

Martha L. Finch
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Southwest Missouri State University
REL 131: Religion in America

Course Justification

There are four primary “givens” that shape this course: 1) it is an introductory survey course that fulfills university General Education requirements; 2) each semester I teach two large sections of the course, about 60 students per section, meeting MWF in 50-minute class periods; 3) it is taught in a predominantly white, conservative Protestant (Bible belt) region of the U.S.; and 4) my own strengths and interests are in the study of lived religion.

As a Gen Ed course in “Humanities: Culture and Society” there are requirements regarding course content: it is a historical survey of religions in the U.S., including the relationship between religions and legal issues, technology, theology, sacred literature, private lives, and public social culture. As well, students should develop specific learning, critical thinking, and communication skills. Large sections have led to a more lecture-based format, although I regularly have questions and topics for discussion, which allow for student classroom contributions. We also discuss and critically reflect on significant events when they occur, e.g., 9/11 attacks, Ten Commandments monument in the Alabama Supreme Court building, Gibson’s *The Passion of the Christ*. This is a more content-driven course than my upper-level courses, although in presenting materials I strive to engage students in critical thinking about that content by assigning most of their reading in primary texts and discussing tensions within and among religious groups and relationships between those groups and American society.

Most of my students are white, conservative Protestants, primarily Southern Baptist, Baptist Bible Fellowship, and Assemblies of God, as well as Church of Christ, Missouri Synod Lutheran, and nondenominational evangelical. Each semester I have progressively more Catholics from northern Missouri (perhaps twenty-five percent of my students this semester) and generally two or three Mormon, Christian Science, or other “alternative Christianities” students. At SMSU virtually all Protestant students encounter Catholics for the first time. Likewise, for the first time many Catholics find themselves in a non-Catholic-dominated, often anti-Catholic, environment. This semester, my sixth at SMSU, I have my first Jewish and Muslim students—one of each. Few of my students have no religious background, and I have only one or two non-Caucasian students each semester.

Given these demographics and most students’ lack of experience with religious diversity, the central three-pronged goal of the course is that they develop understandings of the history of different religions in the United States, the ways religion, personal experiences, and American public life have shaped each other, and the resulting shifts in the American religious landscape. I begin with what most students are familiar with and have them talk about how they know they’re in the Bible belt (e.g., numerous Baptist churches, “fish” symbols on advertising, and the Assemblies of God’s national headquarters, university, Bible college, and seminary and the Baptist Bible Fellowship’s Bible college are all located in Springfield) and what it’s like not to be a member of that Bible belt culture (e.g., Catholic).

From there, the course is organized both historically and by religious tradition with recurring themes throughout, such as unity and diversity, millennialism, contact, conflict, and combination, gender, ethnicity, religious practice, and material culture. To make history

meaningful for present-minded students, for each topic or religious group we consider historically, we also look at a contemporary manifestation of it, often through short (10- to 15-minute) video clips, drawn from a variety of “insider,” documentary, and news sources [contemporary examples indicated in brackets in syllabus]. Over time, I have sacrificed broader coverage of diverse materials for the sake of more depth in exploring fewer religious groups and issues. Neither approach is fully satisfying, yet my current thinking is that I prefer students to develop a more comprehensive understanding of fewer topics rather than a superficial sense of a massive amount of material.

Likewise, I have moved from requiring a lot of reading (which students rarely did) to shorter reading assignments (which students are more likely to do). To help them focus their reading, I provide guiding questions in the syllabus, from which I draw occasional unannounced quizzes. They read Bret Carroll’s *Historical Atlas of Religion in America*, a condensed overview of American religious history, illustrated with images and maps. Carroll provides the general context for the course’s main readings in Patrick Allitt’s *Problems in American Religious History*, a good collection of primary documents and short scholarly essays (I prefer Allitt to Gaustad because the selections are longer and so offer a more fully developed sense of the material). Students generally very much like the Allitt readings; I expect them to read and understand most of the documents on their own, but the more difficult selections we read closely in class.

