



RELIGION IN AMERICAN HISTORY

REL 2121-03 Spring 2013
MWF 10:10-11 am
@USreligionFSU
Florida State University
College of Arts and Sciences

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-2 and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Religion has not played merely a supportive, even reactionary role in American history but has been central to everything from territorial expansion to legislative documents to foreign policy to the classification and interpretation of our very bodies. This course is a survey of American religious history from pre-colonial through contemporary America. By turning to texts, objects, artworks, films, and recorded audio, we will use the tools of historical study to chart continuities and change in religious practice over a period of tremendous population diversification and territorial expansion. Although the readings are at times rigorous, you are responsible for all materials.

This is a Liberal Studies, Area IV (Humanities and Fine Arts) course that meets Gordon Rule requirements.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Broadly conceived, students in this course will:

- Become familiar with major (and some minor) religious events, figures, movements, and themes in American religious history

- Recognize the interconnections between religious, social, economic, racial, technological, political, geographical, and intellectual contexts that inform how people embody and practice their faiths
- Engage critically with primary artifacts, including texts, looking for how normative categories (gender, race, sexuality, class, etc.) are prescribed, embodied, challenged, complicated, or modified in religious practices
- Demonstrate academic writing competency through required written assignments

COURSE MATERIALS

R. Marie Griffith, *American Religions: A Documentary History* (2007)

Bret E. Carroll, *The Routledge Historical Atlas of Religion in America* (2000)

Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements* (1890) **NOTE: Please purchase the Dover 1971 edition [reprinted 2010] with 100 photographs from Riis's collection.**

Zora Neale Hurston, *Jonah's Gourd Vine* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2008 [1934]).

Jack Kerouac, *The Dharma Bums* (New York: Penguin Classics, 2006 [1958]).

All additional material marked with an asterisk [*] is required reading and is available in .pdf format on Blackboard.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

All written assignments must be submitted in hard copy and to SafeAssign by 5pm on the date of the published deadline. Late papers will not be accepted for credit unless mitigating circumstances have been addressed well in advance of the deadline. All other submissions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

- 1) **Weekly Tweets (due Fridays by 5pm):** 3 tweets/week (5pts each week [75 total], 15% of final grade). At least two tweets each week must be in response to material covered in lectures, readings, or other course material using the hashtags provided. You may tweet/retweet at least one additional link to articles, images, videos, or other relevant web content for credit (see further guidelines on Blackboard). Do not replicate your peers' posts. Please include the handle @USreligionFSU in your tweets.
- 2) **Midterm Exam** (50 points, 10% of final grade). This examination assesses material from the first half of the course and consists of definitions, identifications, and short essays.
- 3) **Final Exam** (75 points, 15% of final grade). This examination is comprehensive (though predominantly assesses material from the last half of the course) and consists of definitions, identifications, and short essays.
- 4) **Film Review.** 1000-1250 words. (100pts, 20% of final grade). For this assignment, you will select one film (major motion picture, indie, documentary, etc.) and write a

1000 – 1250 word review. Please see the guidelines on Blackboard for further information. **DUE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15, by 5pm.**

- 5) **Field Experience Essay.** 1000-1250 words (100pts, 20% of final grade). Your second project will be an ethnographic “field experience” of a local religious body (not your “home” institution, denomination, or tradition) or cultural center in order to develop a critical-yet-empathetic understanding of religion “on the ground.” See guidelines on Blackboard for additional information. **DUE FRIDAY, MARCH 29, by 5pm.**
- 6) **Primary Source Essay.** 1000-1250 words (100pts, 20% of final grade). The final paper will be a critical analysis of a primary document or artifact of your choice (you are not limited to assigned material) in which you will aim to situate the document or artifact in its contemporary historical context as well as elaborate on how it testifies to, challenges, or otherwise relates to the broader, diachronic themes encountered in the course. See guidelines on Blackboard for additional information. **DUE FRIDAY, APRIL 26, by 5pm.**

