

**CS525 NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT:  
RELIGION AND VIOLENCE  
SPRING 2006**

**Monday/Wednesday 9:30-11:18**

**Professor Erzen**

433 Hagerty Hall

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Office hours: Tuesday 2-3pm

**Course Description:**

Why are religious movements so often a force for violence as well as peace? How are gender and racial relations implicated in religious violence? How have people advocated for and participated in religious violence? How have they resisted such violence? This course will examine several global religious movements in order to address these questions. We first analyze different ways of defining and classifying religious violence. Then, we turn to case studies on conservative Christianity, foreign policy, and war; genocide in Rwanda and Darfur; the Taliban and Wahhabism; women's rights in Afghanistan; veiling and the role of Islam in Iran; and Hindu nationalism. The course concludes with examples of responses to religious violence. Throughout the quarter, we will explore key issues within the study of religion such as fundamentalism, millenarianism, conversion, religious warfare, colonialism, and post-colonialism.

**Readings:**

Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*

Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*

Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*

(available at SBX Book Store 1806 North High St., Phone: (614) 291-9528 and on reserve at the Main Library)

**The packet of articles is available for purchase from Zip Copy at SBX bookstore.**

**Assignments:**

The assignments for this course include: six media analyses, one take-home midterm, and a final paper project on an issue of religious violence.

**Six Media Analyses:**

A portion of the course will consist of media analyses and reports of contemporary religious movements and the issue of violence. The purpose of this assignment is to encourage students to read a variety of news sources on religion, to help students learn to analyze the media, and to enable students to connect the course material to the world outside the classroom.

We will have six meetings during the quarter in which to discuss your analyses. For these meetings, you should have on hand:

1. a hard copy of a current article about some issue related to religious violence

2. a hard copy of an analytical paper that you have written about the article
3. the text of the readings assigned for that class meeting

The articles you select must be current although they may reflect issues of religious violence either past or present. Articles may be culled from newspapers, magazines, or other online sources as long as they are dated and represent current material. You will turn in these articles and analytical papers at the end of the class meeting.

You must choose at least **4** different sources for your articles.

Only **two** of your articles can be arts or entertainment related.

**One** of your articles may be a political cartoon, comic, or otherwise.

Each analytical paper should be between 450-500 words- absolutely no longer or shorter. Include a word count at the end of your paper.

In writing the analytical papers, do not summarize the article. The paper should analyze the article, commenting on it in a way that goes beyond the article, and relates it to issues we have discussed in class. Discuss what the article is doing and how it pertains to the debates in class. Things to consider: who is the intended audience of this article? What is their agenda in writing it? What kind of intervention (political, social, cultural) does the article make?

**Take-home Midterm:** I will distribute the midterm questions one week prior to the midterm due date of **April 26<sup>th</sup>**.

**Final Paper:** Students will complete a final 8-10-page paper that reflects the theme of religious movements and violence. You may use your media analyses as a basis for the paper.

#### **Attendance and Participation:**

We are extremely fortunate to have two well-known speakers coming to campus this quarter who will address issues directly related to the course. **Melani McAllister** will talk about evangelical Christians and foreign policy. **Paul Rusesabagina**, the subject of the film *Hotel Rwanda*, will relate his experiences in Rwanda during the genocide. I have made these talks required. You may also use them as make-ups for classes you have missed. If your attendance record is already solid, you will receive extra credit for your final grade for attending these events.

I expect students to be active participants in their educations. This means that each student should come to class having carefully read the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss them. Because knowing how to articulate your ideas is a crucial part of the learning process, you will be expected, as a member of the seminar, to contribute your own unique perspective to our discussions.

The real action of our seminar takes place in the classroom. Therefore, it is important and expected that you will be at every class session. Inevitably, an occasion may arise when you are unable to attend. Out of fairness to your classmates who do attend every

class, chronic lateness and/or more than one unexcused absence will detract from your participation grade. To make up for a missed class, you may turn in a 1-page, single-spaced précis summarizing the reading for the class you missed. Finally, if you have any special needs or concerns with this course, please feel free to talk with me in person.

