

# & Ampersand

THE ANSELM HOUSE NEWSLETTER

**Editor's Note:** For more than a century, the idea of "conflict" between science and religion has captured our popular imagination in the United States. But is this the best way to describe the relationship between science and religion? One way to answer this question is by asking what practicing scientists think about religion. In recent years, Dr. Elaine Howard Ecklund has pursued this question, leading a team of researchers who interviewed scientists around the world to discover their thoughts on religion. Last September, Dr. Ecklund reported on her team's findings for us in a lecture on the University of Minnesota campus. (View the lecture online at [anselmhouse.org/secularity-and-science](http://anselmhouse.org/secularity-and-science))

In this issue of Ampersand, Dr. Ecklund and her colleague Dr. David R. Johnson describe the results of this multiyear study, which resulted in the book *Secularity and Science: What Scientists Around the World Really Think About Religion* (OUP, 2019). Their findings give us the data to finally reconceive the complex relationship between science and religion.

Andrew Hansen, Program Director

## What Do Scientists Around the World Think about Religion?



**Dr. Elaine Howard Ecklund**  
Sociology, Rice University

**Dr. David R. Johnson**  
Higher Education and Leadership,  
University of Nevada, Reno

Our past research on science and religion looks at the United States through a sociological lens, examining what scientists really think about religion and what religious people really think about science (see *Science vs. Religion: What Scientists*

*Really Think<sup>1</sup> and Religion vs. Science: What Religious People Really Think<sup>2</sup>*).

Now we've turned our lens globally, to look at what scientists around the world really think about religion. Scientists play an important role in the public understanding of science and religion, but our understanding of what scientists think about religion has overwhelmingly focused on scientists at elite universities in the United States. This understanding is important but narrow: religious characteristics and science infrastructures vary from country to country, most scientists are not at elite universities. These we might think of as empirical blind spots in our understanding of the science-faith interface. We wanted to understand all the nuances of what scientists think by going to the source—scientists themselves. To that end we did surveys with over 22,000 scientists from 8 different national contexts and in-depth interviews (often face-to-face

conversations) with over 600 of them. *Secularity and Science: What Scientists Around the World Really Think About Religion*, the book that explores the findings from our study on scientists in an international context, seeks to fill these gaps, using the most rigorous tools social science offers.

Our focus on France, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Taiwan, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States is motivated primarily by theoretical concerns related to religiosity, religious traditions, and science infrastructure. With respect to religiosity, how scientists think about religion is influenced by whether they are situated in a highly secular country like France versus a highly religious country like Turkey. Religious traditions vary in terms of perceived ethical or moral tensions with science, with some Western nations such as the United States exhibiting persistent debates in the public sphere relative to countries with non-Western religious traditions such as the presence of Hinduism in India and Buddhism in Taiwan. And the development of science infrastructure also matters. The US and UK, for example, are at the core of the global science infrastructure, meaning aspirant and practicing scientists around the world work and train in these countries—often bringing their religious traditions with them. In other countries, such as Italy or Turkey, there is less circulation of scientists, making the presence of religion much more homogenous. We

*Only a minority of scientists perceive the relationship between science and religion as one of conflict. Most scientists around the world... view the relationship between these two spheres as one of independence or collaboration.*

sought a design that allowed us to capture these broader characteristics and study how they shaped scientists' views. Each of the national contexts we studied exhibit distinctive religious characteristics and thus contributes a unique outlook on the relationship between science and religion.



Dr. Ecklund speaking at her September 2019 lecture.

The US is somewhat unique, largely because it exhibits the most consistent debates about religion and science in the public sphere. These include, for example, questions about whether and how evolution should be taught in schools or the moral dimensions of genetic engineering. State and federal policymakers openly express skepticism of science and scientists, most notably in relation to climate change. The US has public policy think tanks, such as the Discovery Institute, which advocate for intelligent design perspectives that are widely rejected by the scientific community. The US also has more than 100 of the preeminent research universities in the world. These unique features often generate misleading assumptions about both religious individuals and scientists, such that what religious and nonreligious individuals in and out of science *actually think* about the science-faith interface is overshadowed mainly by the loudest rather than the most numerous voices.