Grading Policy:

In this course, grades will be distributed as follows (in percentages):

		A:	470-500
Tweets:	75 points	A-:	450-469
Midterm Exam:	50	B+:	435-449
Final Exam:	75	B:	420-434
Film Review:	100	B-:	400-419
Field Experience:	100	C+:	385-399
Primary Source Essay:	100	C:	370-384
<hr/>		C-:	350-369
Semester total:	500 points	D+:	335-349
		D:	320-334
		D-:	300-319
		F:	<300

POLICIES and PROCEDURES

ACADEMIC HONOR POLICY

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University’s expectations for the integrity of students’ academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to “... be honest and truthful and ... [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University” (Florida State University Academic Policy, found at <http://dof.fsu.edu/honorpolicy.htm>.)

The policy of the Department of Religion is that all violations of the FSU honor code, even first offenses, will result in a grade of zero for the assignment and will be reported to the Office of the Dean of the Faculties. Additional sanctions may be imposed by FSU as part of the procedure for resolving academic honor allegations.

It is a violation to use the course Blackboard site for purposes of buying or selling. This includes attempts by students to buy and/or sell class notes. Such practices are prohibited and will immediately result in the student receiving a zero for the assignment with regard to which he/she was trying to buy or sell class notes. It is also a violation to use Blackboard in any other way that conflicts with the Honor Policy.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT

Beepers, cellular phones, and other devices that make noise are disruptive and not welcome in class. Other disruptive practices that are disallowed in class include reading newspapers, books or other material unrelated to the course; texting someone; or copying someone's class notes from days that you missed. Laptops and tablets are allowed for the purpose of note-taking and reference but can also pose a distraction both to yourself and to your peers so please monitor your own use of these devices.

If class is canceled because of bad weather or for some other reason, assume that the following class day will be conducted according to the regular class schedule described in the Schedule of Classes. You should be prepared with the regularly scheduled material when class resumes. If class is canceled on a day that an exam is scheduled, plan to take the exam on the first day that class resumes.

It is distracting and disrespectful if you gather your things, close books, put on a jacket, etc., before class is over. If you need to leave class early, discuss this with me before class so that the disruption is minimal. I also reserve the right to move students from one seat to another and to dismiss students whom I believe to be disruptive.

CIVILITY STATEMENT

Students are expected to communicate in a civil manner in academic interactions at all times, both in and out of the classroom. This means that interactions are to be carried out in a polite, courteous and dignified manner. Class discussion should be respectful and understanding towards both peers and professors. Gender inclusive language is expected in both writing and class discussion. "Mankind" or "man" does not refer to all people. The issue at stake here is not one of political correctness but of historical and analytical accuracy. In every instance you should work to identify as clearly as possible the people, artifacts, events, or figures you are describing or interpreting.

Along the same lines, the academic study of religion focuses on understanding and explanation. The goal is not to persuade persons to join a particular religious group. Students may not proselytize in class. Recitations from religious scriptures offered as "proof" of derogatory views of other religions (e.g., "Group X is inferior because it says in the Bible that ...") are not constructive in the classroom.

GRADING DISPUTES

In order to ensure that each student's work is graded in accordance with standards that apply to the entire class, if you have a question regarding a grade, you must meet with me within one week after the work in question is graded. No exceptions will be made to this policy. If the exam or assignment is re-scored, the entire exam or project will be graded again. This means that your score may increase *or decrease*.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

University regulations stipulate that no student shall be penalized for missing class due to a religious holiday (General Bulletin, 2011-2012, "Class Attendance"). Please notify the instructor in advance if a religious

holiday you plan to observe falls on a day scheduled for class. The FSU website on this topic is http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/undergrad/info/acad_regs.htm# ClassAttendance.

