

GRADUATE COURSES

2017-2018

FALL / WINTER ONLY

FALL

RELI 620/2	Religions of the Silk Road	T 16:00-18:15	R. Foltz
RELI 630/2	Christianity and Sexuality	T 13:00-15:15	C. Daniel-Hughes
RELI 670/2	Talmud	M 16:00-18:15	N. Cohn
RELI 891/3	Doctoral Seminar	J 16:00-18:15	L. Orr/M. Lalonde

WINTER

RELI 609/4	Theories of Religion	M 18:30-20:45	M. Lalonde
RELI 619/4	Temples, Mosques, and Monasteries: Material Religion: South Asia	W 16:00-18:15	L. Orr
RELI 630/4	Anthropology of Christianity	T 16:00-18:15	H. Kaell
RELI 650/4	Women in the Hebrew Bible	M 16:00-18:15	N. Joseph
RELI 630/4	Islam in the West: Gender Issues	J 16:00-18:15	L. Clarke
RELI 891/3	Doctoral Seminar	J 16:00-18:15	M. Lalonde/L. Orr

FALL

RELI 620/2 Religions of the Silk Road T. 16:00-18:15 R. Foltz

The Silk Road is a concept used to refer to a network of overland trade routes that linked the Mediterranean, China, and India from around the beginning of the Common Era to the fifteenth century. A conduit for culture as well as material goods, the Silk Road played a major role in the development and transmission of Buddhism, Christianity, Manichaeism, and Islam. Iranian, Indic, Chinese, and shamanistic religions were also part of this dynamic mix.

RELI 630/2 Christianity and Sexuality T. 13:00-15:15 C. Daniel-Hughes

This course examines how Christians, in different times and places, have understood gender and sexuality. Using examples from early Christianity through to today, the course will explore various topics, including same-sex eroticism, celibacy, marriage, procreation, sexual assault and pedophilia, masturbation, and sex-work. We will take for granted that there is not a singular Christian view of sexuality. Yet, we will ask whether a historical investigation yields particular themes, or points of emphasis of distinctly "Christian" attitudes toward or preoccupations with sexuality and desire? We will consider the roles that differing notions of

authority and forms of religious practice shape Christian perspectives and practices. We will also address how queer and feminist theoretical approaches can advance our historical analysis and speak to contemporary political concerns.

RELI 670/2 The Talmud

M. 16:00-18:15

N. Cohn

The Talmud has been censored, burned, and maligned by outsiders at the same time as it has been revered by Jews for the past two millennia as one of the central texts of Judaism and Jewish tradition. Through a close reading of selected passages from the Mishnah, the Babylonian Talmud, and the Jerusalem Talmud, as well as a survey of current debates in the scholarship, we will set out the Talmud's key components and methodologies and situate the Talmud in its ancient cultural context. By actively engaging these ancient texts, we will attempt to uncover what has given and continues to give the Talmud so much power to inspire.

WINTER

RELI 609/4

Theories of Religion

M. 18:30-20:45

M. Lalonde

The purpose of this course is to introduce, compare, and critically examine a selection of contemporary theories of religion. Some of these include the phenomenological, the cognitive, the critical, the feminist, the social scientific, and the theological. In the process, the student will encounter and sort through a variety of theoretical terms and approaches as well as engage numerous meta-theoretical perspectives and questions. Indeed, the latter task is just as important as surveying the different theories of religion. For here we will learn to think and talk about religion in a "theoretical way." In the final analysis, it is hoped that this "way" will continue to inform the student's examination of religion as they pursue their own particular course of study.

RELI 619/4 Temples, Mosques, and Monasteries:

Material Religion: South Asia

W.16:00-18:15

L. Orr

This course explores how the history of religions can be understood through material culture. We will see how the human production and use of objects, images, ornament, iconography, epigraphy, and sacred space sheds light on religious concepts and practices in South Asia. We will especially focus on the interactions among, and the dynamics of change within, communities of Buddhists, Hindus, and Muslims as these are revealed by the things that they made and the structures that they built.

RELI 630/4 Anthropology of Christianity

T. 16:00-18:15

H. Kaell

Anthropology of Christianity has attracted so much ethnographic and theoretical attention that it has become one of the fastest growing sub-disciplines in contemporary anthropology. This course will engage current themes that are pertinent to the study of religion in anthropology as a whole, but will focus on major debates and topics pertaining especially to Christianity. Themes may include conversion and debates about continuity versus rupture; explorations of how individualism and sociality interact on earth and in the afterlife; the interplay of public and private spaces and constructions of the secular. This course relies on in-depth seminar discussion and reading materials will span Christianity globally, including Catholicism, Pentecostalism, and Eastern Orthodoxy.

RELI 650/4 Women in the Hebrew Bible**M. 16:00-18:15 N. Joseph**

This course meets in conjunction with Reli 406. We will explore the role, status and experience of women in the Hebrew biblical texts. You are required to attend all of the undergraduate classes during which we will explore many parts of the biblical corpus. In our separate sessions we will specifically explore one book or section of the Bible.

This course will explore the narrative traditions of the Hebrew Bible as it portrays women's experience and participation in the Israelite community. The context of the discussion will be the Judaic tradition and its perspective and outlook on women. A variety of Judaic approaches will be discussed such as are found in classical commentaries, legends and midrashic literature. Feminist attempts at interpretation and criticism will form the basis of the class.

RELI 630/4 Islam in the West: Gender Issues**J. 16:00-18:15 L. Clarke**

This course treats gender issues in relation to Muslim communities in Canada and the West both in terms of the perceptions of non-Muslims and commitments and debates among Muslims themselves. Topics include veiling practices, media representations, gender ideals, Muslim family law, women's authority, queer movements and intermarriage.

RELI 891/3 Doctoral Seminar**J. 16:00-18:15 L. Orr/M. Lalonde**

During the first semester of this course, we will examine the nature of the comparative enterprise in the study of religion. We will explore the question of how one might undertake comparisons among religions with respect to religious behaviour and the organization of religious communities. To what extent are the religious structures (or even definitions of "religion") that are found in various cultures commensurate with one another, and what are our aims in attempting to compare them? This leads us to the second theme we will be concerned with: historiography. We will consider the character of our sources for an historical approach to the study of religion; the issue of how and how much ideologies and systems of authority have served as historical forces in the shaping of social and religious behaviour; and the nature and value of different approaches to explaining religious change and processes of religious interaction. The semester will conclude with an examination of the impact on religion and on religious studies of colonialism and globalization.

The purpose of the second part of this course is to ponder the ramifications of Terry Eagleton's brief essay, "The Significance of Theory." Here Eagleton writes that "Theory is just practice forced into a new form of self-reflectiveness on account of certain grievous problems it has encountered." This is to say, theory constitutes a response to perceived social, cultural and political problems that challenge the extant explanation of things. By examining various forms of theoretical discourse—modern, postmodern, critical, social, historiographical etc.—we will try to flesh out the different problems that shape the theories in question and to consider, in turn, their implications for the student's ongoing research.

We will read, for the most part, critical work, but creative presentations of these issues will also play a part in our research and writing

The readings for each class will be indicated on the syllabus. The classes will be conducted as seminars, where the participation of everyone is essential. Every student will also be asked to direct at least part of one of the seminars during the term.