Immigration patterns and national sentiment about immigration all influence perceptions about the relationship of science and religion within a country. A country's scientific infrastructure is closely tied to immigration. The more elite a country's scientific infrastructure, the more attractive it is to scientists from other countries. Immigrant scientists often bring their religion with them, which in turn has an effect on how religion comes up and is

perceived in the scientific workplace. In Italy and Turkey, which have strong but less expansive science infrastructure than the UK and US, for example, we expect there is less religious diversity within the scientific community. Also, the science-religion conflict narrative seems to be somewhat of a Western and thus Christian-centric phenomenon. There is often freer expression of religion in the scientific workplace in nations where the conflict narrative is less abundant, such as India, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Based on our findings, *Secularity and Science* makes four big claims. First, we find that there are more religious scientists than we might think. Second, only a minority of scientists perceive the relationship between science and religion as one of conflict. Most scientists around the world, including in highly secular contexts such as France and the UK, view the relationship between these two spheres as one of independence or collaboration. Across all of the regions that we examined the conflict view never exceeds one-third of overall scientists; nor do atheist scientists overwhelmingly embrace this view. Third, there are scientists who see spirituality in their work. Fourth, even as many scientists view science and religion as independent of one another and others compartmentalize their faith at work, religion still comes up in this highly secular workplace. University students may vocalize faith-based perspectives in class discussions. Scientists may need to accommodate the religious practices of their graduate students, such as working

around holidays or the timing of prayers. It can also shape the moral decisions that scientists make about what it means to be a good scientist.

Where does this leave us? We think that there are two broad avenues of opportunity to help religious and scientific communities understand and appreciate each other, a task that is even more important than ever in our post COVID19 era: 1) recognizing that while there are some scientists with hostile views of religion and some religious individuals with hostile views of science, overwhelmingly most do not have such views; and 2) viewing the presence of religious individuals in science as an opportunity. We found in some of the nations we studied, but particularly in the US and UK, where there are tensions between some in the scientific community and some in religious communities, that religious scientists who are highly respected in their profession have the potential to act as *boundary pioneers*. We find that working closely with a religious scientist who has developed a successful career seems to illustrate to a nonreligious scientist that science and religion do not necessarily conflict with one another. Among scientists, one of the most prevalent justifications we heard for why there is not innate conflict between being religious and being a scientist was that they had worked with a successful religious scientist. The tasks then of a boundary pioneer is to help those in different communities to understand one another by being a living representative of what it can mean to inhabit both worlds. &

## Discussion Questions

1. In your experience, how has religion been described or handled in scientific settings? How has science been described in Christian settings?
2. Are you surprised by Dr. Ecklund and Dr. Johnson's findings? Why or why not?
3. Have you known any "boundary pioneers," respected scientists who were also deeply Christian? How has their faith related to their scientific vocations?

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Ecklund, Elaine Howard. *Science vs. Religion: What Scientists Really Think*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Ecklund, Elaine Howard, and Christopher P. Scheitle. *Religion vs. Science: What Religious People Really Think*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

## Welcome Back!

Find Christian community at the University of Minnesota! All activities will implement COVID precautions.

[anselmhouse.org/fall2020kickoff](https://anselmhouse.org/fall2020kickoff)

### New Student Events

#### Bonfire & S'mores Outdoors

Meet students, enjoy free food, and connect with Christian community at the U

Every Friday, August 14 -  
September 25 | 7 - 10 p.m.  
@ St. Paul Study Center

#### Wilderness Weekend

Adventure in northern MN on this journey of fellowship, prayer, and spiritual preparation for college

August 20 - 23  
\$150—food and travel included!

#### Free Coffee & Donuts Meet and Greet

Join us for delicious donuts and meet students and staff from Anselm House

Daily, August 31 - September 4,  
September 7 - 11 | 9 a.m. - noon  
@ St. Paul Study Center

### Virtual Events for Community & Faculty

#### Virtual Open House

Learn about our distinctive mission at the U

August 19 | noon - 1 p.m.  
[anselmhouse.org/open-house](https://anselmhouse.org/open-house)

#### #CalledToConnect

Join us for a livestream event with prayer, testimonies, Q&A and exciting updates

August 25 | 7 - 8:30 p.m.  
[anselmhouse.org/connect](https://anselmhouse.org/connect)

Find other ways to connect at  
[anselmhouse.org/communities](https://anselmhouse.org/communities)

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



# 2019 - 2020 Annual Report

*In our present moment of pandemic, political polarization, challenges of racial justice and freedom of expression, what our institutions need are leaders of intellectual and moral virtue. These highlights offer just a glimpse of how we form this sort of current and emerging Christian leader at the University of Minnesota. Also, plan to join us virtually for our #CalledToConnect livestream event as we kick off an unprecedented year. You'll hear student and faculty stories, answers to your questions (see below), and a vision for this year and beyond.*

Warmly,

Bryan Bademan, Executive Director



## Greta's Story

Being from St. Louis Park, MN, Greta (class of 2023) engaged with Anselm House during high school and had applied to the Fellows Program before even being admitted to the University of Minnesota. Her first year of college was hard, but being in Christian community made the difference. She especially loves how Fellows connects her to Christians of different vocations. "In my cohort," she says, "there are people who are Vet students, PhD students in English, Physics, and more. As they try and live out their faith in their vocations, it has encouraged me to seek that in my own life." Greta is pursuing a BA in Industrial & Systems Engineering and hopes to seek a career in the medical device industry.

