History 308/708, RN314/614, TX849 Religious Thought in America Fall Term, 2018

MWF: 1:25-2:15

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Course Description:

Few concepts have proved more difficult to define than *religion*, but most students of the subject would agree that religious traditions commonly include rituals and other practices, aesthetic and emotional experiences, and a body of ideas typically expressed as beliefs. This course focuses on those beliefs during the course of American history from the first English colonial settlement to the present and on their interaction with the broader currents of American culture.

Theology is the term often used to describe the systematic expression of religious doctrine. It is clearly possible, however, to discuss religious beliefs outside the context of formal theology, and it is at least arguable that some of the most influential beliefs in American history have received their most vivid and forceful expressions beyond the purview of theological discourse. Accordingly, while much of our attention in this course will focus on the works of theologians and clergy--the religious "professionals"--we shall also deal with religious strategies that a widely disparate group of other thinkers (e.g., scientists, artists, and other influential lay people) have deployed in attempting to account for the nature of the cosmos, the structure of the social order, and the dynamics of human experience. Most of the people whom we'll be studying were committed proponents of Christianity or Judaism, but the course lectures and readings will also occasionally move outside of those traditions to include others. In addition, the role of unbelief in American history will receive attention.

Course and Hub Objectives:

Through their examination of the history of American religious thought, students in HI308

- Will learn how to analyze historical narratives, develop and evaluate interpretations based on historical evidence derived from primary and secondary sources, and construct and critically examine historical arguments [Historical Reasoning].
- Will learn how to situate primary source material within an appropriate historical context [Historical Reasoning].
- 3. Will be able to demonstrate a knowledge of the major theological ideas that shaped American religious thought and how and why those ideas changed over time [**Historical Reasoning**].
- 4. Will be able to draw on a variety of concepts commonly used in the social sciences and apply those concepts in addressing the question of what historical forces helped to shape the nature and dynamics of American

religious thought from the colonial era to the present and in evaluating some of the competing claims that historians have made in addressing that question. Those concepts will include, but are not limited to, as civil religion, rational choice theory, secularization, identity, and modernization [Social Inquiry 1].

Assigned Work:

The written work in this course consists of a MIDTERM EXAMINATION, *tentatively* scheduled for **October 19**, a RESEARCH PAPER (see below), and a FINAL EXAMINATION on **Friday, December 21**, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. One half of the final examination will deal with material presented after the midterm examination, and the other half will be "comprehensive" in the sense that it will require students to draw on material addressed throughout the entire course.

Required Reading:

Charles Sheldon, *In His Steps* (Revell), ISBN 9780800786083 Abraham Cahan, *The Rise of David Levinisky* (Penguin USA), ISBN 9780140186871 William Peter Blatty, *The Exorcist* (Harper), ISBN 9780061007224

Other readings, hereafter abbreviated as BL, will be posted on the Boston University Blackboard Learn course website.

Students should use the editions of the books cited above. This will facilitate discussions by ensuring that everyone in the class will be referencing the same page numbers.

Films:

Students are required to view the films listed below outside of class. These films are either available online through Mugar Library or on reserve at Mugar Library in the Krasker Film Collection (some are also available through Netflix).

The Mayflower Pilgrims (1995) [Week 2] Online

The Chosen (1981) [Week 12] Online

Wise Blood (1979; 2014) [Week 13] Online

Doubt (2008) [Week 14] Krasker

Research Paper:

Students are required to write a paper analyzing the *religious* thought of an important American who has made religion a central concern. A list of suggested names appears at the end of the syllabus. This list is intended to be suggestive rather than comprehensive. Although

some people on the list (e.g., Woody Allen, Annie Dillard, and Stephen King) might well not spring to mind as "religious thinkers," they are included because they have made religious themes central to at least some of their work.

Students who wish to choose an individual not on the list should secure the approval of the instructor in writing by **SEPTEMBER 28**. The easiest way to do this is to either send an email with the suggested topic to the instructor or write the topic on a sheet of paper and submit it to the instructor.

