Education, Scholarship and Global Civilization PETER KHAN

Young Scholars Panel SHAHLA MAGHZI (Organizer), SHABNAM AZAD,
DAVID DIEHL, RACHEL ENSLOW, ANNE GILLETTE, and WILLIAM SILVA

12:00

Closing Musical Presentation

Original songs RED GRAMMER

“O Bahá’u’lláh” JOHN DAVEY HATCHER

Abstracts and Autobiographical Notes

Vicki Abel • Ruhi, Pedagogy and Experience

How does the Ruhi Curriculum relate to pedagogical approaches of the past? What impact does it have on those engaged in its courses? This discussion explores traditional and critical approaches to pedagogy and the relationship of the Ruhi Curriculum to each. To better understand its implications and effects, discussion also includes information gleaned through a case study of a community as skills have developed and confidence has been gradually “built as the friends engage in progressively more complex and demanding acts of service.”

VICKI ABEL is a mother of four, grandmother of five, currently working on a Masters Degree in Instructional Technology at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, USA. Education in the Bahá’í community has long been her interest.

Martha Absher • Between Equality and Difference: Creating a New Vision of Political Action.

Feminism remains challenged by contested visions of equality and difference, and creating effective architectures for the inclusion of women in political processes. This presentation analyzes Bahá’í writings as presenting a framework of political thought which, rooted in the oneness of mankind, provides alternative means of defining gender equality by establishing three levels of social dialogue. These focus on removal of discrimination against women, glorification of values related to care, and the redefinition of masculinity and femininity. Consequently, Bahá’í political thought reconceptualizes power and politics by focusing on change at the epistemic level, disengaging with partisan politics, and providing an alternative system of governance.

MARTHA ABSHER, JD candidate, grew up in Yemen as a Bahá’í, and earned her BA from Landegg International University. Her study of gender theorists and the contributions of the

Bahá’í writings to that field developed while studying for her MSc in Gender and Social Policy at the London School of Economics.

Nancy Ackerman • Publishing in *The Journal of Bahá’í Studies*: A Session for Prospective Authors

This workshop will review key Writings governing Bahá’í scholarship, requirements for authors, and the mechanism of peer review; we will briefly describe the process of publication in *The Journal of Bahá’í Studies*, and look at what makes for an acceptable (or unacceptable) article; in a question and answer format, we will discuss some frequently encountered problems, either for authors or for the Journal; handouts will be provided.

NANCY ACKERMAN is a linguist, with an MA in linguistics and comparative phonology from U Toronto (1964) and MEd from Boston University (1978). After working in the fields of developmental and psycholinguistics, public relations, and communications, in the US, Canada, Russia, Israel, and Switzerland, she is currently director of the editing company, AmadeaEditing.

Nadema Agard • Confluence of Spirituality: The Compatibility of Bahá’í Principles and Native American Beliefs

This compilation of quotes and prayers from the Bahá’í Writings, in harmony with quotes from tribal traditions and those of Native scholars trained in the Western manner, supports nine Bahá’í principles. It includes many references from *Metaphysics of Modern Existence* and *God is Red* by Vine Deloria (Lakota Scholar), *Land of Spotted Eagle* by Luther Standing Bear (Lakota Scholar), *Book of the Hopi* by Frank Waters and Native prophecies that include those as told by Lee Brown (Cherokee), Tehanetorens (Hodenoosaunee) and the Black Elk (Lakota).

NADEMA AGARD (Cherokee/Lakota/Powhatan) is an artist, curator, educator, published author, museum professional and consultant in Reparation and Multicultural/Native American arts and cultures with an MA in Art and Education from Teacher's College, Columbia University. She is currently the Director of Red Earth Studio Consulting/Productions in New York City.

Farzin Aghdazi • The Scholar and the Plan

Individual and collective spiritual growth is intimately linked with both study and action. Inner qualities and attitudes as well as outward activity and service mutually reinforce each other. The current phase of the Divine Plan brings into sharp focus this interplay. The teacher becomes the learned, as the learned becomes the teacher. Scholarship is seen in a new light, as Divine Revelation is acknowledged as a source of knowledge. The Writings contain rich imagery of the interaction between the spiritual and social aspects of civilization, between the scholar and the Plan.

FARZIN AGHDASI holds an MBA and a PhD in Computer Vision. His research has applied Artificial Intelligence methods for early detection of Breast Cancer. He has lived in Africa and lectured at the Universities of Zimbabwe and Witwatersrand. He now serves on the Continental Board of Counselors for the Americas.

Ibrahim Amanat MD • The Ego and the Soul

Researchers in the fields of psychology, sociology, philosophy and theology have presented a confusing portrait of the “self”. Often descriptions of the “self” are colored by the author’s ego and its mechanisms of defense. These colored glass views of the “self” or “self-structure”, do not allow a non-biased view of the spiritual nature of man or his “true-self” due to idle fancies and vain imaginings.

This paper proposes a different path of search free from the ego’s bias and prejudgments.

IBRAHIM AMANAT, MD, is a child and adolescent psychiatrist, Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry at USC Keck School of Medicine and consultant to LA County department of mental health. Board certified and a Diplomate of APA, he is the author of many papers and books in Persian and English.

Shabnam Azad • Young Scholars Panel (see Maghzi-Ali for abstract)

SHABNAM AZAD received her doctorate in Education from the University of California, Berkeley and is a faculty member in the International Multicultural Education program at the University of San Francisco. Her work includes studying the relationship between education and socio-economic development and participatory research projects with youth and women in South Asia.

Joan M. Barden • In Search of the Maid of Heaven or Ungendering the Deity

This presentation reviews the historical progress of divine concepts as they evolve from anthropomorphic perceptions to abstract concepts. The philosophy or wisdom behind the use of gendered metaphors and, ultimately, what they signify, appear to undergo change. The mystical Writings of Bahá’u’lláh provide the clues and understanding to the past as well as the promise for the future. Has there been change or has the maturation of society enabled the recognition of an unchangeable truth? What is that truth? And how does that truth relate to the Truth?

JOAN M. BARDEN, native Californian and Bahá’í since 1963, incorporated diverse experiences from her life’s journey that culminated in her studies in the past few years lead-

ing to a BA in Humanities and MA in History (Humanities/Religious Studies). Her interests include music, theater, and painting.

William Barnes • Revelation and Creation: An Expanding Field of Consciousness

The document “Who is Writing the Future?” states that the human mind has experienced a revolution in the way that it understands the physical universe. Theoretical science now admits the possibility that consciousness is intrinsic to the universe. Many names for this consciousness have been put forward, including the Zero Point Field, the Information field, the Intentional Field, even the Morphic Field. This presentation argues first, that this universal consciousness is divine Revelation, and secondly, that the scientific community is developing an understanding about the nature of the universe that brings it closer to that articulated within the Bahá’í Writings.

WILLIAM BARNES has degrees from Michigan State University. He was principal of Daystar International School in Japan and Director of Desert Rose Bahá’í Institute. He founded Creating Your Destiny which brings together science and spirituality. He is a member of International Educational Initiatives and the Center for Global Integrated Education.

Trip Barthel • Golden Choices: A Spiritual Guide to Practical Decisions (see Fattakhov for abstract)

Trip Barthel • 1992 and the Lesser Peace

In a 2005 publication, *Peace and Conflict*, the University of Maryland’s Center for International Development and Conflict Management identified 1992 as a turning point for international conflict. Every indicator they tracked started a significant downturn toward reducing the overall level of conflict in the world. This

was also true for a number of other monitoring institutions. This session will consider world events, these indices, and the movement toward the Lesser Peace.

TRIP BARTHEL is the Founder and Executive Director of the Neighborhood Mediation Center in Reno, Nevada. Trip, inspired by ZIPoPo, started the Golden Choices program, in which virtues and the Golden Rule are used to teach the skills of conflict resolution.

Sandra J. Bean • The Dichotomy of HIV/AIDS Policy and Practice in China

The Bahá’í International community addressed the 2001 UN General Special Session on HIV and AIDS: “The relationship between the AIDS pandemic and gender inequality is gaining recognition globally.” The scientific literature indicates an increase in HIV incidence among women in China. In 1999, under 10% of Chinese infected with HIV were women, but by 2004, it was over 40%. This qualitative research examined the HIV counseling experience for commercial sex workers in a suburb of Chengdu, Sichuan, China—to determine how women wish to be approached for counseling. The Bahá’í approach of compassionate education is an applicable model for China.

SANDRA J. BEAN, MPH, researched HIV in the People’s Republic of China in June 2005. She hopes to return to China, where she lived 1995-2000, to apply her learning to public health and the education of women and girls.

