

# ABS Bulletin

A PUBLICATION OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR BAHÁ'Í STUDIES—NORTH AMERICA

## Announcing the ABS 2017 Annual Conference

The 41st annual ABS conference is being held in Orange County, California, August 10-13, 2017 at the Hyatt Regency hotel in Garden Grove.

The conference is open to all who are interested in exploring the implications of the Bahá'í teachings for a variety of disciplines, professions and fields of inquiry.

### Conference Statment

Since the establishment of the Association for Bahá'í Studies more than 40 years ago, it has existed to enrich the intellectual life of its participants and of the Bahá'í community. The annual conference is one way in which the Association brings together a growing number of participants to explore the implications of the Bahá'í teachings for a variety of disciplines, professions, and fields of inquiry. Our common purpose is to examine the ideas, concepts, and theories operating within the scholarly and professional disciplines, and to pursue knowledge that is associated with an evolving tradition of Bahá'í thought.

With this purpose in mind, the conference serves as a venue in which fresh approaches can be taken to generate and apply knowledge related to various disciplines and fields of study. Participants are invited to consider how they can play a role in working with others “to earnestly strive to reflect on the implications that the



Dana Point (Photo Courtesy Tourism Orange County)

truths found in the Revelation may hold for their work.”<sup>1</sup> Plenary sessions help to raise our vision and frame our thinking, and breakout sessions create spaces where specialized presentations and discussion can proceed. Across these different settings participants will discover new ideas and begin to explore collaborative enterprises that will extend new lines of inquiry. We hope that the format and spirit of the conference will be conducive to participation so that all can see themselves as actively engaged in a vibrant, inclusive, and uplifting process of learning.

<sup>1</sup> The Universal House of Justice, Letter to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada, 24 July 2013.

### Call for Breakout Session Proposals

**The deadline for submission of proposals is 1 April 2017**

The Association for Bahá'í Studies welcomes proposals for presentations in breakout sessions focusing on any subject of Bahá'í scholarship. The goal of the breakout sessions is to stimulate

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and promote intellectual inquiry across a broad range of themes. Proposals from all disciplines and professions are welcome, including the sciences, humanities, and fine arts. The format for breakout sessions lends itself to sharing works-in-progress as well as formal research findings. Breakout sessions are intended for the presentation and discussion of original work, as distinct from practical workshops or facilitated discussions that can be found in other community gatherings. They do not need to follow the format of a traditional academic presentation, but presenters should be well-grounded conference program.

Owing to practical constraints, the selection committee cannot accept all proposals. The selection committee will approve proposals on the basis of the following considerations: contribution to knowledge, suitability of the topic for the ABS conference, relevant background of the speaker to address the topic, clarity of the proposal, overall variety of the program, and overall diversity of the presenters. Youth, young adults, and first-time presenters are particularly encouraged to apply.

## Registration and Hotel Information

Conference registration and hotel information are available on the ABS website: <http://bahai-studies.ca/upcoming-conference/>

For further inquiries, please contact the Association for Bahá'í Studies, 34 Copernicus St., Ottawa, ON, Canada K1N 7K4; tel.: 613-233-1903 or e-mail: <[abs-na@bahai-studies.ca](mailto:abs-na@bahai-studies.ca)>.

Hotel reservations must be made directly with the conference hotel, Hyatt Regency Orange County, 11999 Harbor Blvd., Garden Grove, CA 92840. To book your room, please call the Reservations Department at 888-421-1442 and refer to the group name "Association for Bahá'í Studies Conference."

You can also book online at: <https://aws.passkey.com/go/BAHAI217>. Room rates are \$139.00 single/double, and \$159 triple/quad occupancy. These rates are guaranteed only until Wednesday, July 26, 2017. Reservations made after the cut-off dates will be based on availability at the Hotel's prevailing rates. The conference rates are extended to three days before and after the conference dates based on availability.



