



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feb. 6, 2007

For more information contact: Roberta Cox, 214-768-2335, rcox@smu.edu;
Dena Hill, 214-768-1393, hild@smu.edu

PERKINS APPOINTS NEW ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY

Dallas, Texas – Southern Methodist University’s Perkins School of Theology announces the appointment of Dr. Jessica Boon to its faculty. Effective January 1, 2007, Dr. Boon is assistant professor of Church History at Perkins. Her work focuses on medieval and early modern Christian mystical texts.

“I explore how mystics choose to represent experiences that by definition lie outside the norms of human language and thought,” Boon says. “I concentrate primarily on the ways mystics break beyond typical linguistic choices through the denial of language, through the manipulation of metaphors and visual images, or through wielding forms of speech that go against cultural norms of gender and racial/ religious heritage. My specialty is in medieval trends and their incorporation into Counter-Reformation Spanish spirituality.”

Dr. Boon comes to Perkins from Duke University where she was a Mellon Lecturing Fellow in Writing and Religion during the past two-and-a-half years. Her teaching experience at Duke included “Writing in the Disciplines” courses in the

Department of Religion on topics such as medieval spirituality and the Spanish Inquisition, and “Academic Writing” in the University Writing Program.

Boon earned her Ph.D. in Religious Studies in the area of History of Medieval Christian Thought in 2004 from the University of Pennsylvania. Her dissertation topic was “The Mystical Language of Recollection: Bernardino de Laredo and the *Subida del Monte Si3n*.” Boon also is a *magna cum laude* graduate of Yale University where she earned a B.A. degree in Humanities in 1998.

Her publications include “A Mystic in the Age of the Inquisition: Bernardino de Laredo's *Converso* Environment and Christological Spirituality,” *Medieval Encounters: Jews, Christians and Muslims in Confluence and Dialogue* 12.2 (2006): 133-52; and “Agonies of the Virgin: Mary Fainted, Mary Crucified in Sixteenth Century Castilian Passion Treatises” in the next issue of *Sixteenth Century Studies*.

Perkins School of Theology is one of five University-related official schools of theology of The United Methodist Church. The school was founded in 1911 by the Methodist Episcopal Church South, now The United Methodist Church. Degree programs include the Master of Church Ministries, Master of Divinity, Master of Sacred Music, Master of Theological Studies, and Doctor of Ministry degree, as well as the Ph.D. in cooperation with SMU's Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences.

- # -

- # -

- # -