Paul Ives Blair • Daily Responsibilities: An Examination of the Bahá’í lifestyle

By increasing our focus on our daily responsibilities, we naturally increase the time and effort we put into the Faith. And through greater understanding of not just what things we must do, but also why, we unlock further

understanding of the role that religion plays in our daily lives. This presentation will gather from the Writings those things that each of us has been called to do each day, and together we will examine the implications of such duties on the individual and society.

PAUL IVES BLAIR is a fifth generation Bahá'í raised in the Pacific Northwest. Paul has been attending Bahá'í schools, conferences and retreats since age five; this is his first time presenting.

Elizabeth Bowen • Spirituality and Ethics in Medicine and Public Health

Nine open consultations were held in North America this last decade on Bahá'í perspectives on spiritual and ethical issues arising within the practice of medicine and global public health. Dr. David S. Ruhe initiated this institute-like process for physicians, medical students and residents to consult on the Bahá'í Writings and ongoing guidance of the Universal House of Justice. This session reviews this process, share recent guidance, and introduces the open consultation of the business meeting on the way forward as a special interest group.

ELIZABETH BOWEN, MD, EdD, serves as an Assistant Professor of Community Health and Preventive Medicine at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia. She has participated in many United Nations and World Health Organization conferences.

Theodore R. Breton • Capitalism's Relationship to World Poverty

In *Century of Light* the Universal House of Justice observes, “Tragically, what Bahá'ís see in present-day society is unbridled exploitation of the masses of humanity by greed that excuses

itself as the operation of “impersonal market forces.” This paper examines the relationship between capitalism and world poverty. Current theories of economic growth are found to be invalid. Laissez-faire capitalism alone is found to exacerbate existing, politically-determined levels of income inequality. Education of the poor by the rich or by the state is shown to be a prerequisite if capitalism is to raise workers from poverty over time.

THEODORE R. BRETON is currently the Chief Economist at Pace Global Energy Systems. He has over 30 years of experience in Peace Corps, government, academia, and consulting. In 2003 he completed a PhD in Economics at George Mason University, with a dissertation that analyzed the causes of world poverty.

Kenneth Cabot • In Search of Diversity: Applying Principles of Cluster Creation to Public Education Reform

The New Jersey Constitution not only prohibits school segregation, but also affirmatively requires that children be afforded the opportunity to study in a diverse classroom. Despite being a leading proponent of legal reform to effectuate this goal, New Jersey remains one of the most segregated states in terms of public education. It is at this intersection of principle and practice that Bahá'í community models can offer assistance. This study examines the opportunities and challenges of using the clustering criteria, as defined by the Universal House of Justice, as an alternative to historically political or racial models of school districting.

KENNETH CABOT is a third year student at Rutgers School of Law (Newark) and a Masters candidate at the Rutgers Center for Global Change and Governance. He is also the writer of several short documentary films, including the award-winning “A Play for Mona” based on the story of Mona Mahmudnizhad.

Terry Cassiday • Religion Publishing for the Trade: The American Market, What Consumers Are Reading, and Opportunities for Bahá'í Scholars (see Minnerly for abstract)

TERRY CASSIDAY is senior editor and director of acquisitions at the US Bahá'í Publishing Trust, which she joined in 1987. During her tenure at the Trust she has been involved in the editorial work of virtually all of its publications.

Druzelle Cederquist • Creating Connection: A Paradigm for Developing Bahá'í Artists and Their Arts

What does a path of service for a Bahá'í artist look like at this time? Explore a paradigm for sustained creative development and the reasons for its vital importance at this critical juncture. How does a Bahá'í artist in any medium create connection between Bahá'í experience with the Creative Word of God and a searching humanity? How does a systematic approach to the development of artist and craft relate to this purpose? How might such an approach operate? What kind of response from Bahá'í community is an authentic and practical help to the artist's development?

DRUZELLE CEDERQUIST is author of *The Story of Bahá'u'lláh: Promised One of All Religions*. Her poetry has appeared in the journal *World Order* and her arts blog is found at luminousrealities.blogspot.com. She has a BA in English Literature, an MA concentration in TESOL, and training as a writing workshop leader.

Hossain Danesh • From a “Nominal Civilization” to a “Genuine Civilization of Character”: The Future of Universities, a Bahá'í perspective (see Mocquais for abstract)

HOSSAIN DANESH, MD, is President of Education for Peace International. He was president

of Landegg International University, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada, Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Ottawa, and a founding member of ABS

Roshan Danesh • Church and State in the Bahá'í Faith: Questions, Controversies, and Approaches

In recent years there have been increasing academic and lay discussions of “church and state” in the Bahá'í Faith. This presentation will examine the emergence of these discussions, the main themes and issues which are being explored, and the understandings which are developing. In particular, the presentation will contrast approaches which strive to uncover within the Bahá'í writings a particular institutional and constitutional structure and pattern which governs the relationship between religious and civil institutions, with those that emphasize a more open, multi-faceted, contingent, and contextual understanding.

ROSHAN DANESH works, teaches, and researches in the areas of law and religion, constitutional law, and conflict resolution. Roshan completed his doctoral studies at Harvard Law School, and was the former Chair of the Department of Conflict Resolution at Landegg International University.

John Richard Davidson • Plato, the Triune Brain, and the Five Aspects of Spirit: an Analogy for Deepening on the Bahá'í Cause

This presentation proposes a framework in which students can arrive at a more profound understanding of the themes of unity/disunity, submission to the divine will, and a revision of human nature in the Holy Writings. The paper outlines how Plato's monster/lion/king paradigm and the Triune brain theory are informed, corrected, and expanded by the Five Aspects of

Spirit and the Bahá'í teachings. It organizes and integrates the teachings as approaches to three main areas: the desires, appetites, or problem of evil; the emotions, passions, or principle of heart; and the mind, intellect, or conduct of the learned.

JOHN DAVIDSON is a second-degree student of Secondary Education in English at Central Michigan University. He holds a BA in Literature from Purdue where he also minored in Philosophy and Anthropology. John has studied the world's religions for ten years and is interested in the relationship between literature and psychology.

David Diehl • Young Scholars Panel (see Maghzi-Ali for abstract)

David Diehl and Ron Shigeta • How Religion Became Cool: Spiritual Currents in North America

Americans are increasingly seeking new religious experiences that meet the demands of their changing lives. Many religious communities have proven innovative in adapting to these new needs, resulting in dramatic growth. We look at two examples in contemporary American Christianity: The move toward “practical spirituality”, with its emphasis on the applications of religion to daily life, from the home to the workplace, and the proliferation of “small groups”, a strategy that has proven highly effective in balancing large-scale growth with members' desire for intimacy and relationships.

DAVID DIEHL is a doctoral student in the sociology of education at Stanford University.

Payman Dehghani • From Homer to Whitman: Laying the Poetic Foundation for the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh

This presentation is a historical examination of different works of literature in the context of divine inspiration and how they have laid the foundation for the coming of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation. This will be accomplished by drawing on the allusions made by literal pieces to concurrent religious dispensations and by studying how these famous pieces culminated in foreshadowing the Bahá'í dispensation.

PAYMAN DEHGHANI just completed his second year of medical school at the University of British Columbia, after completing a double major in Psychology and Biology. Payman has experience in scriptwriting, poetry and drama, and wishes to pursue this passion more extensively after completing his medical training.

Paula A. Drewek • Transforming a College Climate Through Diversity Initiatives

From crafting a vision statement consonant with Bahá'í values of justice, equity and fairness to creating a five-year plan for the transformation of college infrastructure and programs, the process focus of Macomb Community College offers a model of building a multicultural community in all aspects of college life. The planning process focused on four arenas of community college life—curriculum development, staff development, student services and community outreach – and involved a collaborative approach among the many segments of the college community. The presentation aims to engage the experiences of others in achieving a multicultural community through the application of Bahá'í principles.

PAULA DREWEK, PhD, is a retired professor of Humanities and Religious Studies at Macomb Community College and presently serves as Coordinator of Macomb's Multicultural and International Initiatives Program. Her recent work involves interfaith dialogue in various settings and a Fulbright GPA grant studying religions in China in summer of 2005.

Rachel Enslow • Young Scholars Panel (see Maghzi-Ali for abstract)

Rachel transferred to Stanford University with much encouragement and recently graduated with a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering. She has served as an Assistant and an Area Coordinator. China has been a focus throughout her education and she is looking forward to moving back there in September.

Nousha Etemad • Redefining Success: Applying Spiritual Values in Business

In today's "trust-starved climate" the traditional focus on maximized profit has resulted in ethics breaches, a lack of meaning in work performed, as well as a deep disconnect from values and the greater needs of society. This has resulted in businesses being judged on more than their financial performance. Leaders in the corporate world are now feeling the need to redefine success for their organizations. This workshop will offer an exploration of how the practical application of principles outlined in the Bahá'í Writings can enable business leaders, entrepreneurs, managers and employees to develop a more successful enterprise.