*Workshop Participants*

## Message from the Executive Committee Important Changes — Participation in the Association for Bahá'í Studies

Dear Friends,

The Executive Committee of the Association for Bahá'í Studies has been considering ways to make its conferences, seminars, publications, working groups, webinars, and related initiatives accessible to as many people as possible. To this end, we wish to share with you a number of new arrangements that are being put in place:

(1) Starting with the next issue, The Journal of Bahá'í Studies will move to an online publication model. All issues will be freely and immediately available on the ABS website, <[www.bahai-studies.ca](http://www.bahai-studies.ca)>. For those wishing to receive a print copy of the Journal, subscriptions are available at a cost determined by print-on-demand and shipping fees. If you wish to subscribe to a print copy of the Journal, currently published three times per year, please return by mail the enclosed subscription form or submit it online at <<http://bahai-studies.ca/subscription/>>.

(2) The concept of “membership” in the Association has been set aside. Membership fees, both one- and three-year, have been discontinued as of January 1, 2017.

(3) All annual conference attendees will pay the same registration fee, which for 2017 will be the same as last year’s “non-member” registration fee. Those who have paid a three-year membership fee will receive a conference registration discount for the remainder of their fee period; friends who paid a life membership fee will receive this discount indefinitely. Discounts for early registration, students, seniors, unwaged, and families will be continued.

(4) ABS will continue to maintain a database of the names and contact information for all who participate in ABS initiatives, in order to provide all participants with the *ABS Bulletin* and other information regarding ABS activities via email.

Making every issue of the Journal immediately available online to all will greatly increase the accessibility of Journal articles and invite wider participation in scholarly exchange. For example, it will enable the articles to be immediately indexed and available through search engines such as Google Scholar. Moreover, saving the cost of printing and mailing will free up funds to support new initiatives. By setting aside the concept of membership, we are inviting broad participation in the increasingly varied spaces and initiatives of the Association, without distinction regarding membership status.

Your support for the Association to date, not only financially but through active engagement in its programs, has laid a firm foundation for the continuing evolution of ABS as it strives to realize the vision described in the 24 July 2013 guidance of the Universal House of Justice <[http://bahai-studies.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/UHJ\\_2013-07-241.pdf](http://bahai-studies.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/UHJ_2013-07-241.pdf)>.. We look forward to your continued participation in any and all ABS endeavors, such as the annual conference, seminars, publications, working groups, and webinars. The Association is eager to support all those who “seek to excel in scholarly activity” and “strive to reflect on the implications that the truths found in the Revelation may hold” for their academic and professional fields.

With warm regards,

Association for Bahá'í Studies Executive Committee  
Julia Berger, Secretary



# 2017 Call for Nominations

## ABS Awards for Distinguished Scholarship

### Terms of Reference

The Association for Bahá'í Studies – North America (ABS) Endowment Fund was established in 2007 by anonymous donors. The purpose of the endowment is to recognize contributions to Bahá'í scholarship. All fields of Bahá'í scholarship may be considered for this award but, in accordance with the terms of this endowment, preference will be given to scholarly work that correlates the Bahá'í teachings with contemporary issues. The award is intended to stimulate and encourage research in Bahá'í studies.

Awards are made on the basis of demonstrated excellence in generating Bahá'í scholarship and the names of the recipients will be announced at the Annual Conference of the Association. Both awards have an associated monetary value determined annually by the Executive Committee of the Association for Bahá'í Studies.

- The first award will recognize the publication of a major study that advances our collective understanding of the Bahá'í teachings and, where appropriate, that correlates Bahá'í teachings to contemporary issues. Books must have already been published (no earlier than 2012) or been accepted for publication. In the latter case a letter from the publisher is required attesting that the book has been accepted and giving an expected date of publication. This award will be designated as the Association for Bahá'í Studies – North America Award for Distinguished Scholarship, Book Category (ABS Book Award)

- The second award will recognize the work of a graduate student who has recently completed a graduate thesis. The student will already have graduated or his/her thesis been accepted for graduation. In the latter case, a letter from the supervisor or the person responsible for Graduate Studies is required attesting that the thesis has been accepted and indicating the date of graduation. This award will be designated as the Association for Bahá'í Studies – North America Award for Distinguished Scholarship, Graduate Thesis Category (ABS Thesis Award)

In both cases, while at levels necessarily different, the works being considered for the awards will represent significant contributions to knowledge in the field of Bahá'í Studies.

Awards will be adjudicated by the Awards Adjudication Committee appointed by the Executive Committee of the Association for Bahá'í Studies. The Executive Committee will review and approve the recommendation of the Adjudication Committee.