**Grading:**

Attentive presence and participation in discussion: 20%

Six Media Analyses: 30%

Take-home Mid-term Exam: 25%

Final Paper (8-10 pages) and Final Paper Presentation: 25%

**My computer crashed, and my grandma ate my homework...**

All essays should be written in 12-point, double-spaced type, with standard margins, and pages numbered and stapled. I will not accept a paper that is not stapled. *All written work should be thoroughly proofread.* There are no extensions, and all assignments are marked down one-third of a letter grade for every late day. **After 3 days, if you have not turned in your paper, you will automatically receive a "0" for that paper. No exceptions.**

**Student Conferences and E-mail Communication:** Please stop by office hours or schedule an appointment if necessary. You are also welcome to email me with questions related to the course. However, do not send any information or requests in an email that you would not discuss with me in person. I will not answer any email I deem inappropriate.

**Student Rights and Conduct**

Any student with a documented disability who may require special accommodations should identify him or herself to the instructor as early in the quarter as possible to receive effective and timely accommodations. You may also wish to contact the Office for Disability Services (150 Pomerene Hall, 292-3307).

Students are expected to know and understand the rules regarding academic misconduct, particularly the rules regarding plagiarism, as stated in the University's Code of Student Conduct. Plagiarism is the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own: it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas. All cases of plagiarism will be treated very seriously according to the University's guidelines.

**\* Readings in Packet**

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

**Monday March 27**

Introduction to the course

Read "Defenders of the Faith" in class

## **SECTION I: Understanding Religion and Violence**

### **Wednesday March 29**

\*Sally Bachner, "The Wrong Victims: Terrorism, Trauma, and Symbolic Violence"

\*Meredeth Turshen, "Definitions and Injuries of Violence"

\*Janet Jakobsen, "Is Secularism Less Violent than Religion?"

### **Monday April 3**

Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, pp. 1-15, 121-189

### **Wednesday April 5**

Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, pp. 190-249

**ANALYTIC PAPER 1 DUE**

## **SECTION II: Christianity, War, and Foreign Policy**

### **Monday April 10: Prophecy and Foreign Policy**

\*Melani McAllister "Making Israel Matter: Hal Lindsey and the Politics of Prophecy Talk"

\*Erin Runions, "Biblical Promise and Threat in U.S. Imperialist Rhetoric before and After 9/11"

\*Paul Boyer, "When U.S. Foreign Policy Meets Biblical Prophecy"

**REQUIRED: 4PM: Melani McAllister "The Global Visions of American Evangelicals" Humanities Institute, 104 East 15th Avenue**

### **Wednesday April 12: Class Debate: Religious Perspectives on the Iraq War**

\*Melani McAllister, "An Empire of their Own"

\*Charles Marsh "Wayward Christian Soldiers"

Read Online:

"What Would Jesus Do about War with Iraq?"

<http://www.biblebb.com/files/MAC/mac-lkl2.htm>

"Theologians slam Bush's use of God to justify war in Iraq"

[http://maroon.uchicago.edu/news/articles/2004/10/31/theologians\\_slam\\_bus.php](http://maroon.uchicago.edu/news/articles/2004/10/31/theologians_slam_bus.php)

"A just war?"

[http://www.boston.com/news/packages/iraq/globe\\_stories/100602\\_justwar.htm](http://www.boston.com/news/packages/iraq/globe_stories/100602_justwar.htm)

**ANALYTIC PAPER 2 DUE**

**Film: *Left Behind***

### **SECTION III: Religion, Genocide, and Ethnic Violence**

#### **Monday April 17: Defining Genocide**

\*Samantha Powers, "The Crime without a Name", "The Crime with a Name" from *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*

\*Philip Gourevitch, "After the Genocide"

#### **Wednesday April 19: Religion and Genocide in Rwanda**

\*Tim Longman, "Christian Churches and Genocide in Rwanda"

\*Charles de Lespinay, "The Churches and the Genocide in the East African Great Lakes Region"

**ANALYTIC PAPER 3 DUE**

\*\*\*\*\*MIDTERM DISTRIBUTED\*\*\*\*\*

**Film: *Hotel Rwanda***

#### **Monday April 24: Reparations and Justice**

\*Philip Gourevitch, "The Return"

\*Samantha Powers, "Rwanda: The Two Faces of Justice"

\*Tim Morgan, "Healing Genocide"

**Film: Finish *Hotel Rwanda***

#### **Wednesday April 26: Current Responses to Genocide: Darfur**

\*Samantha Powers, "Dying in Darfur"