NOUSHA ETEMAD is a Manager at Deloitte Consulting in Toronto. Her educational background is in Mathematics and Mechanical Engineering.

Shamil Fattakhov and Trip Barthel • Golden Choices: A Spiritual Guide to Practical Decisions

This presentation will consider the lessons learned in the ZIPoPo program, first developed in Russia to explore decision making through the virtues and principles from the world's religions and great philosophers. The program is now in 62 countries around the world, has been mentioned in a Ridván letter of the Universal

House of Justice and in several Bahá'í International Community articles. Program founder Shamil Fattakhov will present his insights from 12 years of development. Trip Barthel, from the Golden Choices Program, will present insights from the US program.

SHAMIL FATTAKHOV is the Founder and Executive Director of the Association for Creative Moral Education (ACME) in Kazan, Russia. Shamil started the ZIPoPo, an interactive performance program that helps youth and adults resolve difficult issues in a positive manner.

Stephen R. Friberg • Evolution, Intelligent Design and 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Explanations of Origins

We review the conflict between the Intelligent Design movement and the scientific community in light of the Bahá'í teachings of the unity of science and religion. Intelligent Design argues that the complexity of life proves the need to invoke a supernatural agency in scientific explanations of evolution. Opposing this, scientists argue that science is limited to natural causes, sometimes claiming this proves that life is meaningless. We argue that 'Abdu'l-Bahá explanations of origins, creation, and evolution are the basis for a successful resolution of the apparent conflict between supernatural creation and scientific explanation.

STEPHEN FRIBERG is a physicist who has done experiments in quantum optics, optical telecommunications, and photonics. A Bahá'í since 1973, he lived in Japan for eleven years before moving to Silicon Valley. He currently serves on the ABS California executive committee and as a coordinator of the ABS Science and Religion Special Interest Group.

Marie Gervais • Forbidden Dialogue: Religion and Multiculturalism in Education in Canada

This presentation emphasizes the importance of religious recognition and dialogue in true intercultural understanding for schools. It provides a brief overview of religion and schooling in Canada and shows why state and religious institutions tend to compete with each other for allegiance. Finally it portrays four individual case studies of religious experience during childhood and how these experiences trouble current assumptions about divisions between sacred and secular in education. Case studies are from Zoroastrian, Muslim, Afro-Caribbean Voodoo and Bahá'í perspectives.

MARIE GERVAIS is a doctoral candidate in Secondary Education at the University of Alberta. She has a Masters in Drama Education, researches arts-based methodology to uncover the relationship between teacher cultural identity and practice, and currently works as the educational coordinator for the Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations.

Abdu'l-Missagh Ghadirian • Science and the Soul

Science and religion have long been perceived as two solitudes separated by a wall of mistrust. Many scientists considered followers of religion to be ignorant while religious leaders saw scientists as bereft of divine mysteries. In medicine, new winds of change are blowing over the thorny field of contention between these two solitudes and there is potential for reconciliation. The presentation will include encounters between science and the soul in the classrooms of North American schools of medicine. Dialogue between young scientific minds exploring religious values in medicine is creating a new dynamic of understanding of our spiritual nature.

ABDU'L-MISSAGH GHADIRIAN, MD, a Professor at McGill University, Faculty of Medicine and an Emeritus Physician of McGill University Health Centre, is the author of over 130 articles

in scientific and academic media and nine books, including *In Search of Nirvana*, *Aging: Challenges and Opportunities* and *Environment and Psychopathology*.

Omid Ghaemmaghami • The Unquenchable Lights of Divine Guidance: Some Notes on the Station and Function of the Shí'í Imams

In the *Ithna 'Asharí* (Twelver) Shí'í *Weltanschauung*, the Imam is regarded as the manifestation of those attributes of God that are possible to manifest. Together with the Prophet Muhammad and His daughter Fatima, the Imams are believed to be impeccable and protected, and are the divine guides and proofs of God on earth. This study mainly explores the station and function of the twelve Imams vis-à-vis the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, together with the expositions of Shoghi Effendi, juxtaposing them with aspects of the Imamology of the Báb and their role in the *GEDANKENWELT* of the early leaders of the Shaykhí school.

OMID GHAEMMAGHAMI, doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto in the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, obtained his MA in Islamic Studies from Washington University in St. Louis. His current research interests include topics in Shí'a Messianism, Esotericism and Imamology; Orientalism and Subaltern Studies; Comparative Religious Phenomenology; and Arabic Language Pedagogy.

Anne Gillette • Young Scholars Panel (see Maghzi-Ali for abstract)

ANNE GILLETTE received her BA from Mt. Holyoke College, and just completed an MA in International and Development Economics at the University of San Francisco. She served for two years in the US National Spiritual Assembly's Office of External Affairs, and has

worked for the World Bank on health initiatives in Central Asia.

John Grayzel • Conscience: Reestablishing the Union of Consciousness and Religion

Philip Stokes' *Pasteur's Quadrant* raised provocative challenges to scientific research's prevailing linear paradigm of basic research to applied research to development to productions and operations. Stokes proposed a yes-no matrix, with "consideration of use" and "quest for fundamental understanding" as the axes, yielding three alternatives: pure basic research, user inspired basic research, and pure applied research. Stokes urged holistic approaches that simultaneously seek fundamental understandings and use. But his metaphor left one square empty... a void representative of presumed "other" motivations. This paper examines at that quadrant and Stokes' model through the role of science and motivations for pursuing science as projected in Bahá'í writings.

JOHN GRAYZEL, JD Stanford University, PhD University of Oregon, is an anthropologist and lawyer. He specialized in law and psychiatry, and in culture and personality studies, ethnic identity, socialization, agro-pastoral production systems and conflict mitigation. In January, he retired from the US Senior Foreign Service to assume the Bahá'í Chair at the University of Maryland.

Holly Hanson, Roxann Stafford, Rebecca Vick, and Corin Olinga Vick • Redefining Religion: a Collaborative Bahá'í Scholarship Workshop

How can Bahá'ís be so positive about the role of religion in society when religions have been seemingly responsible for wars and intractable conflicts? How do we convey the potential vitality of faith to thinking people who see religion as responsible for oppression and violence?

This highly participatory workshop seeks to apply Shoghi Effendi's definition of Bahá'í scholarship—correlating the Faith's teachings with the current thoughts and problems of the people of the world – to the question of how we, the human race, make religion into the force we need it to be.

HOLLY HANSON teaches African History at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley Massachusetts. The author of books and articles on both African history and Bahá'í perspectives on social change, she is currently researching the social history of economic exchange in Kampala, Uganda.

Reed Harvey and Steven Moses • The Inherent Moral Assumptions of an Undergraduate Study of Economics

What are the basic assumptions taught to economics students at the undergraduate level and how might they affect decision making? Economics provides the theoretical base that governments and businesses use to make appropriate decisions. If the theories don't represent the sentiments of the majority of humanity, less than desirable consequences may result. This presentation will attempt to provide a framework from which to evaluate moral assumptions, and use it to examine several common suppositions, such as self-interest theory and infinite human wants.

REED HARVEY is in his third year of undergraduate study in economics, currently attending Western Washington University. He hopes to obtain a post-graduate degree, preferably in a field dealing with development. Reed has volunteered in Ecuador and at the Bahá'í House of Worship in New Delhi, India.

Ingrid Hauck • Anatomy of the Spirit Revisited: A Bahá'í Contribution to Energy Medicine

This presentation explores the physical and metaphysical aspects of human anatomy in light of the Bahá'í teachings. It builds upon Caroline Myss' seminal work, *Anatomy of the Spirit: The Seven Stages of Power and Healing*, which outlines the body's seven centers of spiritual and physical power based on the Hindu, Jewish and Christian traditions. Discover whether Bahá'u'lláh's Seven Valleys can be correlated to the body's chakra system, thereby pointing us not only to spiritual progress, but also to physical health and well-being.

INGRID HAUCK, BA Geography, Trinity College, University of Toronto, has a lifelong interest in complementary health. She was a senior director with the Canadian government, upgraded her management skills at Queen's and Athabasca Universities, the Niagara Institute, and the Center for Creative Leadership, and is now a professional Feng Shui coach.