The three major assignments for the course (besides exams) are two field experiences (attending religious events and writing descriptive and interpretive essays about the events) and one website review (studying a religious organization’s website and writing an essay that analyzes how the organization uses the internet to construct a “public face,” proselytize, mediate a virtual community, provide a virtual space for religious practice, sell products, and so on). These assignments ask students to think both within and beyond their own religious commitments, if any, and draw upon critical analysis and interpretation. The field experiences assignment requires a student to engage others’ religious practices and meanings (lived religion) firsthand, reflect on his or her own reactions and experiences, and then bracket one’s personal opinions to develop an empathetic understanding of the event. The website review asks students to read “beneath the surface” of the site to analyze specific ways it uses layout, text, color, images, sound, and so on to project a particular public image of the organization and then to think about the relationships among that image, American social culture, and popular media.

We end the course by reconsidering general issues of unity and diversity and thinking about where Americans are headed, religiously, in the future. Students view videotaped interviews with Diana Eck on her personal religious experiences and perspectives and her scholarly understandings of pluralism. I get them to think critically about Eckian pluralism and discuss those criticisms in class, but what’s missing is a videotaped interview with another scholar who would provide an alternative, more critical, view of pluralism and its inherent tensions. I’ve discovered that although many students hold very strong religious commitments of their own, they are quite swayed by Eck’s argument.

SPRING 2004

Southwest Missouri State University

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REL 131: RELIGION IN AMERICA

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. First Amendment, Constitution of the United States of America, 1791

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands—one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. “Pledge of Allegiance,” 1954

*Leave me alone, don't want your promises no more
'Cause rock'n'roll is my religion and my law.* Ozzy Osbourne, “You Can’t Kill Rock and Roll,” 1981

The Bush administration this week continued its outreach campaign to Muslims. President Bush visited the Washington Islamic Center and released videotaped greetings to Muslims around the world marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan. Religion and Ethics Newsweekly, Dec. 6, 2002

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

We cannot understand American culture and society without understanding the crucial role that religion has played—and still plays today—in the formation of American identity and values. The story of the American nation is, first and foremost, a story of religious foundations and growing religious diversity. From the first inhabitants of this land, Native Americans, to our Protestant colonial “founding fathers” (and mothers), African slaves, nineteenth-century Catholic and Jewish immigrants, and the many Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, and others arriving during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, religiously committed people have shaped the American social landscape and been shaped by it. Many religious movements have been born in our soil, as well, like the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, charismatic Christianity, and Goddess spirituality.

The story of American religion has been played out in dramatic ways, shaping the thoughts, feelings, and actions of all Americans. Each of you is able to tell a part of that story from your own, lived experiences. In this course, we will investigate the different religious stories of many others and develop a sense of where your own story fits within the larger American religious narrative by understanding what people believe, why they believe it, and how those beliefs have influenced their lives and relations with others.

REL 131 is a **General Education** course that fulfills the **Humanities: Culture and Society** requirement. When you have completed this course successfully, you will have gained:

- an appreciation for the variety of religious cultures in the U.S.
- an understanding of the historical and geographical development of religious traditions in North America
- a familiarity with how Americans’ religious beliefs are expressed and lived through rituals, stories, artifacts, and the media
- an awareness of how religions have both shaped and adapted to American social culture

- an ability to read critically and interpret primary materials, including written texts, religious organizations' websites, and religious events
- a sense of how the choices and actions of religiously motivated individuals affect their relationships with other religious people, their local communities, and national public life

REQUIRED TEXTS

Books (available in SMSU Bookstore):

Allitt, Patrick, ed., *Major Problems in American Religious History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000).
Carroll, Bret E., *The Routledge Historical Atlas of Religion in America* (New York: Routledge, 2000).