\* Samantha Powers, "It's Not Enough to Call it Genocide"

Read the history section at [www.savedarfur.org](http://www.savedarfur.org)

\*\*\*\*\*MIDTERM DUE\*\*\*\*\*

**REQUIRED LECTURE: Paul Rusesabagina, 7:30 p.m** Ohio Union Ballroom  
sponsored by **OSU Hillel**

### **SECTION IV: Fundamentalism, Religion, and Violence**

#### **Monday May 1: Defining fundamentalism**

John S. Hawley, "Introduction" *Gender and Fundamentalism*

Susan D. Rose, "Christian Fundamentalism: Patriarchy, Sexuality and Human Rights"

#### **Wednesday May 3: Case Study: Wahhabism and the Taliban**

Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* pp.

**ANALYTIC PAPER 4 DUE**

**Film: *Osama***

**Monday May 8: Case Study: The Taliban continued**

Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* pp.

\*\*\*\*\*FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE\*\*\*\*\*

**SECTION V: Why are Gender and Sexuality so Often the Focus of Politicized Religion?**

**Wednesday May 10: Afghan Women Respond to Violence**

\*Sima Wali, "Afghanistan: Truth and Mythology" in *Women for Afghan Women: Shattering Myths and Claiming the Future*

\*Riffat Hassan, "Muslim Women's Rights" in *Women for Afghan Women: Shattering Myths and Claiming the Future*

**ANALYTIC PAPER 5 DUE**

**Monday May 15: Case Study: Veiling**

\*Homa Hoodfar, "The Veil in their Minds and on our Heads: Veiling Practices and Muslim Women"

**Film: *A Veiled Revolution***

**Wednesday May 17: Women in Iran**

Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*

**ANALYTIC PAPER 6 DUE**

**SECTION VI: Responding to Religious Violence**

**Monday May 22: Gujarat and Hindu Nationalism**

\*Paola Bacchetta, "Extraordinary Alliances in Crisis Situations: Women against Hindu Nationalism in India"

\*Anupama Rao, "Testifying to Violence: Gujarat as a State of Exception"

**Wednesday May 24: New Perspectives**

\*Azar Nafisi, "Tales of Subversion: Women Challenging Fundamentalism in the Islamic Republic of Iran"

\*Ghazala Anwar, "Reclaiming Religious Center from a Muslim Perspective: Theological Alternatives to Religious Fundamentalism"

**FINAL PAPER PRESENTATIONS**

**Monday May 29- MEMORIAL DAY**

**Wednesday May 31: Topic of your choice and FINAL PAPER PRESENTATIONS**

Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream"

Gandhi's Commentary on the *Baghavat Gita*

Malcolm X: On the Hajj: From the Autobiography of Malcolm X

### **Starting Places for Media Sources on Religion:**

**The Revealer:** [www.therevealer.org](http://www.therevealer.org): A daily review of religion in the news and the news about religion. We're not so much nonpartisan as polypartisan -- interested in all sides, disdainful of dualistic arguments, and enamored of free speech as a first principle. We publish and link to work by people of all persuasions, religious, political, sexual, and critical.

<http://www.therevealer.org/links.php>

*The Revealer's* links page links to media sources by religious tradition.

### **INCORE Guide to Internet sources on Religion and Conflict:**

<http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/services/cds/themes/religion.html>

### **Responding to Violence:**

<http://www.barnard.columbia.edu/crow/respondingtoviolence/colloquium.htm>

**The New York Times:** [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)

**Belief Net:** [www.beliefnet.org](http://www.beliefnet.org)

**Salon:** <http://www.salon.com/>

**The Progressive:** <http://www.progressive.org/>

**The BBC:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/>

**Newsweek:** <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3032542/site/newsweek/>

**Time Magazine:** <http://www.time.com>

**Bartholomew's Notes on Religion** looks at "religion in the news" from a perspective that's not so much liberal as relentlessly skeptical of absurdity, and intrigued by belief.

**B-Log** is the blog of Beliefnet. The site varies greatly in depth and quality, but they've got sharp folks on staff who all contribute to the blog, sort of a running tally of oddities and educational features about religion.