Camille Henderson • Achieving Racial Unity: Walking the Spiritual Path with Practical Feet

The Bahá'í Faith offers more than a vision of unity—it offers the building blocks for social justice on a global scale. In order to apply Bahá'u'lláh's vision of unity to the racial problems we face in the US, race must be examined both as a social and spiritual issue. At this point in the evolution of the Bahá'í community, we have a better grasp of race as a spiritual issue. However, to achieve racial unity, we need a practical understanding of what race is, how race works, and the work race does in society and the Bahá'í community.

CAMILLE HENDERSON, PhD, an historian, pioneered a new way of understanding race, identified the operating principles of sustainable integration, and taught classes on race in America. Now working as a consultant, she helps companies and universities to develop

and execute long-term strategic plans to meet their diversity goals.

Christian Henrichs and Nossrat Peseschkian • Are Our Education, Religions, Politics, Sciences and Psychotherapy keeping up with Current Time? (see Peseschkian for abstract)

CHRISTIAN HENRICH, Dipl.-Psych., M.Phil., P.P., is psychological psychotherapist, management trainer and coach. He is senior lecturer at the German Civil Servants Academy and board secretary at Peseschkian Foundation – International Academy for Positive Psychotherapy and Transcultural Psychotherapy. He has been working for more than 30 organisations in 9 countries.

Duane L. Herrmann • Nazi Destruction of the German Bahá'í Community

Called *glischschaltung* (all gears working together in synchronization), the Nazi goal of social engineering was to control the minds and actions of every resident of the Reich. Though the German Bahá'í community was too tiny to be any threat, it could not be controlled so it had to be suppressed. Aside from the oneness of the human race (there can be no super race), the primary Nazi objection was that Bahá'ís promoted a world federation of nations. This did not allow for Deutschland uber alles. Therefore the Bahá'í community could not exist within the Reich.

DUANNE L HERMANN has degrees in Education and History. A Bahá'í since 1969, he has published history, memoirs, poetry and fiction in twelve countries in five languages (a sixth to be added soon).

Belinda Hill • Current Research on Child Development: Bahá'í Implications

This workshop will cover current research from a variety of fields, including psychology,

cognitive science, neuroscience, speech, genetics, and early childhood education to form some possible links with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s admonitions on raising young children. The emphasis will be on how concerned parents and community members can find, evaluate and use this information.

BELINDA HILL, PhD is an Associate Professor at Saint Martin’s University where she teaches courses in Child Development, Educational Technology and Teacher Preparation. She is also involved in character education, in her local Bahá’í community and at her work where she is a member of the Catholic Benedictine Leadership Team.

Don Hoffman • The Neuroscience of Consciousness (see Skrenes for abstract)

DON HOFFMAN, PhD is a professor of Cognitive Science at UC, Irvine. His research is on “visual intelligence”, or how our brains construct our rich experience of color, motion, objects, and faces, from the two-dimensional images in our eyes. He received his PhD from MIT and has won several research and teaching awards.

Jeffery Huffines • The Search for Values in an Age of Transition

In October 2005, the Bahá’í International Community issued a statement addressed to the United Nations entitled, “The Search for Values in an Age of Transition,” on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Organization. This workshop will introduce a study guide designed to familiarize readers with the statement that addresses a number of issues currently under consideration by the United Nations as well as the ways in which the Bahá’í International Community endeavors to apply principles of the Bahá’í Faith to assist

in the resolution of the many challenging problems facing the international community.

JEFFERY HUFFINES is the United Nations Representative for the US Bahá’í Community and an adjunct professor at the Center for Global Affairs at New York University. Based in New York since 1996, he has been a leading advocate for a number of national and international coalitions related to the UN.

Sylvia Kaye • Religion and the Ethics of Reconciliation in Post-Conflicted Communities: A Southern African Perspective

Religion has the capacity to provide ethical and moral guidance as a community begins recovering from conflict and injustice. The conditions for such guidance to become a reality are conceptualized as: ability to act faithfully upon its own principles; access to a broad range of spiritual teachings; ability to apply principles within a particular context but without compromise; and willingness to seek new understanding and knowledge. This paper examines reconciliation and recovery in a southern African context, identify the major characteristics of past injustices attempt to explain why ethical guidance from religions is needed, and examine the major ethical requirements for peace set forth in the Bahá’í Writings.

SYLVIA KAYE is a lecturer in Skills Development and Adult Learning in the workplace and the community, a pioneer to Botswana and South Africa since 1970, and secretary of the ABS-SA (Southern Africa). She is involved with the integration of university and community service projects that stress ethical practices.

Janet A. Khan • Rank and Station: Reflections on the Life of Bahíyyih Khánum

This paper sets out the distinctive characteristics of the designation of rank in the Bahá’í

administrative structure, drawing upon the example of Bahíyyih Khánum, the highest-ranking woman in the Bahá'í Dispensation to illustrate its essential features. The concept of rank and its functions in society and religion as well as its implications for justice and social organization are reviewed briefly as a background against which to consider the Bahá'í perspective on rank and station, and to assess the significance of the approach adopted by Bahíyyih Khánum as a person of exalted rank. JANET KHAN, PhD has been a member of the Research Department at the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa, Israel, since 1983. She has also held academic positions at the University of Michigan and the University of Queensland, in Brisbane Australia. She served as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia from 1977-1983 and as its Chair for several years.

Peter Khan • Education, Scholarship and Global Civilization

This presentation draws on a comprehensive survey of the authoritative writings of the Bahá'í Faith to clarify its position on intellectual activity and the pursuit of secular and spiritual education. The parameters pertaining to Bahá'í scholarship are examined, and a number of possible pitfalls discussed. The relevance of education and scholarship to the foundation of global civilization is considered, and the relationship to the core activities of the Five Year Plan analyzed.

PETER KHAN, PhD, who is from Australia, has been a member of the Universal House of Justice since March 1987. Before that time he was a Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Michigan and then at the University of Queensland in Australia.

Robert Kim-Farley • Racial Disparities in Health: Striving for Equity

We stand at the threshold of a new era of challenges to health – striving for equity in health, including the elimination of racial disparities. Patterns of disease reflect the disparities in our society – locally, nationally and internationally – that are due to such factors as poverty, racial prejudices, ethnic rivalries, and inadequate compassion and action on the part of those who have the power to reduce such disparities. This paper proposes actions we can take as health care professionals, and members of our communities, to overcome such disparities in the patterns of disease in our “global village.”

ROBERT KIM-FARLEY, PhD Director, Communicable Disease Control and Prevention, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, and Professor in the School of Public Health at UCLA, served for eighteen years as Head of the World Health Organization in India and Indonesia, and Director of the WHO Immunization Program in its Geneva Headquarters.

Ian Kluge • Buddhism and the Bahá'í Faith: An Ontological Rapprochement

A religion's ontology is its theory of being, of what actually is and how things exists. Ontological analysis suggests that the Bahá'í Writings accommodate most fundamental Buddhist teachings: impermanence (*anicca*), dependent origination, non-self (*anatman*), theism, nirvana, the two truths doctrine, nirvana and *samsara* and the nature of the Buddha. On these topics the difference is one of emphasis and development, not of fundamental principle. These congruencies and convergences provide specific and concrete support for Bahá'u'lláh's teaching about the essential unity of all religions. The paper has copious references to primary and secondary literature.

IAN KLUGE is a poet, playwright, literary and philosophy scholar whose work has been published in Canada and the United States. He is a frequent presenter at the Irfan Colloquia. He

and his wife Kirsti live in Prince George, British Columbia, Canada.

Samir Koirala • The Neuroscience of Consciousness (see Skrenes for abstract)

SAMIR KOIRALA, PhD is a neuroscientist at the Children's Hospital at Harvard Medical School. Originally from Nepal, he did his PhD research on nerve regeneration at USC in Los Angeles. His current research is identifying new genes involved in the process of brain development.

Barbara Loeding • Student Perceptions and Challenges in Implementation of an Online Course for an Institution of Higher Education (see Madyarov for abstract)

BARBARA L. LOEDING, PhD is an Associate Professor at the University of South Florida in the College of Education for 17 years, has experience in developing and teaching web-based and web-enhanced courses.

Daniel B. Lord • The Multiple Nature of Commitment in Bahá'í Marriage

Religion is the irreplaceable force for establishing moral behavior, and a social manifestation of such behavior is commitment in marriage. Research in this area is limited to religious affiliation, however, and commitment alone is associated with certain undesirable consequences. The mutually covenantal conception of marriage itself is being eroded by social pressures, such as consumerism and the cult of personality. This presentation examines cultural and legal trends leading to the individualization of marriage. It also explores Bahá'í marriage within the covenantal framework as involving multiple commitments, including to the principles of equality and consultation, and eternity of the marriage bond.

DANIEL B. LORD, PhD, works at the University of Alaska Southeast, Sitka campus, and is of counsel with a law firm in Anchorage. He completed graduate degrees in psychology and education at the University of Michigan, and law degrees at the University of Iowa.