Watch Greta's fully story and more during the

## #CalledToConnect Livestream

Tuesday, August 25 | 7 - 8 p.m.

Join us for prayer, testimonies, Q&A and exciting updates on how we will be connecting with students and the University in unprecedented ways this year!

Learn more, submit your questions about our mission, and join us at:

[anselmhouse.org/connect](https://anselmhouse.org/connect)

*Congratulations to these students who are receiving a Certificate of Christian Studies, having completed all three years of our Colin MacLaurin Fellows Program!*

**Sarah Batman**

Computer Science and Mathematics, Class of 2021

**Alex Baum**

Aerospace Engineering, Class of 2021

**Dominic Christensen**

Applied Plant Sciences, Class of 2020

**Caleb Hay**

Computer Science and Mechanical Engineering, Class of 2020

**Grace Olson**

Developmental Psychology, Class of 2021

**Alice Wilsman**

Graphic Design, Class of 2021

**Josiah Wollan**

Marketing, Class of 2020

# By the Numbers

**3,135 total attendance**

at events (in person and online)

**365 donors**

gave sacrificially to equip current and future leaders

**300+ faculty/staff**

reached through our UMN network

**67 students**

participated in the Fellows Program

**10 visiting scholars**

hosted on campus for events



*A successful hybrid reading group (with people participating in person and online)*



*The 2019-2020 Fellows*

**9 residents**

live in a fellows residential community

**6 faculty**

participated in the pilot of our Faculty Fellows Program

**5 days**

to transition all programming online amid the COVID-19 shutdown

**2 issues**

published of *Between Cities*, a student-run journal of Christian thought at the U

## Strategic Goals

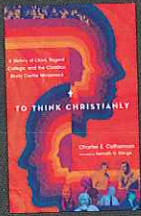
Our board of trustees and staff are committed to strategic planning, goal setting, and assessment. The central strategic goals that we seek to accomplish by 2022-2023 are:

**1. Strengthen and expand the Fellows Program:** We will welcome our 8<sup>th</sup> class of Fellows this autumn. Our goal is to have 200 student fellows in 2022-2023.

**2. Establish a permanent Minneapolis presence:** A move to Minneapolis (while retaining a St. Paul presence) will help triple student and faculty engagement at events and programs.

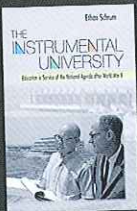
**3. Grow Christian residential community:** Fellows living in residential communities foster shared meals, common prayer, and hospitality. By 2022-2023, we envision 20 or more Fellows living in community.

# Books of Note



***To Think Christianly: A History of L'Abri, Regent College, and the Christian Study Center Movement***, Charles E. Cotherman, IVP Academic (2020)

A pastor-scholar in the Vineyard USA community of churches, Charles Cotherman has given friends and patrons of study centers like Anselm House (founded 1982) a genealogy of their labors. Cotherman traces this history back, especially, to the work of Francis Schaeffer and the L'Abri study center situated in the mountains southeast of Lausanne, Switzerland, and to James Houston and Regent College in Vancouver, B.C. Their inspiring examples directly led to the founding of university-based centers at UC-Berkeley (1977) and UVA (1976), both aiming to support the church in thinking Christianly across disparate fields of knowledge. Cotherman neglects Christian study centers that arose from different historical trajectories, such as the Lumen Christi Institute at the University of Chicago, but his account is a welcome first effort in helping us understand our unfolding story. —Bryan Bademan, Executive Director



***The Instrumental University: Education in Service of the National Agenda after World War II***, Ethan Schrum, Cornell University Press (2019)

