

REL 101-6-20

# First Year Seminar: Queer Religion

MW 2-3:20pm

Ashley King



About half of LGBTQ+ Americans identify as religious, though their stories may be less familiar to us than stories of religious oppression and acrimony. Today, conservative religious institutions lead the opposition to LGBTQ+ rights and provide the public framework for discrimination against queer people. Is religion homophobic and transphobic? Does it have to be?

This course explores how queer religious people in America, past and present, have made sense of their lives as queer and religious. We will ask how religion has shaped queer people's self-understanding as queer, and how queerness has shaped their understanding of faith through their stories of coming out, conversion, transition, diaspora, desire, loss, and healing from spiritual trauma. We will identify the many contributions queer people have made to American religious history—sometimes while hiding their rainbow under a bushel.

REL 172-20

# Intro to Religion, Media, & Culture

TTh 11-12:20pm

Sarah Taylor

Dive into one of today's most exciting and rapidly growing areas of scholarship – the intriguing entanglements of religion and media in society and culture. This course draws from an array of sources, such as television, film, and radio, digital gaming worlds, billboards, advertisements and media campaigns, popular music, streaming video, social media, and even tattoos, body art, and graffiti. Study media while getting to make your own media for course projects!



REL 210-20

# Intro to Buddhism

MW 12:30-1:50pm

Sarah Jacoby

This course provides an introduction to key aspects of the Buddhist religious traditions of multiple Asian countries and the United States. Through careful examination of a variety of literature produced by these traditions, we will consider the ways in which Buddhists have understood human suffering, life after death, karma, merit, the nature of the world and human's place within it, and the path to enlightenment. Our emphasis will be on attempting to understand the moral values, philosophical insights, ritual practices, and social concerns that have shaped Buddhism over centuries of dynamic change in diverse cultural contexts. We will examine not only the history of Buddhism and its three-fold division into Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana, but also facets of the contemporary practice of Buddhism with a focus on the place of mindfulness in America. In addition to textbook readings, course readings privilege primary source readings in order to introduce students directly to the narrative, doctrinal, liturgical, and biographical texts that inform our knowledge of what it has meant to live a Buddhist life over time and across cultures.



photos by Nisheeta Jagtiani



REL 230-20

# Intro to Judaism

MWF 9-9:50am

Barry Wimpfheimer

This course attempts to answer the questions "What is Judaism?" and "Who is a Jew?" by surveying the broad arc of Jewish history, reviewing the practices and beliefs that have defined and continue to define Judaism as a religion, sampling the vast treasure of Jewish literatures, and analyzing the unique social conditions that have made the cultural experience of Jewishness so significant. The class will employ a historical structure to trace the evolutions of Jewish literature, religion, and culture through the ages.



REL 312-20/ ALC 390-0-20

# Buddhism and Gender

W 3-5:30pm

Sarah Jacoby

The unifying theme of this seminar is gender and Buddhism. We take as our point of departure Carolyn Bynum's statement: "No scholar studying religion, no participant in ritual, is ever neuter. Religious experience is the experience of men and women, and in no known society is this experience the same." Bearing this in mind, we will explore historical, textual and social questions relevant to gender in the Buddhist worlds of India, Tibet, and the Himalayas from the time of Buddhism's origins to the present day. Topics covered in this course will include the roles of women, men, femininity, and masculinity in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, Buddhism and the family, gender and the body in Mahayana Buddhism, the roles of female goddess figures such as dakinis in Vajrayana Buddhism, Buddhism and sexuality, and the status of Buddhist nuns. Counts towards Religion, Sexuality, and Gender (RSG) religious studies major concentration.



## Religious Studies



REL 318-22 / ALC 290-0-20

# East Asian Religious Classics

TTh 11-12:20pm

Antonio Terrone

This course explores some of the most influential texts of the major East Asian religious and philosophical traditions including Confucianism, Daoism, Chan/Zen Buddhism, and Tibetan Buddhism still prominent in China, Japan, Tibet, and several other Asian societies today. The goal is to understand their significance in East Asian cultures, as well as consider what we can learn from these texts today. This course will probe the following questions: What are the major themes, dilemmas, and issues these texts address? How can humans achieve contentment in the world? What are the moral values these texts instill? Beyond this historical focus, this course will also reflect on ways that these literary and religious texts have been appropriated and adapted in the modern context. Each period dedicated to a specific text will be preceded by an introduction to the tradition it represents offering a historical background together with biographical and/or content outlines. Format The course format will include a combination of lecture and discussion. Students will be encouraged to exercise critical thinking and to participate in class discussions. Students will analyze primary source material in translation, critically evaluate content and concepts, and will be encouraged to synthesize the information and communicate it effectively and thoroughly.