Irshat Madyarov and Barbara Loeding • Student Perceptions and Challenges in Implementation of an Online Course for an Institution of Higher Education

This presentation will discuss course implementation and student perceptions of 50 Bahá'í college students who took an online course to develop their academic English skills. Since the intent was to develop a course that did not rely on outside texts, original content was developed by a team. Taking an online course is challenging, let alone with inconsistent access to the Internet and tutors who reside in different countries. Presenters will discuss how students perceived this course at the level of course environment and organization, methodology, assessment, and student support and discuss how to overcome challenges in developing future courses.

IRSHAT MADYAROV is a doctoral student in Second Language Acquisition and Instructional Technology at the University of South Florida.

Shahla Maghzi (Chair) • Young Scholars Panel

A panel of students and recent graduates discuss challenges and opportunities for Bahá'ís in an academic environment. Substantial time will be allowed for discussion.

SHAHLA MAGHZI-ALI, PhD student, Jurisprudence and Social Policy, UC Berkeley; JD Boalt Hall; MA Consultation and Conflict Resolution, Landegg; BA International Relations and Chinese Language, Stanford, has

lived and worked in China, Israel, Siberia and the US. Her research interests include applying principle-based indicators in development and consultation in cross cultural contexts.

Saba Mahanian • Religion: Detrimental? Optional? or Required? (see Majd for abstract)

Saba Mahanian and Farjam Majd • Accident, Uncertainty, and Randomness in the Context of Complex Sustainable Systems

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s dismissal of accidental composition as cause of formation is not a categorical rejection of accidents but rather a refutation of accidents as cause of sustained and coordinated process of evolution. Randomness and unpredictability are natural indicators of complex multi-scale interactions which can neither be fully modeled within a local, finite theory nor fully observed and controlled with limited instrumental accuracy. Sustained and coordinated functionality of systems are in spite of and not because of random and unpredictable phenomena. Sustainability in the presence of unpredictability is a measure of robustness and flexibility of higher level system coordination and management.

SABA MAHANIAN, PhD, is an aerospace engineer from Stanford University specializing in control systems and biomechanics. Has taught engineering and enjoys study of history and philosophy.

Hoda Mahmoudi • The Permanence of Change: Contemporary Sociological and Bahá’í Perspectives on Modernity

This presentation examines social change and modernity through the two lenses of the Bahá’í Faith and sociology. Premised on the vital role of religion in effecting social change, it progresses in three parts. First, it examines the

socio-historical changes of the Axial Age, and the forces which brought about the Reformation and Renaissance. Second, it reviews the sociological view of modernity, tracing its contemporary challenges. Finally, it considers the Bahá’í perspective of modernity as “the universal awakening of historical consciousness”, wherein Divine Civilization is the essential impetus for advancing and transforming material civilization.

HODA MAHMOUDI, PhD heads the Research Department at the Bahá’í World Centre, was the Dean of Arts & Sciences and Professor of Sociology at Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago and Vice President and Dean of Olivet College. Her Bahá’í service includes administrative assignments, national and international appointments, and two-terms as Auxiliary Board Member for Protection.

Farjam Majd • Accident, Uncertainty, and Randomness in the Context of Complex Sustainable Systems (see Mahanian for abstract)

Farjam Majd and Saba Mahanian • Religion: Detrimental? Optional? or Required?

Questions relating to alternatives to religion are explored in view of systems theory. Human civilization is ultimately created and controlled by the intelligence of many individuals integrated at societal level. Human social relations built upon intelligence, as distinct from animal societies built upon instinct, ultimately depend on spiritual principles. Spiritual principles, unlike scientific ones, cannot be fully understood and applied by any amount of experimentation and analysis because the requisite conditions of observability and controllability are absent. Spiritual principles are understood and applied only through the infallible teachings of divine religion, making it an indispensable part of and the ultimate guide of human civilization.

FARJAM MAJD is an attorney. Formerly an engineer in the fields of software, electrical, and mechanical engineering, he enjoys study of philosophy and science.

Susan Maneck • The Covenant as Responsiveness

The concept of covenant has often focused on legitimate chains of authority and succession. I will explore the Bahá'í concept of the Covenant especially as it involves responsiveness. I begin by examining the Islamic roots of the Bahá'í concept found in the Qur'an's primordial question "Am I not your Lord?" then discuss the Báb's treatment of this theme in the Persian Bayán. Finally, I examine Bahá'u'lláh's use of this theme in texts like the Mathnavi Mubarak and the Long Healing Prayer. My intention is to examine how responsiveness ties in with the issues of authority and succession which often dominate Bahá'í discussions.

SUSAN MANECK, PhD is Associate Professor in the Department of History and Philosophy at Jackson State University. She has written numerous articles on minority conversions to the Bahá'í Faith and issues related to women in the Bahá'í community. She has also written a book on Zoroastrianism entitled *The Death of Ahri-man*.

Jack McLean • Bábí Heroism and the Recovery of the Heroic

This essay has two main purposes. First, it sets out some plausible meanings of Shoghi Effendi's reference to the Báb as a Master Hero. The description of the Báb refers to an ideal type or archetype of divine hero, the Hero-Prophet which is, in the Báb's case, synonymous with the Martyr-Prophet. The Hero-Prophet/Martyr-Prophet archetype corresponds to a certain typology of the prophetic figure of

which the Báb constitutes the sublime paradigm. Second, It invites further reflection on the heroic conduct of His slain warriors at the siege of Fort Shaykh Tabarsí (1848-49) near Bárfurúsh (now Babol), northern Iran.

JACK MCLEAN is an independent scholar, writer and poet, writing and living in Ottawa He has just completed a major study of Shoghi Effendi's writings which is forthcoming at George Ronald Publisher.

Lee Minnerly, Tim Moore, and Terry Cassidy • Religion Publishing for the Trade: The American Market, What Consumers Are Reading, and Opportunities for Bahá'í Scholars

In the United States religion trade books, or titles on religious subjects sold through retail bookstores, generated \$2.3 billion in sales in 2005. Industry analysts predict sales in the category will increase significantly over the next five years. This presentation explores some spiritual and market dynamics of religion publishing in the United States from the perspective of "Bahá'í Publishing," the trade publishing initiative of the National Spiritual Assembly and the Bahá'í Publishing Trust. Through explorations of *One Common Faith*, the present-day book market, and the spiritual dimension of Bahá'í trade publishing, new opportunities for Bahá'í scholars are suggested.

LEE MINNERLY has been general manager of the US Bahá'í Publishing Trust since 2000. In 2002, he and the Trust staff launched Bahá'í Publishing, a trade imprint of the National Spiritual Assembly. Previously he directed research and publishing programs for several large real estate organizations.

Pierre-Yves Mocquais and Hossain Danesh • From a "Nominal Civilization" to a "Genu-

ine Civilization of Character” – The Role of Universities in Building “True Civilization”

Many wonder about universities' future. The quest to identify the best universities is incessant (MacLean's classification of Canadian universities, Shanghai Jiao Tong University taxonomy of world universities). Are the right questions being asked? Is the debate on the “relevance” of programs and research addressing the real issues? The objectives of the panel workshop is threefold: to look at the condition of universities from a Bahá'í perspective; to evoke the principles in the Bahá'í Writings about the nature and role of education in building civilization and what shape universities may take; to learn from past and present undertakings at creating Bahá'í inspired universities.

PIERRE-YVES MOCQUAIS, PhD, is Professor of French Studies (University of Calgary) and Coordinator of Graduate Studies. Former Dean of Humanities, he is an Auxiliary Board member for Protection, Former Academic Director ABS, author or co-author of five books and working on two more, and Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques.

Shahrokh Monjazez • Discovering “the Mysteries of Divine Providence”

Close examination of Bahá'u'lláh's letters to the political rulers of the nineteenth century world shows that these important proclamations were in fact communicated in three distinct and separate stages over the course of six years. The presentation will explore this momentous period in Bahá'u'lláh's divine Mission by examining historical documents and contemporary accounts to provide new insights into the process and manner in which these powerful summons were carried out.

SHAHROKH MONJAZEB has been a presenter at the ABS Conference for over a decade. His writings and presentations focus primarily on

Bahá'í Sacred Text and their literary and historical significance in the context of socio-spiritual conditions of human society.