### Calls For Nominations

The Association for Bahá'í Studies invites nominations for each of the two awards, the ABS Book Award and the ABS Thesis Award.

All nominations will provide the following documentation:

- A cover letter outlining the reasons for making the nomination. The cover letter should not be more than two pages long.
- A copy of the published book or of the bound thesis

- In the case of a book having not yet been published but having been accepted for publication, a letter from the publisher confirming that the book has been accepted for publication and indicating the date of publication

- In the case of a graduate student having yet to graduate but his/her thesis having been accepted for graduation, a letter from the supervisor or from the person responsible for Graduate Studies attesting that the thesis has been accepted and indicating the date of graduation.

- A resume of the nominee's curriculum vitae stressing both salient academic and service activities. The resume should not be more than one page.

Nominations with accompanying documentation should be sent to Association for Bahá'í Studies – North America, 34 Copernicus Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1N 7K4. Nominations can be emailed to [abs-na@bahai-studies.ca](mailto:abs-na@bahai-studies.ca) or faxed to 613-233-3644 with supporting documents to follow by regular mail or courier. Nominations should be received by **15 March 2017**. Please note that no material will be returned to the person or persons submitting the nomination.

The names of the recipients will be announced at the annual conference of the Association for Bahá'í Studies being held August 10-13, 2017 at the Hyatt Regency Orange County, California. Recipients attending the conference will be presented with the awards during the conference.

# The Journal of Bahá'í Studies

## Online Book Review Repository

In 2014 the Association for Bahá'í Studies announced that it would be transitioning from the publication of book reviews in the print version of the *Journal of Bahá'í Studies* to online publication. One of the main goals in making that transition was to provide a space and format in which an increasing number of book reviews could be presented in a wide diversity of formats and in a more timely manner, while supplemented by additional commentary that can link together the ideas or themes that demonstrate the growth of the study and publication of works about the Bahá'í Faith.

In establishing this Online Book Review Repository, the Association for Bahá'í Studies hopes that, over time, this web site will become an increasingly valuable resource which chronicles development of scholarship about the Bahá'í Faith, as well as a window into how the Baha'i Faith is seeking to inform and participate in the social discourses regarding the challenges facing humanity.

**Check out the latest postings of book reviews on the ABS Online Book Review Repository at:**  
<http://bahai-studies.ca/publications/journal/book-reviews/>

*Champions of Oneness: Louis Gregory and His Shining Circle*

by Janet Ruhe-Schoen. 282 pages, Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing, 2015.

Reviewed by Lex Musta for Journal of Bahá'í Studies. Available at US BDS and on Amazon.

*One Life, One Memory*

by Rúhá Asdaq. 46 pages, Welwyn, UK: George Ronald Publisher, 1999.

Reviewed by Paul Mantle for Journal of Bahá'í Studies. Available at George Ronald.

*Eleven*

by Paul Hanley. 408 pages, Victoria, BC: Friesen Press, 2014.

Reviewed by Benn McGregor for The Journal of Bahá'í Studies. Available at Amazon and at Friesen Press.

Three Books on Self-Help and Healing reviewed by Mary K. Radpour for The Journal of Bahá'í Studies.

*Healing the Wounded Soul*

by Phyllis K. Peterson, (Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing, 2005), ix + 195 pages, including index and appendix.

Available at US BDS and Amazon.

*High Desert: A Journey of Survival and Hope*

by Kim Douglas, (Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing, 2009), ix + 270 pages, including index. Available at US BDS and Amazon.

*It's Not Your Fault: How Healing Relationships Change Your Brain and Can Help You Overcome a Painful Past*

by Patricia Romano McGraw, (Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing, 2004), ix + 264 pages, including index, appendix, and bibliography. Available at Amazon.