ADA REQUIREMENTS

Students with disabilities who need academic accommodations should:

1. Register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC).
2. Bring a letter to the instructor from the SDRC indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done within the first week of class.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact:

sdrc@admin.fsu.edu, Student Disability Resource Center, 874 Traditions Way, 108 Student Services Building, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167, (850) 644-9566 (voice); (850) 644-8504 (TDD). Email: sdrc@admin.fsu.edu. See also <http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>.

GORDON RULE REQUIREMENTS

This is a "Gordon Rule" class. This means that the assignments given to each student must include a minimum of 3,000 written words. This is to help identify ways that students can improve their writing early in their college careers.

To receive FSU's Gordon Rule "W" Designation (writing) credit for this course, the student must earn a "C-" or better, and in order to receive a "C-" or better in the course, the student must earn at least a "C-" on the required writing assignments. If the student does not earn a "C-" or better on the required writing assignments for the course, the student will not earn an overall grade of "C-" or better, no matter how well the student performs in the remaining portion of the course.

LIBERAL STUDIES AREA IV (HUMANITIES AND FINE ARTS)

The Liberal Studies Program at Florida State University has been designed to provide a perspective on the qualities, accomplishments and aspirations of human beings, the past and present civilizations we have created, and the natural and technological world we inhabit. This course has been approved as meeting the requirements for Liberal Studies Area IV, Humanities and Fine Arts, and in combination with your other Liberal Studies courses, provides an important foundation for your lifelong quest for knowledge.

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and subject to change with advance notice.

EMAIL POLICY

I do my best to respond to students' emails within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours over the weekend or other scheduled university breaks. Please consult your syllabus and Blackboard before asking questions about readings or assignments. Please also be aware of when you are emailing. I am far more likely to respond promptly to emails sent between 8am and 8pm than those sent overnight. Finally, please also make sure that you clearly identify yourself and your course in any communication, especially early in the semester.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

WEEK ONE:

WHAT IS RELIGION? WHAT IS AMERICA?

1/7 M:

Introduction to the course, administrative details, review syllabus.

#rel2121firstimpressions: tweet your first impressions about this course and/or a topic you are particularly interested in

1/9 W:

*McCutcheon, "What is the Academic Study of Religion?"

Griffith, 624-627: "Religious Expression in Public Schools," U.S. Department of Education (1995)

#rel2121firstamendment: tweet one reference to a first amendment issue (it can be from either a legal or cultural vantage) involving religion

1/11 F:

Carroll, 8-11, 128-31.

Griffith, xx-xxiv

UNIT 1: "NEW WORLD" ENCOUNTERS: THE COLONIST, THE NATIVE, AND THE SLAVE

WEEK TWO:

CATHOLICISM and CALVINISM in the NEW WORLD

1/14 M:

Carroll, 12-17, 20-21

*Bernal Diaz del Castillo Describes Cortes' Replacement of Human Sacrifice with the Cult of the Virgin Mary" (1519)

**"Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, a Spanish Castaway, Becomes an Indian Healer" (1542)

**"Rabbit and the Turkeys" and "Rabbit Tricks Great One Who Eats Human Beings" (Koasati narratives recorded ca. 1910)

#rel2121colonialencounters: tweet a reaction from either indigenous Americans or European explorers/colonizers (make sure your context cues identify your perspective)

1/16 W:

Carroll, 24-27

Griffith, 2-3: "Bull Sublimis Deus," Pope Paul III (1537)

1/18 F:

Carroll, 30-39

Griffith, 11-15: John Cotton, "Spirituell Milk for Boston Babes in Either England"

Griffith, 16-19: John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity" (1630)

#rel2121bostonbabes: tweet from onboard the *Arbella* after Winthrop's sermon or as a young person in early New England reading Cotton's catechism

WEEK THREE:

COLONIAL CALVINISMS

1/21 M: MLK Day—***No Classes***

1/23 W: Griffith, 23-27: Anne Bradstreet, “To My Dear Children” and “To My Dear and Loving Husband” (1650)

Griffith, 37-63: “The Examination of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson” (1637)