**Casing the Promised Land** offers an intelligent roundup of religion news from a center-left perspective.

**Christianity Today's blog** is a superb resource regardless of your faith or lack thereof. Regular blogger Ted Olson roams far and wide and has the wisdom to bring back more than just the controversy of the day.

**DeepBlog:** Not a God beat blog itself, but a good directory to the blogosphere with a growing list of "Spiritual Blogs."

**Direland,** a sharply written politics and media blog by journalist Doug Ireland, occasionally runs a "theocracy watch" column.

The Foundation for American Communications offers a terrific array of resources for all journalists, and its **Religion and Public Life Program** is especially useful for God beat reporters.

**Get Religion** is a pun -- get it? But then again, it's not. Its creators, veteran religion reporters Douglas LeBlanc and Terry Mattingly, consider smart, critical thinking about the news and the way religion often doesn't get to be the best witness of their Christian faith. Recommended for believers and nonbelievers alike.

**God and Consequences** offers religion commentary by sci-fi writer Lilith Saintcrow.

**Jak's View from Vancouver** includes the occasional comment on religion, including a 10,000-word essay on "The American Taliban."

**Jesus Politics** is a thorough anthology of readings, with some commentary, related to the political influence of Christianity from the Christian Right to the Jesus Left.

**Lattin Write** is a new blog by *The San Francisco Chronicle's* star religion writer, Don Lattin, author of *Following Our Bliss*.

**On Religion** is an excellent newsclipping service -- terrific links to the hot topic of the moment and good finds from the lesser-known press.

**OpEdNews's Religion and Politics** page publishes a fine collection of original, politically progressive religion essays as well as links to other noteworthy religion articles.

**The Raving Atheist**, "An Atheistic Examination of the Culture of Belief [on] How Religious Devotion Trivializes American Law and Politics," is an intensely intelligent, often funny, and all around well-made blog that's good enough for true believers as well as godless folk.

**Relapsed Catholic** is a fierce godblog without mercy for liberals or unbelievers, by Kathy Shaidle, a Canadian journalist and poet with a sharp eye for the absurd and compelling.

**Religion and Ethics Newsweekly** is the website of PBS' high-minded, thoughtfully-produced program. Looking for background on a contemporary religious thinker, a movement, or a conflict? Odds are you'll find good information and smart thinking here.

**Religion Blogs** -- "A compilation of religion blogs." Short comments on other people's commentary. A good guide to what the God Beat is busy with.

**Religion in the News** only comes out three times a year. But that's good, because it means you have plenty of time to absorb everything in each issue. Essential reading for students of the God beat and the journalists who work it.

**Religion News Blog** is a Christian site that rounds up reports on "religious cults, sects, new religious movements, alternative religions, apologetics-, anticult-, and countercult organizations, doctrines, religious practices and world views." Plus, apparently, Roseanne.

**Religion Review** is big and somewhat unimaginative, but it's a good starting point for research.

**The Religion Newswriters Association** maintains an excellent site that includes ReligionLink, a



guide to understanding religion in the news. Free for non-members.

**Religion & Society**: Perceptive and thoughtful blog on religion, society and culture from scholar J. Shawn Landres, who has written on 'American Religious Consequences' and "Religious Ethnography."

**Religion Source** provides referrals to over 5,000 religion scholars. Unfortunately, you must be a journalist to take advantage of this resource, which means no bloggers need apply. Just so you know.

**The Village Gate**, formerly *The Right Christians* (not the Christian Right). Liberal Christian views on religion in the news of the day.

**Speaking of Faith** is a weekly public radio program that asks "how perspectives of faith might offer illumination." That's a polite way of saying that host Krista Tippet takes religion and its role in the world seriously. Smart guests, smart questions.

**The Turnspit Daily**: Politics, Religion and their Confluence. A progressive, culti- politico-religio- blog with a name explanation that deserves to be quoted at length: "The word 'turnspit' is a noun meaning: 'One that turns a roasting spit.' It is often used in reference to a small dog that, during the mid-19th century, was placed in a treadmill to turn a roasting spit. For large households and manors, turning a spit could be tedious work, so they handed that job down to these small dogs. Below is a **picture** of 'Whiskey' the last remaining specimen of a turnspit dog. He is stuffed and kept on display. The breed died out some years ago. One could think of The Turnspit Daily as an attempt to place its subject matter on the skewer where we are the turnspit." Worth checking.