**Also, visit the "Past Issues" page of the *Journal of Bahá'í Studies* on the ABS website regularly to access articles from past issues of the Journal. These articles can be viewed and downloaded at <http://bahai-studies.ca/past-issues/>**

## **Bahá'í Chair Program Elevates Discourse on Children and Youth in an Interconnected World**

### **Calendar of Events**

**ABS Medicine and Health  
Working Group Seminar  
April 6-9, 2017  
Bosch Bahá'í School  
www.bosch.org**

**Bahá'í Chair University of  
Maryland Events  
Understanding Race and Class in  
the 2016 Election  
February 13, 2017 - 2:00pm  
Secessionism, Violence, and  
Nonviolence  
February 15, 2017 - 4:00pm  
Structural Racism & Youth  
Violence  
March 1, 2017 - 4:00pm  
<http://www.bahaichair.umd.edu/events>**

**Wilmette Institute Courses  
2017 Courses open for registra-  
tion  
<http://wilmetteinstitute.org/our-courses/>**

### **40th Annual ABS Conference Recordings Available**

Video recordings of the 40th annual conference held in Montreal, as well as audio and video recordings of some past conferences are available for free viewing or download on the ABS website at <http://bahai-studies.ca/proceedings-and-recordings/>

Speaking at the recent Bahá'í Chair-sponsored conference on children and youth in an interconnected world was Wilma King, professor emerita and distinguished school of African American history at the University of Missouri. Photo courtesy of the University of Maryland

Children today are growing up in a vastly different world than in previous decades. From the influences of technology to the rapid spread of conflict, children face challenges that redefine the way we view adolescent development and will come to shape the next generation.

To discuss the role of children in an ever-changing world, the Bahá'í Chair for World Peace at the University of Maryland held a two-day international conference on Sept. 28–29, 2016.

“Learning Outside the Lines: Children and Youth in an Interconnected World” featured more than a dozen academics and practitioners discussing the theme of childhood and adolescence.

Topics spanned from the role of media in the construction of childhood technology addiction to the lasting effects of parental supervision on childhood development.

Among the featured presentations were Cindi Katz of the City University of New York Graduate Center focused on more effectively defining and conceptualizing notions of what it means to have a “good” and “social” childhood and how childhood experiences vary based on a family’s economic status and the level of involvement and supervision from parents.

In her talk, Katz argued for the need to recognize the autonomy and agency of children. And she highlighted the central significance of play and wonder

as a powerful component for developing one’s own sense of self.

A central theme throughout was that achieving good childhood outcomes “is impossible if it requires so many children to be left behind and wasted.”

Wilma King of the University of Missouri provided an in-depth historical analysis of childhood slavery in 19th-century North America.

She discussed the perception enslaved children had about their lack of liberties and how that intersected with the experiences of emancipated children during the same time period.

The focus of the talk centered on a discussion of how 19th-century children grappled with these various statuses within society and how this shaped their experiences and childhood development.

Steven Mintz of the University of Texas in Austin gave an in-depth discussion of how society’s conception of childhood disabilities has evolved over time.

He cautioned that the various ways children are being diagnosed with new disorders might be having an impact on the self-esteem and self-conceptions children have.

Michael Robb of Common Sense Media analyzed the modern technology-driven environment that children find themselves in and summarized research on the lasting effect media addiction can have on the psychological well-being of children and youth.

Robb argued for a balanced approach to media and technology, which requires oversight and engagement from parents. That involves helping children navigate ethical dilemmas they encounter online and establish good media habits from the outset.

## ABS Webinar Schedule

The Association is continuing to schedule webinars to engage both ABS associates and the community at large in the study and discussion of scholarly topics. For the list of upcoming webinar sessions go to the ABS website at: <http://bahai-studies.ca/major-initiatives/webinars/>

**Thursday February 16, 2017 at 8:00 p.m. EST with Dr. Todd Lawson**

**Topic: The Artistry of the Báb: Literary Dimensions of the Báb's Revelation"**

A close examination of the form and contents of the *Qayyúm al-asmá* - also known as the *Tafsír súrih Yúsuf* - suggests that the Báb was consciously rewriting the *Qur'an* in a gesture of literary and religious modernism in which the past is simultaneously hallowed and reconfigured. This becomes more clear if we compare some aspects of the central patterns of the *Qayyúm al-asmá* with those of what may be considered the major founding work of European literary modernism, James Joyce's *Ulysses*.

TODD LAWSON is emeritus professor of Islamic Thought at the University of Toronto where he taught for 25 years. He has published widely on Bahá'í Faith, *Qur'an* commentary, the *Qur'an* as literature, Sufism, and Shí'ih Islám.

