Earlier this year my high school class had its twentieth reunion. As was the case with my ten-year high school reunion, I didn’t go (because I am nothing if not consistent). A friend of mine lives for these milestone occasions and couldn’t believe that I would twice pass up the opportunity to reconnect with people and celebrate the good times. What my “friend” doesn’t realize is that I am fiercely independent. It takes a considerable amount of bandwidth for me to handle people. I am just now rebooting from the social marathon that was secondary education. I got the diploma and the yearbooks to prove it. Why would I go back on someone else’s arbitrary terms?

I said as much to my “friend” before they made a telling appeal. “You’re a successful professor. Your friends will be proud. Your enemies will be jealous. You win. Take the victory lap.” Not only did I learn that my friend thinks I’m petty (which I am, but that’s not the point), but also that they have a view of success that is by no means universal.

You see, what my friend didn’t realize is that I basically went to a performing arts high school modeled after the inspiration for the 1980s film and television show *Fame*. My classmates were indeed singing through the halls, dancing from class to class, and putting on impromptu concerts. Not everyone who graduated from the school went into the arts, but many of them did. But many of them are working behind the scenes in Hollywood if not center stage in New York. So while I appreciate my friend’s vote of confidence, I don’t think my entrance will merit an unrolling of the red carpet. All jokes aside, my friend really is my friend. And I know this because they know I’m a sucker for a well-timed segue.

“Okay, so you aren’t a movie star or successful enough to make your enemies seethe with envy. You don’t have anything to prove back at your high school. But tell me this Richard Newton. Are you working on anything that keeps you going forward in whatever you’re doing? If not, then you have a problem.”

Fortunately, I’ve had the opportunity to work on something with you all. Over the past three years, we have been making something extraordinary. Together at the *Bulletin* we have been building an exchange of ideas that shows the field as it is and could be. We have printed pieces by distinguished senior scholars and first publications by graduate students. Our contributors are independent scholars, endowed chairs, and everything in between. We’ve published pieces by experts in a range of subfields working from all around the world. And we have been talking about issues unearthed from archives, vexing museums, percolating in office lounges, and challenging our guilds. The issue before you keeps that same energy and is by no means a bad day at the office.

We are pleased to share a much-requested discussion with Cody Musselman on what fitness brands like CrossFit and SoulCycle can show us about the social-politics of Evangelicalism in the United States. Michael J. Altman facilitated The Interview as part of the University of Alabama’s 2022 Day Lecture.

In The Experiment, we have two important pieces worth your attention. The first is a collaborative essay on the state of graduate education in the field and a call for overdue transformations and innovations to make doctoral study a worthwhile professional endeavor in the 21st century. This manifesto was co-written by Andrew Ali Aghapour, Shannon Trosper Schorey, Thomas J. Whitley, Vaia Touna, and Russell T. McCutcheon. The second piece, written by F. LeRon Shults and Wesley Wildman advances a new model for quantifying and describing the manner in which scholarly work relies upon appeals to supernatural forces. Shults and Wildman contend that this Methodological Naturalism-Methodological Secularism scale can help refine debates about a key debate in the field.

In The Essay, John Cappucci shares his research on perceptions of Jews and Judaism in a Catholic diocese. More specifically, he investigates the extent to which the ethnographic data that he collected corresponds
with official Roman Catholic doctrines and policies.

And apropos to the currents in the aforementioned pieces, we have brought out two pieces in The Archive. The first is a 1984 piece by Kenneth Kramer (1941–2019) on “unteaching” the norms of the academic study of religion. The second is a 2005 piece by Lieve Orye on the place and presence of science in the academic study of religion.

Finally, Sage D’Vice is back, this time to tackle The Question—“What do you do when students don’t do the reading?”

The exchanges we get to have here in the Bulletin reverberate in so many different spaces, so many sites where we see fit to share what the study of religion might have something to say. Success takes many forms, and I guess I don’t sweat looking back because I’m too busy looking forward to deepening questions, expanding outlooks, and enriching conversations with you all. I hope you look forward to coming back to the Bulletin again and again.