Internet sources (read through websites or, when assigned, print out online documents and bring to class)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

- 1) **Three Exams:** (Two midterms [100 pts. each] and one final exam [100 pts.] = 300 pts. total [60% of course grade]) Exams are a combination of multiple choice, matching, and essay and will be on material covered since previous exam (i.e., noncumulative).
- 2) **Two Field Experience Essays:** (40 pts. each = 80 pts. total [16% of course grade]) During the semester, you will attend two different religious events and write one 2- to 3-page essay about each event. Essays are due in class on the days indicated in Schedule of Classes. Essays should use standard formatting (1" margins, 12-point font, double-spacing) and employ correct, college-level grammar, spelling, and style. See "Field Experience Guidelines" handout for details.
- 3) **One Website Review:** (40 pts. [8 % of course grade]) You will sign up to do a close study of one of the websites assigned during the semester and write a 2- to 3-page critical review of the site, to be handed in on the date noted in Schedule of Classes, below. See "Website Review Guidelines" handout for details. On the day that your review is due, you will be expected to contribute your research and ideas about the website to class discussion.
- 4) **Quizzes:** (50 points total [10% of course grade]) There will be approximately seven short, sometimes unannounced, quizzes to ensure your preparation for class, that is, that you are keeping up with the assigned readings and have engaged constructively with the ideas presented in the readings. Quiz questions will typically be drawn from the guiding questions in Schedule of Classes—if you have done the assigned reading, you will do fine on the quizzes. Quizzes cannot be made up unless you have informed me ahead of time that you will not be in class due to an excused absence (see Participation, below). At end of semester, your lowest quiz score will be deleted and your total quiz score determined by the remaining quizzes.
- 5) **Participation:** (30 pts. [6% of course grade]) The least boring and most effective way to learn is to participate fully in the process. You will be expected to contribute to the success of this course by attending every class, arriving on time, and staying until class had ended; reading the assigned materials and thinking about them; listening respectfully to each other and the instructor; and contributing to discussions. Attendance will be taken periodically throughout the semester. Excused absences will be granted if you hand me paper documentation for: (1) participation in University-sanctioned activities and programs; (2) serious personal illness; or (3) serious family circumstances, such as a death in your immediate family. See SMSU's *Attendance Policy*: www.smsu.edu/recreg/attendan.html.

There are 500 possible points to be earned throughout the semester:

3 exams	300 pts.
2 field experience essays	80 pts.
1 website review	40 pts.
Quizzes	50 pts.

Grading Scale:

450-500 pts. = A range
400-449 pts. = B range
350-399 pts. = C range
300-349 pts. = D range

Participation	30 pts.	Below 300 = F
TOTAL	500 PTS.	

COURSE POLICIES

Assignments are handed in during the class period they are due. I typically do not accept **late assignments**. If I do, it will receive a lowered grade (1 full letter grade per day late) for the assignment. Computer and printer problems happen, so plan ahead. If you anticipate a problem being able to take an exam or hand in an assignment as scheduled, see me about it at least one week before it is due. If you are desperately ill on the day of an exam, telephone or email me *before* the class period starts. Makeup exams must be taken *within two days* following the scheduled exam date.

Academic dishonesty—cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, or helping another student to do any of these—is a serious offense. Using another’s work (words, ideas, or downloaded documents) on written assignments without proper citation or using unauthorized materials during exams will result in your being subject to sanctions as described in *Student Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures* (www.smsu.edu/acadaff/StudentAcademicIntegrity.pdf), including failing the assignment and possibly failing the course. It is your responsibility to read and fully understand SMSU’s policy on academic integrity.

SMSU maintains a policy of **nondiscrimination** (www.smsu.edu/eoaa.htm). In this course, as we study about our own and others’ religious beliefs and practices, we value the diversity represented in American society and on this campus. In class, we are expected to treat others with respect, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, abilities, disabilities, or opinions. If you feel you have been discriminated against, please bring it to my attention. You may also contact the Office of Human Resources, Carrington 128, 836-4252.