The essay, which should be based on an examination of a meaningful sample (e.g., two or three books or the equivalent) of the person's work, ought to demonstrate an understanding of both the person's ideas and how those ideas relate to the intellectual/cultural/social context in which that person wrote.

The paper should be 5-7 typed, double-spaced pages in length. TWO COPIES of the papers must be submitted in hard copy; electronic versions will not be accepted. One copy will be returned to the student. The paper is **DUE NOVEMBER 19**.

Papers are welcome at any point in the semester up to and including that date. Late papers are not accepted except in cases of serious and unforeseeable misfortune.

IMPORTANT: The penalties for plagiarism and other academic misconduct can be--and properly should be--very severe. Students should consult the University Academic Conduct Code (www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/) if they are unsure of official standards.

All ideas, as well as quoted or closely paraphrased material within a paper, must be clearly attributed to the source from which they are taken. Feel free to check with the instructor if you have any questions about this.

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend class regularly and are responsible for all material covered in class. Attendance on days when class discussions are scheduled is especially important.

Grades:

The following formula will be used to compute grades in the course for undergraduates:

Midterm Examination30%Research Paper30%Final Examination40%

Students must complete all assigned work in order to pass the course.

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Assigned Work:

The written work in the course consists of **TWO BOOK REVIEWS** (see below), a **RESEARCH PAPER** (see below) and a **FINAL EXAMINATION**, which is scheduled for **Friday**, **December 21** from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Grading:

The following formula will be used to compute the course grade:

Book Reviews20%Research Paper40%Final Examination40%

Students must complete all written work in order to pass the course.

Required Reading and Book Reviews:

In addition to reading the works and watching the films assigned to undergraduates (see above), graduate students should read the secondary works listed below. They are required to write a two-page, double-spaced book review of **two** of these works. They may choose which of these books to review. The reviews of the books are due on the dates listed in parentheses.

Douglas L. Winiarski, *Darkness Falls on the Land of Light: Experiencing Religious Awakenings in Eighteenth-Century New England* (**review due September 17**)

Catherine L. Albanese, A Republic of Mind and Spirit: A Cultural History of American Metaphysical Religion, "Introduction" and chs. 3-5, 7 (review due October 5)

E. Brooks Holifield, *Theology in America*, chs. 1, 7-26 (review due October 22)

James Turner, Without God, Without Creed: The Origins of Unbelief in America (review due November 9)

Andrew Hartman, A War for the Soul of America: A History of the Culture Wars (review due November 26)

Research Paper:

Graduate students are required to write a research paper dealing with a topic in the history of religious thought in America. The paper should be 15-20 typed, double-spaced pages in length. The topic should be approved by the instructor by **SEPTEMBER 28**. As a preliminary step, graduate students are required to submit a partial and tentative list of the sources they plan to use in writing the research paper. This bibliography is **DUE IN CLASS OCTOBER 26**. The research paper is **DUE DECEMBER 5**.

Students are required to SUBMIT **TWO COPIES** of their papers. One copy will be returned to the student. All papers must be submitted in hard copy.

IMPORTANT: The penalties for plagiarism and other instances of academic misconduct can be--and properly should be--very severe. Students should consult the "Academic Discipline

Procedures of the Graduate School Committee on Academic Standards" (http://www.bu.edu/grs/academics/resources/adp.html) if they are unsure about official standards.

All ideas, as well as quoted or closely paraphrased material within a paper, must be clearly attributed to the source from which they are taken. Please feel free to discuss this with the instructor if you have any questions.