#rel2121twoannes: tweet as one of these two women

1/25 F: Griffith, 73-75: William Penn, “Letter to the Indians” (1681)

Griffith, 63-73: Mary Rowlandson, *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (1682)

#rel2121rowlandson: tweet Mary Rowlandson’s message from captivity

WEEK FOUR:

SPIRITUAL “AWAKENING”

1/28 M: Carroll, 40-43

Griffith, 80-90: Cotton Mather, from “Wonders of the Invisible World” (1692)

#rel2121saalemtrials: tweet as an observer or participant in the witchcraft proceedings

1/30 W: Carroll, 56-59

Griffith, 92-102: Jonathan Edwards, from “Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New-England” (1743)

*“Nathan Cole, Connecticut Farmer, Hears the Preaching of George Whitefield and is Born Again”

#rel2121awakening: tweet as someone listening to a sermon by Edwards or Whitefield or as Nathan Cole

2/1 F: Carroll, 44-55

Griffith, 115-121: John Wesley, “A Plain Account of Christian Perfection” (1777)

Griffith, 121-127: Phyllis Wheatley, “On Being Brought from Africa to America” (1773) and “On the Death of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield” (1770)

#rel2121phylliswheatley: tweet a micropoem by Phyllis Wheatley

Griffith, 148-150: “The Petition of the Philadelphia Synagogue to Council of Censors of Pennsylvania” (1783)

#rel2121phillyjews: tweet as either an advocate or a critic of the petition being deliberated

UNIT 2: NEW REPUBLICS: ENLIGHTENMENT, REVOLUTION, and REVIVAL

WEEK FIVE: ESTABLISHING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

- 2/4 M: *"Benjamin Franklin Explains His Religious Views in a Letter" (1756)
Griffith, 150-151: Thomas Jefferson, "A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom" (1779)
Griffith, 152-156: James Madison, "Memorial and Remonstrance Against Religious Assessments" (1785)
#rel2121foundingfathers: tweet as Benjamin Franklin, James Madison, or Thomas Jefferson identifying their views on religion
- 2/6 W: *"John Witherspoon Preaches the Revolutionary War as God's Test to Sinners" (1776)
*"Jonathan Boucher's Loyalist Sermon Denounces the Revolution" (1775)
#rel21211776: tweet as either a loyalist or a patriot on the role of God in the American Revolution
- 2/8 F: * Thomas Jefferson, *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth*, ed. Cyrus Adler (1904) [Skim through Adler's introduction and familiarize yourself with the plates]
#rel2121thomasjefferson: tweet Jefferson's understanding of Jesus for the new republic

WEEK SIX: SECOND GREAT AWAKENING

- 2/11 M: Carroll: 60-69
Griffith, 157-162: Hannah Adams, from *An Alphabetical Compendium of the Various Sects Which have Appeared in the World from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Present Day* (1785)
#rel2121greatrevival: tweet an assessment of American religion in the early 19th century
- 2/13 W: Carroll, 70-71
*"Orestes Brownson Recalls his Quest for the Right Religion as a Young Man" (ca. 1820)
#rel2121seekers: tweet your definition of religion and state in 1835
- 2/15 F: Griffith, 189-196: Charles Grandison Finney, from *Memoirs* (1876)
#rel2121CharlesFinney: tweet from the scene of a Finney revival

FILM REVIEW DUE BY 5 pm

UNIT 3: UTOPIAN VISIONS: THE ANTEBELLUM “SPIRITUAL HOTHOUSE”