Tim Moore • Religion Publishing for the Trade: The American Market, What Consumers Are Reading, and Opportunities for Bahá'í Scholars (see Minnerly for abstract)

TIM MOORE is sales and marketing manager for Bahá'í Publishing, the trade imprint of the US Bahá'í Publishing Trust. Before joining the Trust in 2005, he was divisional sales manager and acting North American sales director for an international business consulting firm. **Steven Moses • The Inherent Moral Assumptions of an Undergraduate Study of Economics** (see Harvey for abstract)

STEVEN MOSES is an undergraduate student at Western Washington University, with interests in political science and economics. He served as a research assistant to Michael Karlberg for the project on Global Citizenship curricula, and he wrote a senior thesis on the topic.

Siamak Motahari • Portals to Spiritual Progress through Sacred Metaphor from The Seven Valleys by Bahá'u'lláh (see Thelen Steere for abstract)

SIAMAK MOTAHARI, has his BS in Civil Engineering. He works as a Senior Civil Engineer for Marin County Department of Public Works. Siamak's life-long love and study of the Persian and English languages embraces all of the Persian poets as well as the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh.

Bahman Nadimi • From Intelligent Design to Unity of Nations – Understanding Evolutionary Processes in Our Universe

Intelligent design, world peace, world unity, progressive revelation? Do you want to gain a

better understanding of these processes? Are you in need of effective tools and interesting metaphors to present these difficult subjects to your colleagues? This presentation will use metaphors and imagery from the Writings to provide a basic framework for analyzing such evolutionary processes such as evolution of species, collective security, unity of nations and world peace. The basic inter-connectivity of these phenomena, and their relation to current contemporary problems will be discussed.

BAHMAN NADIMI, MSEE, is a senior software engineer at Cisco Systems. He holds a Bachelor's degree from University of London, a Master's degree from Louisiana State University, and has also taught science and engineering at various universities. He currently lives in North Carolina with his wife and children.

Gordon Naylor • From a “Nominal Civilization” to a “Genuine Civilization of Character” – The Future of Universities – A Bahá’í Perspective (see Mocquais for abstract)

Gordon Naylor, MEd, member, National Spiritual Assembly of Canada has served as Auxiliary Board member, and pioneer to Guyana. He operates a social services company for disabled youth, is founder of Nancy Campbell Collegiate (Bahá’í inspired school) and spearheaded an application to the Government of Ontario for a Bahá’í inspired liberal arts college.

Joseph Nga • When Anger Burns the Liver: The Mind-Body Connection Versus Mainstream Therapeutics

This friendly discussion examines contacts and conflicts between holistic and mainstream medicine from a cross-cultural and Bahá’í perspective. Recent research suggests complex biochemical links between stress and the immune system. However, it’s difficult to integrate the body-mind connection into main-

stream medicine because modern medicine focuses on evidence-based drugs and surgery. Holistic medicine remains a complex and confusing proposition because practitioners come in all colors and sizes, making the practice particularly prone to charlatanism. Bahá’í Writings teach us to heal with diet, drugs and prayer, though, in reality, “He Who giveth healing is God”. We will explore options that enhance wholesome healthcare.

JOSEPH NGA is a first generation college student from the West African Nation of Cameroon. He learnt the culture of herbal medicine from his father, a traditional doctor in Cameroon. Joseph worked as a forester and earned graduate degrees in Biology and International Development Studies. He lives in Washington DC.

Salman Bashir Oksooi • Context & Consistency: Moving Towards a Universal Understanding of the Bahá’í Teachings

Within the Bahá’í Writings, as with every religion, there appear ambiguities which have been the cause for debate both within and without the Bahá’í community. Examples of topics that are especially contentious for the above reason are: Evolution and Creation, Fate and Free Will, Relying on Spiritual Faculties vs. Intellectual Faculties. The importance of bringing together all relevant passages on the more challenging topics addressed in the Bahá’í Revelation, in order to form a coherent understanding of the Faith, is central to defending the wholeness of its principles.

SALMAN BASHIR OSKOOI is an aspiring social sciences teacher who will begin a credential program in the Fall. He has travel taught in China and Brazil, and served at the Bahá’í World Centre. While in Israel, he lived in ‘Akka and was a support custodian of the Holy Places.

Taravat Ostovar • Healing the Soul: What Counseling Psychology and the Bahá'í Faith Offer and What They Have in Common

Bahá'u'lláh states that, “the purpose of His Revelation is to create an organic unity between the inner and outer realities of man.” This presentation elucidates how Counseling Psychology connects to the Bahá'í Faith in making people more conscious of their true realities, more integrated as persons, and united inwardly and outwardly. Both counseling and the Bahá'í Faith focus on healing and guiding the soul regardless of its conditions. Orientations and trends in counseling models and theories will be reviewed and compared with Bahá'í perspectives on human reality, the human station, dignity, the power of transformation, and spiritual healing, amongst other concepts.

TARAVAT OSTOVAR is a Bahá'í pioneer in Iqaluit, Nunavut. She has a Psychology degree from UBC and is doing her Masters with the Psychiatry Department at McGill University.

Anne Gordon Perry • Spirituality Expressed through Art: Some Examples within and without the Bahá'í Faith

This presentation explores how some individual artists have drawn on religion, religious themes or ideas, and/or simply the idea of a transcendent reality. Examples include visual artists Wassily Kandinsky, Barnett Newman, Mark Rothko, and Clyfford Still; writers Denise Levertov and Flannery O'Connor; and anthroposophist Rudolf Steiner, along with Bahá'í visual artists Juliet Thompson, Mark Tobey, and Bernard Leach; writers Robert Hayden, Roger White, and Michael Fitzgerald, among others.

ANNE GORDON PERRY teaches English and Humanities at the Art Institute of Dallas. Her PhD included work on the intersection of art

and religion. She is the editor of *Orison* an arts journal affiliated with the Association for Bahá'í Studies, and has published essays, fiction, poetry, and historical biography.

Nossrat Peseschkian and Christian Henrichs • Are Our Education, Religions, Politics, Sciences and Psychotherapy keeping up with Current Time?

In earlier times the body was considered the cause of physical and mental illnesses, today segments of the environment are viewed as the responsible factors. The physical and environmental factors are themselves dependent on another dimension: the dimension of time. Concept and result: While an animal lives primarily in the present, man is able to look at the past, present, and future. If the time dimension is not given consideration, the result is fixation, resistance, and indifference. The consequences can be found in politics, religion, and science. We want to look into causes, test assumptions, and find suitable solutions.

NOSSRAT PESECHKIAN, MD, PhD, born 1933 in Iran, is a specialist in psychiatry, neurology, psychotherapeutic medicine and psychotherapy. He founded Positive Psychotherapy, which is based on a cross-cultural approach. His work focuses the investigation of the relationship between culture and mental disorders, including the analysis of cultural concepts.

David M. Piff • “Instant, Exact, and Complete”: Popular Narrative and the Ideal of Obedience in the Bahá'í Community

Obedience to Bahá'í laws and institutional guidance is an acknowledged requirement of membership but not always easy in practice. Here we explore the role of stories shared between Bahá'ís in reinforcing and nuancing the impositions of Bahá'í life. Rhetorically, these stories often reflect a progression from doubt

to certitude on the part of raconteur, reinforcing their persuasive effect. The stories may privilege good news over facts and contain miraculous elements deemed to illustrate spiritual forces at work. Such narratives could be problematic in the Bahá'í community, which presents itself as scientific in its outlook and methods.

DAVID PIFF is a Senior Records Analyst with the National Archives, Pacific Region. Previously he was modern records archivist at the Bahá'í World Centre. He has degrees in psychology and history and a PhD in Sociology from the University of Copenhagen, having written a dissertation on unofficial Bahá'í lore.

Jalaliyyih Quinn • *Saneh* (Fashioner) The Origin of the Arts

The origin of the arts has remained an unanswered question. Bahá'u'lláh proclaims “Through the mere revelation of the word ‘Fashioner,’ issuing forth from His lips and proclaiming His attribute to mankind, such power is released as can generate, through successive ages, all the manifold arts which the hands of man can produce.” This passage has a profound effect upon the artists, affirming that the Word of God is indeed the source of artistic talents. *Saneh* is a series of paintings created as a welcome home for artists of all disciplines. Two other paintings further explore the relationship between the artist and this profound truth.

JALALIYYIH QUINN, MFA University of Colorado, Boulder, has held solo exhibitions and taught extensively in the US, China and Liberia. Her paintings, which contemplate the Bahá'í writings, invite meditation on seen and unseen realities. In China, Quinn received several awards. After nineteen years abroad, Quinn returned to the US and lives in Colorado.

Neda Rafati • Spirituality and Health Outcomes

Viewing the role of spiritual and religious factors in health, from a scientific perspective, has been yielding interesting if not intriguing results. In general, studies have reported fairly consistent positive relationships between spirituality and mental health. In this presentation, spirituality and its relation to health will be discussed from a Bahá'í perspective and report on an overview of current scientific literature in addition to the Bahá'í writings on the relationship between health and spirituality.

