

World Religions of Greater Indianapolis Teaching Module

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Humanities Discipline: History

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World Religion: Buddhism

Teaching Module Title: A discussion on how the United States received Buddhists and other non-western religious believers who migrated to America during the turn of the century along with a comparison of how Buddhists believers are received today.

Teaching Module Goals:

To show how some Americans received Buddhism and other non-western religions with fascination while other Americans and their government received Buddhism and non-western religions with hostility. To discuss religious pluralism in today's United States.

Assigned Readings and/or Website:

1. *Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs in America: A Short History* by Gurinder Singh Mann, Paul Numrich, and Raymond Williams pp 1-42.
2. <http://content.time.com/Time/magazine/artcile/o.9171,136680,00.html>
3. <https://www.urbandharma.org/udharma5//tensions.html>.
4. <http://urbandharama.org/udharmaA6/bavo//1.html>.
5. <http://www.pbs.org/thebuddha/blog/2010mar/17/how-buddhism-came-west-maia-duerr/>.
6. <http://pluralism.org/religions/buddhism/buddhisminameric/at> the 1893-worldsparliament-of-religions.
7. <http://immigration.laws.com/immigrationact-of1924>.
8. <http://www.history.com/topics/chinese-exclusion-act>.
9. <http://www.mosanyc.org/learn/timeline/immigration-act-of-1917>.

Study questions and Prompts for students:

1. Have people in this country readily accepted nonwestern and Buddhist religious practice brought to the United States by immigrants?
2. What role did the World Parliament of Religions play in that acceptance of Buddhism?
3. Why was the United States criticized for its treatment of Japanese immigrants at the World Parliament?
4. What was the result of the Chinese Exclusion act 1882? What did it accomplish and why were Californians threatened by Chinese immigrants?
5. How and why did the Immigration Acts of 1917 and 1924 close off America to Asian immigrants?
6. What is the attitude toward Buddhism today? Are all Buddhist in the United States Asian today?
7. What is Hollywood's attitude toward Buddhism?

Written assignment and/or other Assessment instruments:

Interview an Asian believer or an American convert to Buddhism and ask them if they feel their religion is accepted in the United States today? Discuss out why feel this is the case. Compare your findings to the turn of the century. Is American society now more accepting of Buddhism? The paper should be 5-8 pages in length and include 5 bibliographic entries from various sources.