REL 359-20 / ANTHRO 384-20 / MENA 301-3-20

# Traveling While Muslim: Islam, Mobility, and Security after 9/11

TTH 5-6:20pm

Emrah Yildiz

Particularly after the 9/11 attacks and during the long war on terror, Muslims on the move—ranging from international students, pilgrims, tourists and artists—have faced increasing scrutiny and surveillance in both global travel economies and national immigration regimes. These regimes gained even more importance under the rule of authoritarian leaders in power across the globe from the US to India. What often unites Modi's India and Trump's United States is Islamophobia—albeit in different guises—as racialization of Islam and Muslims continues to punctuate and puncture our current era. What are the stakes of traveling while Muslim in that post 9/11 era of racing Islam? How do we come to understand such mobility? What assumptions underpin the attendant constructions of religion and race in such understandings, as various state and non-state actors enlist themselves to manage the movements of Muslims, specifically and exceptionally? In probing these questions, amongst others, in this seminar we aim to examine the interlocked relationship between Islam, mobility and security. We have three aims: (1) becoming exposed to studies of Islam and Islamophobia in the US and across the globe, (2) gaining a better understanding of religion as a center tenet in a deeply uneven and racialized regime of 'global' mobility, and lastly, (3) critically analyzing global and local designs of security that manage those differential regimes of mobility. Counts towards Religion, Law, and Politics (RLP) major concentration.



REL 379-20 / AF\_AM 381-21 / LACS 391-20

# Religion, Culture, and Resistance in the Caribbean

TTh 2:00-3:20pm

KB Dennis Meade

The Caribbean constitutes a unique space to understand the history of resistance and social change in the Black Atlantic world. Going beyond the tropes of reggae, Rastafari, and tourism--this course provides an introduction to the diversity of religious traditions in the region, with a particular focus on Afro-Caribbean religious practices and spiritual technologies. Students will explore the cosmological features and embodied expressions that characterize these traditions. Through presentations, discussions, and writing assignments students will reflect on concepts such as belonging, migration, colonialism, race, class, and gender to understand the political and cultural implications of religion in the region. Counts towards Religion, Law, and Politics (RLP) major concentration.

**Religious Studies**

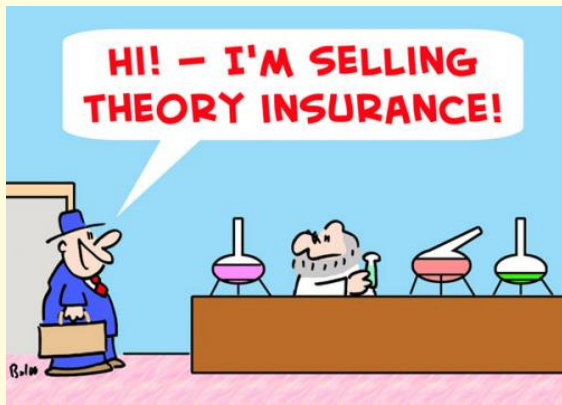


REL 395-20

# Theories of Religion

F 2-4:30pm

Sarah Taylor



What is "theory"? What does it mean to have a theory about something? How are theories helpful? What do theories do? What is "religion"? How do things get excluded or included in this category? What counts as "religious" and why? Who gets to decide? This course is an introduction to foundational theories of religion and to the history of the construction of the category of "religion" over time. Throughout the term, you will be working on formulating your own theory of religion, which you will articulate and defend in your final seminar paper. In this course, you will gain (as ritual theorist Catherine Bell says) "the skills and tools to make sure that very complicated situations and ideas can be put into words, thereby making it possible to have discussions about issues that can only be discussed if there is language for reflexivity, nuance, counter-evidence, and doubt." In the process, you will be asked to make theory translatable to your peers by actively engaging theoretical concepts in creative ways.



## Religious Studies

REL 473-20 / ALC 492-20

# Graduate Level: Religious and Literary Texts

TTh 2:00-3:20pm

Bloomfield

The Caribbean constitutes a unique space to understand the history of resistance and social change in the Black Atlantic world. Going beyond the tropes of reggae, Rastafari, and tourism--this course provides an introduction to the diversity of religious traditions in the region, with a particular focus on Afro-Caribbean religious practices and spiritual technologies. Students will explore the cosmological features and embodied expressions that characterize these traditions. Through presentations, discussions, and writing assignments students will reflect on concepts such as belonging, migration, colonialism, race, class, and gender to understand the political and cultural implications of religion in the region. Counts towards Religion, Law, and Politics (RLP) major concentration.



REL 482-20

# Graduate Seminar: Anthropology of Religion: Colonial Contexts

T 3-5:50pm

Michelle Molina

Theoretical and methodological approaches to comparative work in religious studies.