- WEEK SEVEN:** SEEKERS
- 2/18 M: Carroll: 72-77, 80-83
Griffith, 172-183: Emerson, “Divinity School Address” (1838)
#rel2121emerson: tweet as a Harvard Divinity School graduate hearing Emerson’s sermon
- 2/20 W: Carroll: 78-80
*John Humphrey Noyes, excerpts from “Bible Communism” and “Male Contenance” (1849)
*“Lucy Wight Meets Shaker Leader Mother Ann Lee” (1826)
#rel2121oneida or #rel2121shakers: tweet as a woman living among one of these communities
- 2/22 F: Carroll: 80-83
Griffith, 164-72: Joseph Smith, *The Articles of Faith* (1842) and *Revelation* (1835)
#rel2121mormons: tweet as either a Mormon convert or as an incredulous/skeptical outsider in 1855
- WEEK EIGHT:** SLAVERY and ENSLAVEMENT
- 2/25 M: Carroll: 84-87
Griffith, 197-213: Jarena Lee, from *The Life and Religious Experience of Jarena Lee* (1836)
*Jacobs, “The Church and Slavery,” *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861)
#rel2121blackwomensvoices: tweet your comparison of Lee and Jacobs’s memoirs
- 2/27 W: Griffith, 220-235: Angelina Grimke, *Appeal to Christian Women of the South* (1836)
Griffith, 235-239: Catherine Beecher, *Essay on Slavery and Abolitionism* (1837)
#rel2121whitewomensvoices: tweet your comparison of Grimke and Beecher’s positions on enslavement
- 3/1 F: Griffith 213-220: Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845)
Griffith, 239-244: George D. Armstrong, from, *The Christian Doctrine of Slavery* (1857)
#rel2121christianityandslavery: tweet as either Douglass or Armstrong defending his position on Christianity and slavery

UNIT4: FRACTURING AN “EMPIRE” AND IMAGINING A NATION

- WEEK NINE: RELIGION in the “WHITE REPUBLIC”
- 3/4: *Abraham Lincoln, “Second Inaugural Address” (1865)
In addition to the printed Address, please also review the manuscript in Lincoln’s handwriting:
<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=38#>
#rel2121secondinaugural: tweet as someone hearing Lincoln’s speech on March 4, 1865, and responding to his references to God
- 3/6: ***MIDTERM EXAM***
- 3/8: Carroll: 88-97
Griffith, 321-323: “The Pittsburgh Platform” (1885)
*“Bintel Brief” Letters to the *Forward*
#rel2121bintelbrief: as a recent immigrant, tweet a question to Abraham Cahan about Judaism in America or tweet as someone attending the Trefa Banquet in 1883

WEEK TEN: ***SPRING BREAK—NO CLASSES 3/11-3/16***

- WEEK ELEVEN: INVITATIONS and INVASIONS
- 3/18 M: Carroll: 98-111
Griffith, 196-197: Bishop Innocent Veniaminov, “Instructions to the Priest-Monk Theophan” (1853)
*Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull-House*, “Preface” and “Chapter XI: Immigrants and their Children” (1912)
<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/addams/hullhouse/hullhouse.html#371>
Griffith, 389-402: James Freeman Clarke, from *The Ten Religions and Christianity* (1871)
#rel2121otherchristians: tweet as a recent Orthodox or Catholic immigrant to the US in the 19th century
- 3/20 W: Griffith, 365-382: Josiah Strong, from *Our Country* (1886)
Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*, selections.
#rel2121otherhalf: tweet as someone viewing Riis’s photographs of tenement life in the 1890s

- 3/22 F: Griffith, 402-411: Swami Vivikenanda, "Farewell" (1893)
 Griffith, 384-389: Mabel Potter Daggett, from *The Heathen Invasion of America* (1912)
#rel2121heathen: tweet as someone describing representations of Eastern religions at the Chicago World's Fair or as someone responding to Daggett's assessment of immigration in 1912