Reading Assignments, Discussions, Written Assignments, and Examination Schedule

Week 1 (Sept. 5-7)

Reading: John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity" (BL)

Sept. 5 Introduction to the Course

Week 2 (Sept. 10-14)

Reading: Michael Wigglesworth, "God's Controversy with New England" (BL); Jonathan Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" (BL)

Week 3 (Sept. 17-21)

Reading: Jonathan Edwards, selection from *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (BL); Ebenezer Gay, "Natural Religion as Distinguished from Revealed" (BL)

Sept. 17 GRADUATE STUDENT BOOK REVIEW OF WINIARSKI IS DUE

Sept. 21 DISCUSSION: Readings assigned in weeks 1-3

Week 4 (Sept. 24-28)

Reading: Freeborn Garrettson, "Substance of the Semi-Centennial Sermon . . ." (BL); William E. Channing, "Unitarian Christianity" (BL); Nathaniel W. Taylor, *Concio ad Clerum* (BL)

Sept. 28 **Undergraduates: Deadline** for submitting names not on the list at the end of the syllabus to the instructor

Graduate Students: Research topic must be submitted for approval

Week 5 (Oct. 1-5)

Reading: Charles G. Finney, selection from *Lectures on Revivals of Religion* (BL); Charles Hodge, selection from *Systematic Theology* (BL); Theodore Parker, "A Discourse of the Transient and Permanent in Christianity" (BL)

Oct. 5 GRADUATE STUDENT BOOK REVIEW OF ALBANESE IS DUE

Week 6 (Oct. 8-12)

Reading: Orestes Brownson, selections from "The Church and Its Mission" (BL); "The Life and Religious Experience of Jarena Lee . . ." (BL); Abraham Lincoln, "Second Inaugural Address" (BL)

Oct. 8 UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY

Oct. 9 SUBSTITUTE MONDAY SCHEDULE

Week 7 (Oct. 15-19)

No New Reading Assignments

Oct. 17 DISCUSSION: Readings assigned in weeks 4-6

Oct. 19 MIDTERM EXAMINATION

Week 8 (Oct. 22-26)

Reading: Charles Sheldon, *In His Steps*; John Augustine Ryan, "The Church and the Workingman" (BL)

Oct. 22 GRADUATE STUDENT BOOK REVIEW OF HOLIFIELD IS DUE

Oct. 26 Graduate Student List of Sources for Research Paper is Due

Week 9 (Oct. 29-Nov. 2)

Reading: Robert G. Ingersoll, "Why I Am An Agnostic" (BL); Borden P. Bowne, selection from *Personalism* (BL); A. A. Hodge and B. B. Warfield, "Inspiration," 225-244 (BL)

Week 10 (Nov. 5-9)

Reading: Theodore Munger, "The New Theology" (BL); William James, selection from *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (BL)

Nov. 9 GRADUATE STUDENT BOOK REVIEW OF TURNER IS DUE

Week 11 (Nov. 12-16)

Reading: Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*, ch. 14 (BL); John Ireland, "The Church and the Age" (BL); J. Gresham Machen, selection from *Christianity and Liberalism* (BL); Shailer Mathews, selection from *The Faith of Modernism* (BL)

Nov. 12 DISCUSSION: Readings assigned in weeks 8-10

Week 12 (Nov. 19-20)

Reading: "Pittsburgh Platform" (BL); Abraham Cahan, The Rise of David Levinisky

Nov. 19 UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PAPERS ARE DUE

Nov. 21-23 Thanksgiving Recess

Week 13 (Nov. 26-30)

Reading: "World's Parliament of Religions, 1893" (BL); *Humanist Manifesto* (BL); Carl F. H. Henry, selection from *Christianity Today* (BL); Paul Tillich, selection from *Systematic Theology* (BL)

Nov. 26 GRADUATE STUDENT BOOK REVIEW OF HARTMAN IS DUE

Week 14 (Dec. 3-7)

Reading: Selections dealing with Vatican II and *Humanae Vitae* (BL); Martin Luther King, Jr., selection from *Strength to Love* (BL); Tim LaHaye, selection from *The Battle for the Mind* (BL); William Peter Blatty, *The Exorcist*

Dec. 5 GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH PAPERS ARE DUE

Week 15

Dec. 10 DISCUSSION: Readings Assigned in Weeks 11-14

Dec. 12 REVIEW SESSION

FINAL EXAMINATION: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21, 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Lecture Topics