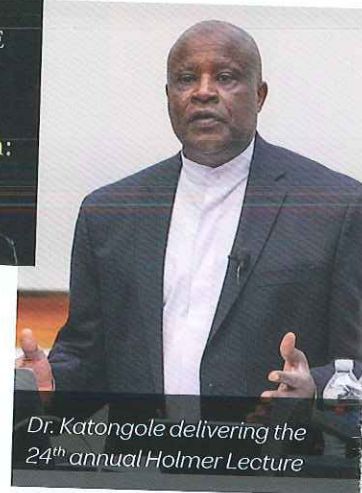
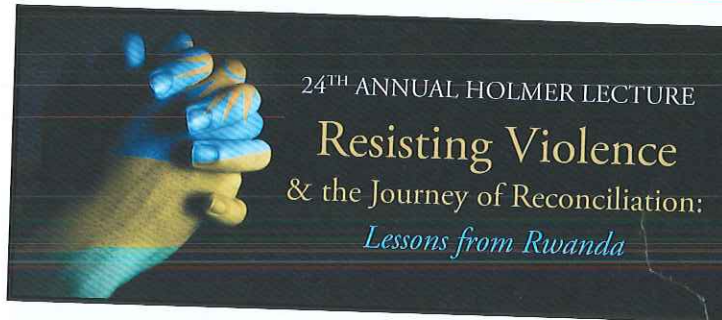
Ethan Schrum charts the rise of the "instrumental university": modern research universities (such as the University of Minnesota), characterized by the pursuit of technical knowledge for practical and economic benefits. A new development in global higher education, Schrum locates this transformation of research universities into instrumental universities in the period immediately after World War II in the US. Corporate and governmental funding flooded into universities for technical, problem-oriented research, reshaping universities' academic missions in the process. Like Alan Jacobs's *Year of Our Lord 1943*, Schrum's book helps us see how "technocratic progressivism," which reduces society to a set technical challenges to be solved, came to dominate the American social imagination, including higher education. Understanding this history is a needed first step to recovering a fuller, more Christian vision of education. —Andrew Hansen, Program Director



***The Twenty-Something Soul: Understanding the Religious and Secular Lives of American Young Adults***, Tim Clydesdale and Kathleen Garces-Foley, Oxford University Press (2019)

*The Twenty-Something Soul* explores the diverse religious and spiritual beliefs (or lack thereof) of today's young people. It examines the lives and spiritual habits of four main subgroups of young adults: Catholics, Mainline Protestants, Evangelicals, and the ever-growing population - the Nones. The goal of this particular work is to help churches understand what young Americans are looking for in terms of religion, spirituality, and community. In most cases, young people, regardless of their religious affiliation, are searching for a community that not only is well represented by other young adults, but that promotes ideas with which they agree. These ideas vary from individual to individual, but they are largely focused on social justice, traditional values, and care for creation and one's neighbor. This book is helpful for those interested in understanding the lives and desires of today's young people. —Emily Casey, Student Outreach Coordinator

# Media Spotlight



Featuring Dr. Emmanuel Katongole (Theology and Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame), Professor Tade Okediji (UMN Applied Economics; African American & African Studies), and Brooke Chambers (UMN Sociology PhD candidate and 2018 Badzin Fellow in Holocaust & Genocide Studies). Watch online: [anselmhouse.org/resisting-violence](https://anselmhouse.org/resisting-violence).

Dr. Katongole delivering the 24<sup>th</sup> annual Holmer Lecture

Miss a lecture? Find all recordings at [anselmhouse.org/media](https://anselmhouse.org/media).

# Financials

INCOME	2018-2019 Actuals	2019-2020 Actuals*	2020-2021 Goals
Donations—Undesignated	\$567,229	\$644,278	\$710,000
Donations—Designated	\$0	\$200,450	\$150,000
Release from Donor Restriction	\$236,977	\$158,150	\$80,000
Other Income	\$79,753	\$185,214	\$6,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$883,959</b>	<b>\$1,188,092</b>	<b>\$946,000</b>
EXPENSE			
Program	\$700,893	\$868,317	\$794,640
Management	\$63,407	\$78,842	\$71,896
Fundraising	\$63,667	\$82,361	\$79,464
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$827,967</b>	<b>\$1,029,520</b>	<b>\$946,000</b>
INCOME (Restricted Use)			
Capital & Other	\$4,023,586	\$80,000	TBD
Net Assets, End of Year	\$4,358,374	\$4,524,400**	TBD

\*2019-2020 actuals were not yet audited at the time of printing. To review our most recent audited financials contact Dan Olson, Managing Director, at [do@anselmhouse.org](mailto:do@anselmhouse.org).  
 \*\*This includes a lead gift agreement of \$3,500,000 for future Capital expenditures.