UNIT 5: (RE)BIRTH OF A NATION: FUNDAMENTALISM, RENAISSANCE, AND REVIVAL

WEEK TWELVE: MODERNISM and FUNDAMENTALISM

- 3/25 M: Carroll: 112-119
 * "Washington Gladden Explains Higher Criticism" (1894)
 * "William Jennings Bryan Defends Biblical Infallibility" (1924)
 Griffith, 418-423: Harry Emerson Fosdick, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?"
#rel2121bibledebates: tweet from the courtroom of the Scopes Trial or as either Gladden or Bryan defending his position on biblical authority in modern (early 1900s) American society
- 3/27 W: Griffith, 328-341: W.E. B. du Bois, "The Sorrow Songs," "Credo," and "A Litany of Atlanta"
#rel2121souls: tweet your response to *Souls of Black Folk*
- 3/29 F: WATCH: D. W. Griffith, *Birth of a Nation* (1915)
http://archive.org/details/dw_griffith_birth_of_a_nation
#rel2121birthofanation: tweet the reaction of someone seeing Griffith's film for the first time in 1915

***** FIELD EXPERIENCE PAPER DUE AND DEBRIEFING*****

WEEK THIRTEEN: RELIGION and the NEW NEGRO

- 4/1 M: Carroll, 120-123
 * Langston Hughes, "Prayer Meeting," "Feet o' Jesus," "Spirituals," "Ma Lord," "Christ in Alabama," "Personal"
 * Countee Cullen, *The Black Christ* (1929)
 * Johnson, *God's Trombones* (intro)
#rel2121newnegro: tweet the response of someone who has recently read one of these selections in the 1920s or 1930s

4/3-4/5 W-F: Zora Neal Hurston, *Jonah's Gourd Vine* (1934)

Reading Prompts: What is the plot of this novel? Who was Zora Neale Hurston? What role does religion play in the story? Whose story is it? Does Hurston seem to endorse the Harlem Renaissance or does she see room for critique? Does she anticipate the Civil Rights movement? What is the evidence for either position?

#rel2121zora: tweet Hurston's response to the prototype of the New Negro

UNIT 6: AMERICAN RELIGION IN A GLOBAL WORLD AND THE GLOBAL WORLD IN AMERICAN RELIGION

WEEK FOURTEEN: WAR and RELIGION

4/8: **Readings TBA**

#rel2121ww2: tweet as a recently incarcerated Japanese American Buddhist

4/10: *"Alan Watts Explains the Fascination of Zen Buddhism" (1972)

Jack Kerouac, *The Dharma Bums* (1958)

#rel2121dharmabums: tweet Ray's /Kerouac's assessment of American culture

4/12: Kerouac, *The Dharma Bums* (1958)

#rel2121haiku: tweet a haiku of religion in American history

WEEK FIFTEEN: CIVIL RIGHTS / CIVIL RELIGION

4/15 M: Griffith, 499-502: "Howard and Sue Bailey Thurman Meet with Mahatma Gandhi"

Griffith, 502-514: Martin Luther King, Jr. "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" (1963)

LISTEN: MLK "I Have a Dream" (August 28, 1963): http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc_august_28_1963_i_have_a_dream/

#rel2121ihaveadream: tweet as someone who is listening to King's speech on the radio

4/17 W: * Malcolm X, "Letter from Mecca" and "Telegram to MLK"

#rel2121malcolmx: tweet as Malcolm X returning from the Hajj

4/19 F: **Readings TBA**
#rel2121religionandpolitics: tweet one example of the intersection of religion and politics in the last year (since April 2012)

WEEK SIXTEEN:

4/22 M: WATCH: *Divided We Fall*, dir. Valarie Kaur
#rel2121sikhsinamerica: tweet one reference to Sikhs in America

4/24 W: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/19/us/judge-allows-muslims-to-use-murfreesboro-mosque.html>
<http://www.npr.org/2011/01/13/132908971/Conn-Jewish-Group-Stuck-In-Zoning-Deadlock>
#rel2121americanmuslims: tweet as a Muslim responding to mischaracterizations of Islam in the media

4/26 F: *****PRIMARY SOURCE ESSAY DUE by 5pm*****
#rel2121lastimpressions: tweet your final assessment of the course

FINAL EXAM:

Monday, April 29, 5:30 to 7:30pm.