If you feel you need **accommodations for a disability** in this class, let me know; you will also need to contact directly Disability Services (www.smsu.edu/disability), Plaster Student Union, Suite 405, 836-4192; TTY 836-6792. Students must provide documentation of disability to Disability Services prior to receiving accommodations.

In accordance with accepted scholarly language usage and accurate terminology, I expect you to employ **gender inclusive language** in your writing and in class discussions. “Man” and “mankind” do not refer to all of humanity. Please be conscious of replacing these terms with “humanity,” “humankind,” “people,” “human beings,” and so on.

This is a course in **Religious Studies** at a public institution. Thus, it is not confessional in nature; we are not here to promote a particular religious viewpoint or to debate religious “truth.” Rather, we will be engaging religious materials (texts, practices, websites, objects) as scholars—as historians, anthropologists, and sociologists—in order to understand what these materials mean for those who produce and use them. You may have your own personal religious commitments; if so, throughout this course you will likely encounter opinions and religious beliefs and practices with which you do not agree. I ask you to imagine yourself in the shoes of someone else whose actions and beliefs may differ radically from your own and yet carry immense meaning and value for that person. If your personal religious commitment is causing you to have difficulties doing this, please feel free to discuss with me privately.

You will be reading both **primary and secondary source materials**. It is important to recognize the differences between them and know how to read and interpret them. **Primary sources** (the Documents in

Allitt, and religious organizations' websites) are those texts usually written by "insiders" of a religious group (e.g., LDS Church website) or sometimes written by those immediately observing the group (e.g., 17th-cent. English Puritan Roger Williams explaining Narragansett religion). Primary sources are written from a particular religious perspective to explain, advocate, or critique a religious idea or practice. **Secondary sources** (Carroll's text and the introductions and essays in Allitt) are texts written by "outsiders" (e.g., historians, anthropologists, sociologists) that provide a scholarly analysis of the religious beliefs, practices, or objects being studied. They attempt to understand and interpret the insider's point of view, without either promoting or criticizing it. Secondary sources are, presumably, *not* written from a particular religious, political, or other stance.

Finally, I encourage you to take advantage of my **office hours** to get whatever help you need. I am in my office at other times, as well, so feel free to stop by; if I'm there and available, you are welcome. If you cannot meet with me during my office hours, I'm happy to arrange another time for us to talk. I'm also available by email, which I read and answer regularly.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

I. UNITY AND DIVERSITY

WEEK ONE (1/12, 14, 16):

In the Buckle of the Bible Belt

READ: Carroll: Foreword, Introduction, and Epilogue (8-11, 128-31)

Allitt: Preface and Ch. 1 intro (xvii-1)

According to Allitt, what are the questions or issues that lie at the center of American religious history?

According to Carroll, in which region is Springfield, MO, located? What are that region's characteristics?

II. "NEW WORLD" ENCOUNTERS (Prehistory to the 18th century)

WEEK TWO (W, F 1/21, 23. *No class M, 1/19, MLK Jr. Day*):

Native Americans: Indigenous Cultures and Traditions

READ: Carroll: 12-17, 22-29

Allitt: Ch. 2 intro and Docs. 1 – 8 (24-41)

[Video clip: contemporary Navajo sweat house ritual]

What beliefs and practices characteristic of traditional Native American culture are exemplified in the documents? What was the "sweat house"?

WEEK THREE (1/26, 28, 30):

The Colonies: Protestant Denominationalism and Puritan New England

READ: M/W: Carroll: Colonial Formations; Puritanism in New England (30-31, 34-37); plus choose one denomination you're interested in to read about: Church of England (Episcopalians) (32-33), Presbyterians (38-39), Quakers (40-41), Baptists (42-43), Methodists (44-45), Lutherans (46-49), German Sectarians (50-51)

Which colonies/regions were dominated by which Protestant groups/denominations?

F: Carroll: reread Puritanism in New England

Allitt: Ch. 3 intro and Docs. 1, 2 (59-64)

[Read in class: examples of American exceptionalism and jeremiadic rhetoric from Bush and Falwell speeches]

According to John Winthrop, what did the Puritans understand their purpose(s) to be in New England?