The lecture topics for this course often do not fit neatly into fifty-minute segments. Accordingly, students should understand that the topics listed below may be covered in more than a single class session:

The European Background
Religious Thought in British North America, 1607-1730
The First "Great Awakening(s)"
"Enlightened" Christianity
Jonathan Edwards and His Successors
Religious Thought in an Age of Revolution

Calvinism Assailed and Altered

The Evangelical Persuasion

The Centrality of Divine Revelation(s)

The Romantic Impulse in American Theology

Roman Catholicism and Its Opponents, 1775-1860

Slavery, the Sectional Controversy, and the Civil War in Religious Perspective

Christian Social Thought, 1870-1920

Intellectual Challenges to the Faith

Philosophies and Mediating Theologies in an Age of Science

Conservative Protestant Thought

Dispensations of the Spirit: The Holiness Movement and Pentecostalism

The "New Theology"

The Efflorescence of "Mind Cure": Christian Science and New Thought

The Inward Turn in Mainstream Protestant Thought

American Catholicism Confronts Modernity

Varieties of American Jewish Thought

Beyond the Judeo-Christian Tradition

The Rise of Fundamentalism, 1910-1930

Liberal Protestantism and the Neo-Orthodox Critique

Postwar American Religious Thought: From Revivalism to Radicalism

American Catholic Thought, 1920-1970

Christian Metaphysics in Post-World War II America

African American Religious Thought Since 1920

Social and Cultural Activism in Religious Context Since 1955

Spiritual, But Not Religious

IMPORTANT: This syllabus and all class lectures are copyrighted by Boston University and/or the instructor. Students who are enrolled in the course are allowed to share with other enrolled students course materials, notes, and other writings based on the course materials and lectures, but they may not do so on a commercial basis or otherwise for payment of any kind. Any sale or commercial use of notes, summaries, outlines, or other reproductions of lectures constitutes a violation of the copyright laws and is prohibited. Selling or buying class notes, lecture notes, summaries, or similar materials not only violates copyright but also interferes with the academic mission of the University. It is therefore prohibited in this class and will be considered a violation of the student code of responsibility that is subject to academic sanctions.

NOTE: The above schedule (including the dates for discussions and the midterm examination) is subject to revision by the instructor.

A Select List of Subjects for Undergraduate Research Papers

Francis Ellingwood Abbot Lyman Abbott William J. Abraham Henry Adams Felix Adler Archibald Alexander Ethan Allen Richard Allen Woody Allen Thomas J. J. Altizer Edward Scribner Ames John Armstrong Francis Asbury Sholem Asch John Bachman Isaac Backus Jim Bakker James Baldwin Nathan Bangs **Albert Barnes** Harry Elmer Barnes

Cyrus Bartol Bruce Barton John Bascom **Gregory Baum** Catharine Beecher Henry Ward Beecher Lyman Beecher Bernard Iddings Bell Robert Bellah Edward Bellamy

Joseph Bellamy Peter Berger Daniel Berrigan Peter Bertocci

Antoinette Brown Blackwell

Charles Blanchard

William Dwight Porter Bliss

Donald Bloesch

George Dana Boardman

John Elof Boodin Marcus Borg Francis Bowen

Borden Parker Bowne

Malcolm Boyd Anne Bradstreet

Charles Augustus Briggs

Bill Bright

Edgar Sheffield Brightman

Phillips Brooks

Charles Reynolds Brown Robert McAfee Brown William Adams Brown Orestes A. Brownson William Jennings Bryan John Wright Buckham Frederick Buechner Rufus Burrow, Jr. Horace Bushnell

Abraham Cahan Daniel Callahan Alexander Campbell Joseph Campbell

Tony Campolo Edward J. Carnell

Anne Carr John Carroll Peter Cartwright Shirley Jackson Case Lewis Sperry Chafer Oswald Chambers William Ellery Channing Charles Chauncy Lvdia Maria Child Carol P. Christ F. Forrester Church

