Fall 2018

REL 6137 (09H6) Religion in North America

TIME: Monday Periods 3-5 (9:35 a.m.-12:35 p.m.)
PLACE: CBD 234
CREDITS: 3 Semester Hours
INSTRUCTOR: David G. Hackett
Office: 122 Anderson Hall
Office Hours: Monday 12:45-3:45 and by appointment
Phone: 273-2929
Email: DHackett@ufl.edu

DESCRIPTION:
Today the field of American religious history is in the midst of substantial revision. As recently as the 1970's what we knew about the American religious past came primarily from the study of formal theology and the histories of the established churches. A great and continuing strength of church history is its attention to the influence of religious ideas and to the relationship between religion and political affairs. Beginning in the 1960's, however, religious history started breaking away from church history. Influential historians, such as E.P. Thompson and Eugene Genovese, emphasized the emancipatory power of religion in helping ordinary people to oppose the ruling classes. By the 1970's, this conflict model was largely enveloped by the insights of anthropologists who directed historians' interest to the meaning and order conveyed to believers by religious symbols. Clifford Geertz's understanding of "religion as a cultural system," in particular, was widely read and appropriated throughout the discipline. By the late 1970's, this mixture of social history and cultural anthropology led to the emergence of the new area of "popular religion." Works by Jon Butler on magic and the occult, Rhys Isaac on the religious culture of eighteenth century Virginia, as well as new research on revivalism and slave religion all suggested the arrival of a new "popular" approach to the American religious past.

During the 1980's and up to the present the thrust of this new work has dramatically expanded the area of research. Native American religious history, non-existent as a field until the 1980's, is an exciting and rapidly emerging new discipline. Significant revisions are being made in our understanding of the African American religious past. New attention is being given to the relationship between religion, consumption, and social class. At the same time, the complex view of gender now current in women's studies is echoed in new works on women and men across class and racial lines. Since the 1990s, many studies now employ the methodology of “lived religion.” The twenty-first century has brought an Americas, transnational, global perspective that pushes us to see the religion in the United States as influenced by and a participant in larger world patterns.

The result of this new scholarship is not to offer a new interpretation of the American religious past. It is still not at all clear what should be the proper subject matter of religious history nor which methods and theories ought to be applied. The purpose of this course is to introduce graduate students to this rapidly changing field.
BOOKS TO PURCHASE


Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Harvard, 2001)

RECOMMENDED BOOK TO PURCHASE


REQUIREMENTS:

This is a proseminar. It is intended to immerse graduate students in the literature. You will read and critically assess major books, articles and methods current in the field. You will not do primary research. Within the seminar you will be expected to clearly report on your reading and directly respond to the ideas of your fellow students. All of the class meetings, your readings, and written assignments are intended to help you develop a knowledge of the historiographical and methodological terrain.

There are five major requirements:

1) Each week a core of common readings will form the basis of our discussions. Your careful reading and reflection upon these weekly readings is essential to the success of this course. The required books are listed in the syllabus, some are available at the University Bookstore and all can be purchased via the internet. Most of the articles will be available online through the course website.
2) Each week one student will be responsible for summarizing the methodological and historiographical issues contained in the week's common readings (two presentations will be required of each student). This summary will offer a starting point for our discussions.

3) Eight times in the course of the semester each student will be required to submit by class time a one page synthesis of the required readings for that day.

4) Each week one or more students will present written reports on particular books (Two will be required of each student). These reviews will consist of three to five pages, double-spaced. These students are also expected to provide expertise in the discussion of the week's topics based on their reading.

5) Each student will also prepare an historiographical essay on one of the historical periods or topics discussed in the field. The essay should be no longer than twenty pages in length. The subject may be based on one of the oral reports or book reports, and it should fully cover the topic.

GRADING:

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Historiographical Essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Report (2)</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Reviews (2)</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>One Page Historiographical Papers (8)</td>
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TOPICS AND READINGS:
*Available electronically through UF Course Reserves

First Week: Orientation (August 27th)

- Introductions
- Review of syllabus
- Course mechanics
- Theoretical considerations

Recommended Reading:


**Second Week NO CLASS (September 3rd) Labor Day**

**Third Week: The "New" Indian Religious History (September 10th)**

**Required Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**
2) Daniel K. Richter, "War and Culture: The Iroquois Experience" in Reader, 53-72.
4) Joel Martin, “From ‘Middle Ground’ to Underground’: Southeastern Indians and the Early Republic” in Reader, 139-158.

**Report Reading:**

**Fourth Week: The Early Colonial Religious World (September 17th)**

**Required Reading:**
1) Sarah Rivett, “The Puritans”
2) John Winthrop “A Model of Christian Charity”
   http://religiousfreedom.lib.virginia.edu/sacred/charity.html


Report Reading:

Fifth Week: African Americans (September 24th)

Required Reading:
1) Judith Weisenfeld, Religion in African American History

Recommended Reading:

Report Reading:

Sixth Week: The Great Awakening (October 1st)

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

Report Reading:
1) George Marsden, Jonathan Edwards: A Life (Yale, 2003)
2) E. Brooks Holifield, Theology in America (Yale, 2004)

Seventh Week: Religion and the Revolution (October 8th)

Required Reading:
1) Rhys Isaac, The Transformation of Virginia 1740-1790 (University of North Carolina, 1982).
2) *Clifford Geertz "Religion as a Cultural System" in The Interpretation of Cultures (Basic Books, 1973) 87-125.

Recommended Reading:

Report Reading:
1) Jon Butler, Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People (Harvard, 1990)

Eighth Week: New Religious Movements (October 15th)

Required Reading:

1) Mathew Bowman, Mormonism  

2) Richard Bushman, Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling - a cultural history of Mormonism’s founder (Vintage, 2007).

Report Reading:

Ninth Week: Class and Consumption (October 22nd)

Required Reading:


6) *Colleen McDannell, “Material Christianity” in her Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America (Yale, 1995), 1-16.

Report Reading:

Tenth Week: Catholicism (October 29th)

Required Reading:

Report Reading:

Eleventh Week: Gender and Religion (November 5th)

Required Reading:
1) Catherine Brekus, Women and American Religion
2) Ann Braude, Women’s History IS American Religious History,” in Reader 159-178.
Report Reading:

Twelfth Week November 19th NO CLASS American Academy of Religion Meetings

Thirteenth: Conservative Protestants and American Culture (November 26th)

Required Reading:
Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Harvard, 2001)

Recommended Reading:

Report Reading:

Fourteenth Week: Religion and Immigration after 1965 (December 3rd)

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:
1) *Robert A. Orsi, “Crossing the City Line” in Orsi ed. Gods of the City (Indiana, 1999), 1-79

2) Thomas A. Tweed, “Diasporic Nationalism and Urban Landscape: Cuban Immigrants at a Catholic Shrine in Miami” in Reader 497-514.


Report Reading:


*FINAL PAPERS ARE DUE ON Monday, December 10th*