Did William Bradford believe that New England had maintained its early vision of the ideal godly society?

III. REVIVALISTS, RATIONALISTS, REVOLUTIONARIES, RESTORATIONISTS, RADICALS, AND REFORMERS (18th and 19th centuries)

WEEK FOUR (2/2, 4, 6):

Religious Freedom: Revivalism, Rationalism, and Revolution

READ: M/W: Carroll: Great Awakening (56-59); Second Great Awakening (62-63)

Allitt: Ch. 4 intro and Docs. 1, 2 (91-99); Ch. 5 Doc. 3 (132-34)

[Video clip: Rodney Howard-Browne revival meeting]

How did Jonathan Edwards and Nathan Cole each describe and/or experience the First Great Awakening?

According to Charles Finney, can religion be promoted without revivals?

F: Allitt: Ch. 4 Doc. 9 (109-110)

How did Thomas Jefferson define religious liberty?

What were the arguments he employed to establish religious freedom as a “natural right” in Virginia?

At what point did he think the civil government could interfere with religious opinions?

WEEK FIVE (2/9, 11, 13):

The Antebellum Spiritual Hothouse: Restorationists and Radicals

READ: M/W: Carroll: Part IV (60-79)

What was the goal of the Protestant Empire? What methods did Protestants use to accomplish their goals? What was “manifest destiny”?

What were some of the alternative forms of religion that arose during the 19th century?

W/F: Carroll: Mormonism (80-83)

Allitt: Ch. 5 intro and Doc. 4 (126-27, 134-37)

Explore website: www.mormons.org OR www.lds.org

[Mormon websites and contemporary Mormon practices]

How did Joseph Smith receive “the records”? What did they look like? What did they say?

What have you learned about the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Mormon values and lifestyle from your website research?

Friday, 2/13: WEBSITE REVIEW due:

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (www.mormons.org)

WEEK SIX (2/18, 20. No class M, 2/16, Presidents’ Day):

The Crucible of Slavery and Abolitionist Reform

READ: W: Carroll: African-American Churches (84-87)

Allitt: Ch. 5, Raboteau essay (152-59)

[Video clip: Black Pentecostal church service]

Compare the Christianity preached to slaves by Euroamerican ministers with the Christianity practiced by slaves in “hush harbors.” Which form of Christianity do you think better reflected slaves’ needs? Why?

F: Allitt: Ch. 6 Docs. 6, 7, 8 (176-82)

What arguments did Protestants make for and against slavery?

WEEK SEVEN (2/23, 25, 27):

M: *****Monday, February 23: EXAM #1*****

W: Discuss Field Experience Assignment

IV. CHALLENGES TO PROTESTANT DOMINANCE (19th and 20th centuries)

The Virgin in the Americas: American Catholicism

READ: F: Carroll: Part V, 88-93

Allitt: Ch. 6 intro and Docs. 2, 3; Ch. 10 intro and Doc. 1 (161-62, 165-71, 290-93)

Why did American Protestants fear the influx of Catholic immigrants from Europe in the middle of the 19th century?

What did Maria Monk allegedly experience in the convent? As a response to anti-Catholicism, how does Maguire describe the character of Irish Catholic young women?

What is “Americanization”? How did Protestant settlement houses attempt to Americanize Italian Catholic immigrants? Do you think this was a benefit or a detriment for immigrants?

WEEK EIGHT (3/1, 3, 5):

READ: M: Continue Catholicism readings/discussion, above (F, 2/27)

W/F: Allitt: Ch. 14 intro and Doc. 3 (428-29, 434-37)

Explore website: “Our Lady of Guadalupe”: www.sancta.org/intro.html

Read home page, click on and view/read “Pictures,” “Petitions.”

[Video clip: Our Lady of Guadalupe story and basilica at Tepeyac]

Who is Our Lady of Guadalupe? For what kinds of problems do her devotees petition her?