Winston Churchill [novelist] James Freeman Clarke

William Newton Clarke

Philip Clayton Albert Cleage John B. Cobb, Jr. George Albert Coe Henry Sloane Coffin William Sloane Coffin

Robert Coles James H. Cone A. Z. Conrad Sam Cooke Thomas Cooper Kenneth Copeland Thomas Costain John Cotton Charles Coughlin Harvey Cox

Algernon C. Crapsey

W. A. Criswell Fanny Crosby

Alexander Crummell Charles E. Curran

Robert Lewis Dabney

Mary Daly Ram Dass

Andrew Jackson Davis

Dorothy Day William Dean James De Koven William A. Dembski Daniel C. Dennett Peter DeVries John Dewey L. Harold DeWolf **Emily Dickinson**

Annie Dillard
Walt Disney
Father Divine
James Dobson
Thomas Andrew Dorsey
Larry Dossey
Lloyd C. Douglas
Frederick Douglass
John William Draper
Horatio W. Dresser
William Porcher DuBose
Avery Dulles
Timothy Dwight

Mary Baker Eddy
Jonathan Edwards
David Einhorn
Mircea Eliade
Ralph Waldo Emerson
John England
Warren Felt Evans

Jerry Falwell
Edward Farley
Nels F. S. Ferré
Charles G. Finney
Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza
George P. Fisher
John Fiske
Ralph Flewelling
Harry Emerson Fosdick
George Burman Foster
Matthew Fox
Benjamin Franklin
Erich Fromm
Octavius Brooks Frothingham

Arno Clemens Gaebelein
Henry Highland Garnet
William Lloyd Garrison
Ebenezer Gay
Norman Geisler
James Gibbons
Langdon Gilkey
Charlotte Perkins Gilman
Washington Gladden
W. B. Godbey
Peter J. Gomes
Edgar J. Goodspeed
George A. Gordon
Billy Graham

Asa Gray Andrew Greeley William Henry Green David Ray Griffin Sarah Grimké James M. Gustafson

Kenneth Hagin Georgia Harkness William Rainey Harper George Harris Sam Harris Samuel Harris Charles Hartshorne Stanley Hauerwas Nathaniel Hawthorne A. Eustace Haydon Isaac Thomas Hecker Frederic Henry Hedge Charles Henderson Carl F. H. Henry Will Herberg George D. Herron Abraham Joshua Heschel Laurens P. Hickock Emil G. Hirsch Edward Hitchcock John Henry Hobart William Ernest Hocking Archibald Hodge Charles Hodge Peter Hodgson Thomas Hooker Alvah Hovey Mark Hopkins Samuel Hopkins Walter Marshall Horton George Holmes Howison John Hughes Frederic Dan Huntington Anne Marbury Hutchinson

Robert G. Ingersoll John Ireland

Jesse Jackson Mahalia Jackson T. D. Jakes Henry James, Sr. William James Thomas Jefferson Elizabeth A. Johnson Phillip E. Johnson Samuel Johnson E. Stanley Jones Rufus M. Jones

Kenneth Kantzer
Mordecai M. Kaplan
Gordon D. Kaufman
Catherine Keller
Leander S. Keyser
Henry Churchill King
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Stephen King
Albert Cornelius Knudson
Kaufmann Kohler
David Koresh
Charles Porterfield Krauth
Joseph Wood Krutch
Kathryn Kuhlman
Harold S. Kushner

George T. Ladd Tim LaHaye Joseph Le Conte James H. Leuba Edwin Lewis Joshua Liebman George Lindbeck Hal Lindsey Walter Lippmann Bernard Loomer Max Lucado Halford E. Luccock Eugene W. Lyman

Richard McBrien
Sally McFague
J. Gresham Machen
Douglas Clyde Macintosh
Francis J. McConnell
James McCosh
Carl McIntire
Aimee Semple McPherson
Howard McQueary
Asa Mahan
James Marsh
Leslie Ray Marston
T. T. Martin
Cotton Mather
Increase Mather