**Tuesday April 11, 2017 at 8:00 p.m. EST with Dr. Victoria Talwar**

**Topic: The Foundations of Trust: Reflections from Bahá'í Writings and Psychological Science on the Pivotal Role of Trust in our Lives**

Trustworthiness and truthfulness are a crucial aspect of human functioning and society. Bahá'u'lláh said that trustworthiness is the "supreme instrument for the prosperity of the world." It is central to the development of character and the life of the community as a whole. The current talk will review some of the scientific evidence on the importance of trustworthiness to interpersonal functioning and as the basis for a healthy society. It will examine this evidence within the framework of how trustworthiness and truthfulness are conceptualized in the Bahá'í Faith.

VICTORIA TALWAR is a Canada Research Chair (II) in the Dept. of Educational and Counselling Psychology at McGill University. Her research is in the area of developmental psychology with an emphasis on social-emotional development.

**Webinar held in January 2017**

**Topic: Shoghi Effendi's "Hands"— The Ministry of the Custodians: Six Years that Changed History and Shaped a Faith's Destiny**

**Speaker: Dr. Shaheen Tedjarati**

To watch a recording of this session, please visit <http://bahai-studies.ca/the-ministry-of-the-custodians/>

To watch recordings of past webinars, go to: <http://bahai-studies.ca/major-initiatives/webinars/>

# ASSOCIATION FOR BAHÁ'Í STUDIES

## 41st Annual Conference, 10–13 August, 2017 Hyatt Regency Orange County, California, USA

Please register for EACH person attending the conference by *fax*: 1-613-233-3644, by *phone*: 1-613-233-1903, *online* at <http://www.bahai-studies.ca> or by *mail*: 34 Copernicus Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1N 7K4.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Province/State \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_ Postal/ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

If this registrant is a child, please indicate age \_\_\_\_\_ Do you have any special needs? \_\_\_\_\_

		Full Conference Fee (4 days)	One-Day Fee
Individual Adults	By May 31	\$170	\$60
	By July 31	\$180	\$60
	After July 31	\$190	\$60
Seniors (65+)	By May 31	\$120	\$50
	By July 31	\$130	\$50
	After July 31	\$140	\$50
Students (15+)	By May 31	\$120	\$50
	By July 31	\$130	\$50
	After July 31	\$140	\$50
Unwaged		\$140	\$50
Children (ages 5–14) <u>must</u> be registered by July 31		\$70	\$35
Family discount		20% off total registration fee*	

← Please circle one fee.

ALL CONFERENCE FEES  
ARE IN US DOLLARS

\* Parents and dependent children living at the same address (minimum 3 registrants)

Total Fees: \_\_\_\_\_

+ Scholarship Contribution: \_\_\_\_\_

- Family discount (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

**GRAND TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

### Method of Payment

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**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Registration fees are refundable, less 10% administrative fees if the Association is notified by July 31, and less 20% administrative fees if notified after July 31.

**Registrants from outside Canada, please note:** fees paid by credit card are processed in Canada. Some credit card companies apply a service charge for transactions taking place in another Country.



## HOTEL AND RESERVATIONS

### Hyatt Regency Orange County

11999 Harbor Boulevard,  
Garden Grove, CA, 92840 USA  
Tel: (714) 750-1234; Fax: (714) 740-0465

Toll-free reservations: 1-888-421-1442

Online:

<https://aws.passkey.com/go/BAHAI217>

Single/double occupancy —  
US \$139 per night (plus tax)  
Triple/quad. occupancy —  
US \$159 per night (plus tax)

Maximum occupancy: 4 persons per room.



*Conference attendees must make hotel reservations directly with the hotel. To receive the special rate ask for the Association for Bahá'í Studies special conference rate when making your reservation.*

**PLEASE NOTE:** these rates are guaranteed **only until the room-block is filled or until July 26, 2017, whichever comes first.** Reservations made after the cut-off dates will be based on availability at the Hotel's prevailing rates. **The conference rates are extended to three days before and three days after the conference dates.**



# Association for Bahá'í Studies

34 Copernicus Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1N 7K4

Tel: (613) 233-1903 Fax: (613) 233-3644

Email: [abs-na@bahai-studies.ca](mailto:abs-na@bahai-studies.ca) Website: [www.bahai-studies.ca](http://www.bahai-studies.ca)

## *The Journal of Bahá'í Studies*

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