How does Richard Rodriguez portray the differences between Irish American and Mexican American Roman Catholicism? What were the differences between the Irish Mary and the Mexican Mary?

Fri., 3/5: WEBSITE REVIEW due: Our Lady of Guadalupe (www.sancta.org/intro.html)

WEEK NINE (3/8, 10, 12):

Mon., 3/8: FIELD EXPERIENCE #1 DUE.

A Land of Milk and Honey: American Judaism

READ: MWF: Carroll: Development of American Judaism (94-97)

Allitt: Ch. 6 Doc. 4; Ch. 8 intro and Doc. 6; Ch. 10 Doc. 2 (172-74, 226-27, 239-41, 293-96)

Film: *Hester Street*

[PBS NewsHour segment: contemporary Reform Jews]

According to Benjamin Roth, what were the dangers for Jews migrating to America?

Despite the perceived dangers, European Jews also imagined the United States as “a land of milk and honey.” What happened to the religious faith and observances of many, once they

arrived there? In what ways did traditional practices change? Why do you think that they changed?

V. LIBERALS AND CONSERVATIVES EMBATTLED (20th and 21st centuries)

WEEK TEN (3/15, 17, 19):

Modernist Liberals and Fundamentalist Conservatives: Protestantisms in Conflict

READ: M: Allitt: Ch. 8 Doc. 4 (234-36)

The World's Parliament of Religions, held in Chicago in 1893, brought representatives of Asian religions to speak officially to the American public for the first time. Among them was a Hindu from India, Swami Vivekananda, who would later found the Vedanta Society in the United States. What were some of his observations of American culture and society? How did many Americans respond to him?

W: Carroll: Part VI: Religions of the Modern Age; Fundamentalist Protestantism, Holiness and Pentecostalism (112-19)

Allitt: Ch. 9 intro, Docs. 4, 5 (258-59, 266-69)

Biblical interpretation was at the heart of the modernist-fundamentalist (now the liberal-conservative) debate within Protestantism in the early 20th century. According to Gladden, what is "higher criticism"? According to Bryan, what is "biblical infallibility"? Which argument do you find more persuasive?

F: Allitt: Ch. 13 Doc. 2; Ch 12 Garrow essay (398-400, 379-84)

Hal Lindsey is a conservative premillennialist, who believes that social and other evils in the world will inevitably worsen until Jesus returns. What is the "rapture"?

Dr. M. L. King, Jr., was a liberal postmillennialist, who believed that Christians are called to improve society in practical ways, as in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. What did he mean by "taking up the cross" and the "Promised Land"?

<<< 3/22, 24, 26: SPRING BREAK >>>

Gender Matters

WEEK ELEVEN (3/29, 31, 4/2):

Women's Ordination

READ: M/W: Explore website: "Women's Ordination": www.womenpriests.org/

Look around website. Then, at the homepage (in English), towards bottom of page, click on "the academic mode." Scroll down to "Quick Menu Options" and click on "Our Discussion with the teaching authorities in Rome." Print out this "Summary of the two positions" (bring to class) and click on each of the topics (Scripture, Tradition, Theology, and Authority) to read more details about the arguments.

What is the Roman Catholic Church's official stance on the ordination of women to the priesthood?

Note the arguments against women's ordination and the responses by those who are for women's ordination.

What is your position on the ordination of women as ministers, pastors, priests, or rabbis in Christianity and Judaism?

Wed., 3/31: WEBSITE REVIEW due:

Women's Ordination in Roman Catholicism (www.womenpriests.org)

The Goddess

F: Allitt: Ch. 13 Docs. 5, 6 (407-12)
[Video clip: Starhawk, Goddess spirituality]

Why are many women turning to Goddess worship? Why is the Goddess a powerful symbol for these women?

In what ways do adherents of the Goddess practice their spirituality?