Shailer Mathews Jonathan Mayhew Benjamin E. Mays Bernard Meland Herman Melville H. L. Mencken Thomas Merton Joyce Meyer Virgil Michel Samuel Warley Miles Samuel Miller William Miller Dwight L. Moody Henry Morris Charles Clayton Morrison Walter Muelder Elijah Muhammad Edgar Y. Mullins Theodore T. Munger John Courtney Murray A. J. Muste

Clyde Narramore
Carry Nation
David Neff
Richard John Neuhaus
Robert C. Neville
John W. Nevin
R. Heber Newton
H. Richard Niebuhr
Reinhold Niebuhr
Andrews Norton
Michael Novak
John Humphrey Noyes

Harold John Ockenga Flannery O'Connor Thomas C. Oden Schubert M. Ogden Madalyn Murray O'Hair Roger Olson Joel Osteen

Thomas Paine
Elihu Palmer
Phoebe Palmer
Charles Fox Parham
Edwards Amasa Park
Theodore Parker
Francis L. Patton
Nathaniel Paul

Daniel Alexander Payne Andrew Preston Peabody Norman Vincent Peale M. Scott Peck Charles Sanders Peirce Walker Percy

Walker Percy Frank Peretti

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps [Ward]

David Philipson A. T. Pierson James Pike W. Norman Pitte

W. Norman Pittenger Alvin Plantinga Judith Plaskow Noah Porter Chaim Potok Henry C. Potter

James Bissett Pratt George McCready Price

Paul Pruyser

J. F. Powers

Harris Franklin Rall Thomas Ralston Bernard Ramm Paul Ramsey John Crowe Ransom Walter Rauschenbusch Curtis W. Reese William Bell Riley Harry Rimmer **Oral Roberts** Pat Robertson Josiah Royce Rosemary Radford Ruether Rousas John Rushdoony Charles Taze Russell John Augustine Ryan

Valerie Saiving
Francis Schaeffer
Philip Schaff
Solomon Schechter
S. Paul Schilling
Samuel Schmucker
Robert Schuller
Charles Schultz
Jacob Gould Schurman
Cyrus Ingerson Scofield
Elizabeth Ann Seton
William G. T. Shedd

Fulton J. Sheen Thomas Shepard Ron Sider Benjamin Silliman A. B. Simpson Gerald Birney Smith Hannah Whitall Smith Henry B. Smith Joseph Smith Wilbur M. Smith Newman Smvth Robert E. Speer John Shelby Spong Elizabeth Cady Stanton Edwin Diller Starbuck Lewis French Stearns Ezra Stiles Harriet Beecher Stowe John Roach Straton Augustus Hopkins Strong Josiah Strong Moses Stuart Marjorie Suchocki Jimmy Swaggart

T. De Witt Talmage
Nathaniel William Taylor
James Henley Thornwell
Howard Thurman
Paul Tillich
Reuben Torrey
Luther Tracy Townsend
David Tracy
Elton Trueblood
Henry McNeal Turner
Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens)

John Updike Thomas C. Upham

Henry P. Van Dusen Kevin Vanhoozer Eric Voegelin Jacob Voorsanger

David Walker
Jim Wallis
C. F. W. Walther
Harry F. Ward
Benjamin B. Warfield
Henry Ware

Susan Warner

Rick Warren

Francis Wayland

Theodore Dwight Weld

Cornel West

John Whitcomb

Andrew Dickson White

Ellen G. White

Walt Whitman

Henry Nelson Wieman

Elie Wiesel

Michael Wigglesworth

H. Orton Wiley

E. O. Wilson

Frances Willard

Samuel Willard

D. H. Williams

Daniel Day Williams

Roger Williams

Garry Wills

Isaac Mayer Wise

Jemima Wilkinson

John Woolman

Frances Wright

George Frederick Wright

Harold Bell Wright

William Kelley Wright

Edward L. Youmans

John A. Zahm