NEDA RAFATI completed her BSc at the University of British Columbia this year. She will be pursuing her professional training in dentistry. Her undergraduate studies were focused on Biology and Health sciences. She also has been involved in cardiovascular research for the past two years.

Tuli Rode • Portals to Spiritual Progress through Sacred Metaphor from The Seven Valleys by Bahá'u'lláh (see Thelen Steere for abstract)

TULI RODE, CCHT is a Board Certified Clinical Hypnotherapist and Program Developer in the fields of Addictions and Family Therapy with the Native American Community. Of Apache descent, she has worked extensively with San Francisco Bay Area Native American women, men and children as well as a private counselor for others.

Harold Rosen • The Furutan Academy: Seeking Excellence in Studying the Bahá'í Revelation

In the spirit of the Guardian's injunction “to obtain a more adequate understanding of the significance of Bahá'u'lláh's stupendous Revelation”, and to honor the educational legacy of

the Hand of the Cause, Ali Akbar Furutan, the Furutan Academy was created. The Furutan Academy is a formal initiative that offers post-secondary courses on Bahá'í history and sacred text, welcoming fellow learners and teachers who share a sense of spiritual devotion and educational excellence. This presentation and discussion explores the rationale, achievements and aspirations of the Furutan Academy – inviting frank feedback, constructive suggestions and participation in its development.

HAROLD ROSEN is a lifelong student and teacher of world religions and philosophy, with three master's degrees in religion, philosophy and education. A Unitarian minister for 25 years, and a Bahá'í since the year 2000, he serves as a community interfaith educator in Vancouver, and a board member of the Furutan Academy (www.furutanacademy.org).

Barbara Ruys, • The Motivating Power of Beauty: A Spiritual Perspective

We talk a great deal about the spiritual evolution of humankind and the true nature of human reality. What motivates us to do the hard work to transform ourselves and humanity? Bahá'u'lláh advises us: "Observe My commandments, for the love of My beauty." Beauty is one of the months of the Bahá'í calendar, is associated with virtues such as truth and love, and is a multi-billion dollar industry. What do these varied uses of "Beauty" mean for us as we work to transform the consciousness of the planet? This short presentation is followed by focused group discussion on the motivating power of Beauty.

BARBARA RUYS, BA Art History Reed College; Masters of Architecture, Harvard University, owns Plumtree Productions, San Diego, is a registered architect in California and Washington state, adjunct instructor at the San Diego Newschool of Architecture, and has lectured on diversity and beauty in the US and abroad.

Behrooz Sabet • Secret of Divine Civilization and the Concept of Modernity

'Abdu'l-Bahá's Secret of Divine Civilization is a monumental work on social discourse. This session provides an overview of the historical and socio-cultural contexts of the text. It explores its content in light of modern intellectual discourse in Iran and traces the historical, religious, and literary origins of its references. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's definition of modernity will be examined and His references to development and social progress, Westernization, Europeanization, and detraditionalization will be analyzed. This session also introduces a progressive evolutionary view of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and his infusion of global perspective, world system, and dynamics of civilization to the discourse on modernity.

BEHROOZ SABET received his Doctor of Education in 1987, has studied philosophy and economics, been a university professor, international lecturer and education consultant, written extensively on educational, philosophical, and social themes, worked with Iranian Bahá'í higher education initiatives, and has contributed to Payam-e-Doost radio for four years. He was Academic Dean of Landegg International University.

David R. Smith • Reflections on the Mind of the Physician

Implicit in the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh is transformation and as such transformation must also be expected in the physician. The object of this presentation is to look at some of the Words and concepts that would surely seem to have a transforming effect on the physician when given due consideration. Some themes which will be considered are the role of the mind, knowledge as a gift, the role of intellectual investigation and research, religion as a promoter of truth and from 'Abdu'l-Bahá – the qualifications required of the physician.

DAVID SMITH, MD, CM., FRCSC, serves on the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada, is an Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Toronto and a specialist in pediatric ophthalmology and adult strabismus surgery. He is married with three married sons and nine grandchildren and holds a 6th degree black belt in karate

Justice St. Rain • The Community Model of Consciousness

The maturation of the human race implies more than simply the “evolution of spiritual civilization” or the “awakening of global consciousness.” It promises the transformation of consciousness itself. The nature and mechanism of this transformation is best understood using “community” as a model for individual consciousness. We can visualize individual identity as a community of thoughts, ideas, experiences, memories and feelings that exist only in relationship to one another. Mental health is the result of a spiritually unified “inner community” and is achieved through the same Bahá’í principles that will guide the evolution of society as a whole.

JUSTICE ST. RAIN is the owner of Special Ideas, an independent Bahá’í Publishing company celebrating its twenty-fifth year. He is the author of several books, including: *Falling Into Grace, My Bahá’í Faith, Why Me – A Spiritual Guide to Growing Through Tests, The Secret of Happiness, and One Light – Many Lamps.*

Ron Shigeta • How Religion Became Cool: Spiritual Currents in North America (see Diehl for abstract)

Ron Shigeta • An Open-Source Curriculum for Marriage Education (see Weiczorek for abstract)

Ron Shigeta • The Selfish Gene @ 30

After 30 years, “The Selfish Gene” stands as the origin of a new way of thinking whose other advocates include E.O. Wilson and a generation of new scientists and thinkers who are transforming society. At the same time the book is in many ways the first shot fired in the culture wars which have expanded to media, art and eventually politics as well as the law. In this talk we will meditate upon the 30 year legacy of Dawkins book its lessons and value to us all as well as what it may or may not say about religion.

RON SHIGETA, PhD, is a scientist for a Bay Area Biotechnology company.

Carol Skrenes, Samir Koirala, Don Hoffman, and Faraneh Vargha-Khadem • The Neuroscience of Consciousness

These are exciting times for scientific research on consciousness, and on the connection between mind and brain in general. With new technologies and greater understanding of how the brain works, neuroscience is now tackling complex questions impinging on the realm of the spiritual: What is the nature of consciousness? How does the brain generate conscious experience? How do elements of consciousness develop during infancy? Four presentations from experts will address such questions, discussing the latest scientific knowledge, but also the limits of a purely physical understanding. They will also offer perspectives from religious thought, principally from the Bahá’í Writings, that enrich our growing understanding of consciousness.

CAROL SKRENES has a PhD in religion from Claremont Graduate University and in Philosophy of Science from UC, Irvine. Her extensive teaching experience has included interdisciplinary neuroscience courses taught together with philosophers, neuroscientists and

neurologists. She has a broad interest in cognitive neuroscience, and currently teaches at UC, Irvine.

Roxann Stafford • Redefining Religion: a Collaborative Bahá'í Scholarship Workshop
(see Hanson for abstract)

ROXANN STAFFORD received a BS in Product Design from Stanford University and was active in running the Haas Center for Public Service. She currently works as Senior Associate at Jump Associates, a design strategy company which helps companies find new opportunities for growth through understanding and reconnecting to human needs.

John Steere • Bringing Heaven Home – Parallels of Ministry of Bahá'u'lláh and Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas

The author examines the remarkable parallels of the consciousness and teachings of Bahá'u'lláh with those of Christ in the Gospel of Thomas and their significance in today's diversifying ecumenical environment. Thomas's Jesus speaks in curious and paradoxical parables that are reminiscent of the Hidden Words in content and intent. Why the Thomas Gospel remains obscure will also be explored. Bahá'u'lláh's ministry serves to flesh out and fully realize the outlines presented by that of Jesus in Thomas, and their comparative study provides a portrait of divine prophecy that brings heaven home and into the hearts of those seeking God.

JOHN STEERE is an environmental planner who works as a consultant and serves on several environmental/community non-profit boards, as well as on the ABS California Committee. He is the co-author of *Restoring the Estuary*. He holds a BA from Harvard College and a joint Masters in City Planning and Landscape Architecture from UC Berkeley.

Peter Terry • The Infallibility of the Universal House of Justice: A Bahá'í Dialogue

This session presents a dialogue with Dr. Udo Schaefer's approach to the infallibility of the Universal House of Justice, based on selections from the authoritative Bahá'í source texts and a critical examination of the role of this unique institution. This dialogue has been several years in the making, resulting from email conversations with Dr. Schaefer, Brent Poirier and others, and study of the pertinent literature, from historical, philological and legal perspectives. The implications of alternate understandings of the infallibility of the Universal House of Justice are explored in a philosophical manner, with no pretensions to finality.