WEEK TWELVE (MW, 4/5, 7. No class F, 4/9, Spring Holiday):

Promise Keepers

M: Explore website: Promise Keepers: www.promisekeepers.org
[PBS NewsHour segment: Promise Keepers]

What is Promise Keepers? What are the 7 Promises? What is the purpose of the organization? Based on the testimonies and personal stories posted on the website, do you think PK has been successful? Note the athletic and militaristic language and images used by PK to construct a "masculine" form of Christianity.

Mon., 4/5, WEBSITE REVIEW due: Promise Keepers (www.promisekeepers.org)

*****Wednesday, 4/7: EXAM #2*****

VI. AMERICAN RELIGIOUS KALEIDOSCOPE (20th and 21st centuries)

WEEK THIRTEEN (4/12, 14, 16):

A Total Way of Life: Islam in America

READ: MWF: Carroll: Islam in America (102-03)
Allitt: Ch. 14 Docs. 4, 5, and Voll essay (437-44, 452-57)
[PBS NewsHour segment: Post-9/11 American Muslims]

What is the prevailing attitude of Muslims toward American culture? What positive elements do Muslims feel that American society has to offer them? What difficulties do Muslims, including teenagers, face in American culture? Do these problems tend to cause them to be more or less religious?

East Meets West, West Meets East: Asian Religions in America

WEEK FOURTEEN (4/19, 21, 23):

American Pujas: Hinduism

READ: M: Carroll: Hinduism and Sikhism in America (104-07)
What is the difference between "export religions" and "ethnic religions"?

W: Allitt: Ch. 13 Doc. 3 (400-03)

Why did some Euroamerican young people become Hare Krishnas in the 1970s?

F: Allitt: Ch. 14 Doc. 6 (444-47)

Explore website:

Hindu Temple of Atlanta: www.hindutempleofatlanta.org

[Video clip: American Hindu homes and temples]

What is the relationship between religion and cultural identity for Asian immigrants to the United States? What is different about religious practices in America than in India and other Asian countries?

Describe the deities represented at the Hindu Temple of Atlanta. What activities occur at the temple? What kinds of items are required for pujas and other functions?

Fri., 4/23: WEBSITE REVIEW due:
Hindu Temple of Atlanta (www.hindutempleofatlanta.org)

WEEK FIFTEEN (4/26, 28, 29):

All Things Are Impermanent: Buddhism

READ: M: Carroll: Buddhism in America (108-11)

Allitt: Fields essay (457-63)

[Video clip: Thich Naht Hahn, American Buddhism]

What does Fields mean by the “dual development” of American Buddhism? What are the differences between “white Buddhists” and “ethnic Buddhists”? What role has racism played in American Buddhism?

W: Explore website: Cleveland Buddhist Temple:

<http://samsara.law.cwru.edu/~cbt/>

Look at “Images of the Temple” and “Supervising Minister”; print out, read, and bring to class “History of the Temple.” Read through “Current Electronic Bulletin”; print out, read, and bring to class “Sensei Talk.”

What form of Buddhism is practiced at the Cleveland Buddhist Temple? Which ethnic group is affiliated with the temple? Describe the Buddhist values represented and promoted. What activities do members engage in?

F: Explore website: The Mindful Life Sangha of South Texas:

www.geocities.com/athens/styx/8732/

Under Sangha News and Website Updates, click on HERE for the article on the sangha in the *Corpus Christi Caller Times*. Print article, read, bring to class.

What form of Buddhism is practiced at the Mindful Life Sangha of South Texas? What is “mindfulness”? What is “zazen”? Why have Euroamericans been attracted to this form of Buddhism?

VII. UNITY AND DIVERSITY REVISITED

WEEK SIXTEEN (MW 5/3, 5)

Mon, 5/3: FIELD EXPERIENCE #2 DUE.

View and discuss in class: Interviews with Diana Eck

FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE:

Section 2 (noon-12:50): Mon., 5/10 11:00 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Section 1 (11-11:50): Wed., 5/12 11:00 a.m. – 1 p.m.