PETER TERRY has written many academic papers related to the Bahá'í Faith, studied Islam at University of Chicago, Vocal Music at Oberlin and San Francisco Conservatories of Music, and Elementary Education at the Universities of Southern Maine and Massachusetts. He is a freelance singer, teacher, writer and editor, and is program coordinator for a tutoring agency.

Michelle Thelen-Steere, Tuli Rode and Siamak Motahari • Portals to Spiritual Progress through Sacred Metaphor from The Seven Valleys by Bahá'u'lláh

The presenters develop the concept of sacred metaphor within The Seven Valleys. Their thesis explores the manner in which metaphor transports the individual like a bridge from the known to the unknown, thus connecting the numinous knowledge within the Valley metaphors to everyday existence, and further demonstrate possible ways to maintain this essential link in the evolving continuum of one's spiritual life. The presenters intend to conduct an experiential group. It will focus on one exercise developed out of the Seven Valleys Process a.k.a. The Seven Valleys Spirit Walk as inspired by the sacred Text.

MICHELLE THELEN-STEERE, MA, CHT., holds a Master's Degree in Clinical Counseling, a Bachelor's in Education and Spanish Literature and is a Certified Hypnotherapist. Her specializations have been: cross-cultural, women's, disability, and childhood and adult abuse issues. She maintains a private practice in Berkeley where she specializes in Bahá'í issues.

Phillip Tussing • The Word: Transformation Through Devotions with reference to Neuro-Linguistic Programming

John Hatcher's "Life as Metaphor" is the starting point of a discussion of the unity of spiritual and material reality, and the primacy of spiritual reality. There is an overview of relevant aspects of neuro-linguistic programming, and the discussion moves to the transformative power which prayer, meditation and spiritual healing have on the human psyche.

PHILLIP TUSSING, BA Study of Religion (Islam), Harvard, MA Arab Studies, Georgetown, has done a small-scale financial institutions project for the UN Bahá'í Representative Office, written on Bahá'í Devotions, with suggested activities and on 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Dublin, and is a founding member of Wellness International Network, a Bahá'í web-group.

Faraneh Vargha-Khadem • The Neuroscience of Consciousness (see Skrenes for abstract)

FARANEH VARGHA-KHADEM, PhD is Head of the Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience Unit at University College London. Her groundbreaking academic and clinical research of over 20 years has explored the cognitive deficits of brain-injured children as well as the development of language and memory. She is the recipient of numerous international research awards.

Corin Vick • Redefining Religion: a Collaborative Bahá'í Scholarship Workshop (see Hanson for abstract)

CORIN OLINGA VICK studied economics and political science at the University of Florida. He is currently relocating to Gainesville Florida where he hopes to complete a novel about religion and society.

Rebecca Vick • Redefining Religion: a Collaborative Bahá'í Scholarship Workshop (see Hanson for abstract)

REBECCA VICK is a classroom counselor for severely emotionally disturbed children at Longwood Elementary School in Heyward, California, with plans for graduate study in the not-too-distant future. Her research on the academic self-regulation strategies of low-income, ethnic minority adolescents is under review with *The Journal of Adolescence*.

David T. Wellman • The Source of Who We Are: Reflections on the Harmony of Science and Religion

Viewed in depth, surprising similarities between science and religion become apparent. These include a common origin in the phenomenon of intelligence, and extend to the virtues essential to the beneficial experience of each. The Bahá'í principle of the harmony of science and religion defines the relationship of the rational soul to the universe, and challenges our conceptions of both. In meeting this challenge, a profound understanding of the nature of humanity emerges, generating the "great unifying, cleansing force" that, according to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "will sweep before it all wars, disagreements, discords and struggles."

DAVE WELLMAN is retired from high school science teaching in rural Alaska. Reflection on evocative implications of the principle of the harmony of science and religion has been inspired by Bahá'í Writings, the concept of sci-

entific integrity, and challenges arising from encounters with young minds.

Joy Weiczorek and Ron Shigeta • An Open-Source Curriculum for Marriage Education

“Relationship education” curricula have become available which are clinically shown to reduce participant divorce rate, far more effectively than therapy at an end stage. The best-established courses do not fit well for the Bahá’í Community, whose limited funds for training and broad geographical distribution outside the United States preclude the adoption of these courses in the wider Bahá’í Community. Our open-source curriculum is developed from publicly available research literature, focusing on consultation, cultural and temperamental differences. We will review the available courses, and present some of our newly assembled curriculum.

JOY WIECZOREK is a media consultant and videographer in the San Francisco Bay area.

William Silva • Young Scholars Panel (see Maghzi-Ali for abstract)

WILLIAM SILVA, Master’s student, University of San Francisco, International and Multicultural Education program, has served on the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of San Francisco for the last three years. He is currently Senior Vice-President at the Shemano Group, an investment banking firm, dealing primarily with financing early stage growth companies.

Nazanin Zargarpour • Learning to Grow: Education and the Five Year Plan

This workshop explores the growth processes that comprise the “framework for action” in the Five Year Plan. Utilizing the December 2005

letters of the Universal House of Justice, participants will engage in activities to identify the elements, processes, approaches, and methods that characterize this framework. Examples from case studies of successful efforts in public schools toward continuous improvement will be offered to demonstrate the application of similar growth processes and themes in Education, themes such as leadership, accountability, data use, individual initiative, collaboration, and action research. Participants will dialogue about how these themes might apply to their communities and clusters.

NAZANIN ZARGARPOUR, PhD, serves as Executive Director of Claremont Graduate University’s Institute at Indian Hill, an educational agency committed to integrating responsible scholarship and best practices in serving the continuous improvement of school systems. Her work is informed by Bahá’í service, experience as district administrator, and her award-winning doctoral research.

Missagh Ziaei • ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as Teacher of the Cause: An Overview

The power of utterance preceded by an upright and praiseworthy character is the secret of the most successful teachers of the Cause. These twin forces are most effective when disciplined by the dictates of wisdom. In His public and private appearances in both the East and the West, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá championed the use of these two forces and exemplified an effective style for both contemporary and future Bahá’í teachers. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá demonstrated wisdom by His keen sense of time, place, and His audience, as well as by the universality of His message and His uncompromising attitude in championing Bahá’u’lláh’s Faith.

MISSAGH ZIAEI is pursuing a Master’s degree in Physiology from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada. He thoroughly enjoys music, poetry, core activities, Bahá’í history,

learning Arabic and Persian to read untranslated Writings, and study of Bahá'í teachings on a variety of topics such as mysticism, medicine, and extraterrestrials.

Artists Performing

VARGHA DAVARI, Modern Persian

JOHN DAVEY-HATCHER has been a first tenor with the San Francisco Opera for six seasons. He is Music Director of the award winning Adda Clevenger Junior Youth Chorus of San Francisco. He was featured as a soloist with many opera companies and symphonies throughout the US and Canada, including; San Francisco Lyric Opera, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, Tennessee Valley Orchestra, Phoenix Symphony, Phoenix Bach Choir.

CHRIS FRENCH, Jazz

RED GRAMMER is one of the premier entertainers of children and families in America and his music delights young and old around the world. Described by *Parent's Magazine* as "the best voice in children's music" Red has set the standard for writing and performing music that playfully reconnects each one of us with the best in ourselves.

DEVON GUNDRY www.devongundry.com is a singer/songwriter/entrepreneur living in Los Angeles. In addition to releasing, "At the Top of My Lungs," selections from the Bahá'í Writings set to music, Devon has spent the last year developing gohuman.com, an Internet marketplace for hiring and offering local services.

EMAN ISADIAR, Classical Piano

VIC SALVO is an alumnus and former faculty member of Boston's the Berklee College of

Music. He has taught piano, band and classroom music from elementary to college level for 30 years, has composed over 200 compositions, many of which have been performed in Europe and the United States.

KELLY SNOOK PHD is a producer, musician, and astrophysicist currently living in Washington, DC. She works at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center by day, where she plans future missions to Mars. Nights and weekends she can be found in her recording/mixing studio, It's Not Rocket Science Studios.

Conference Organization

Conference Task Force Michael Karlberg, Mehran Kiai, Kim Naqvi, Parvin Rowhani, Matt Weinberg
Conference Coordinator Parvin Rowhani
Arts Program John Davey Hatcher
Children's and Junior Youth Program Greg Weiler
Devotions Anne Perry
Logistics Larry Curtis
Photography Courosh Mehanian and Edmund Drozek
Program Kim Naqvi and Michael Karlberg
Public Relations/Publicity Sherna Deamer
Registration Nilufar Gordon
Security and Ushers Anoosh Nikubonyad
Stage Manager Richard Dearborn
Technical Director Geoff Cohen
Treasurer Mehran Kiai
Volunteers Luisa Priddy

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With special thanks to the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of San Francisco

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