



The University of Auckland

Anthropology

Anthro319

WORLDVIEW & RELIGION

2019

Welcome! This course covers some of the key topics in the field of religion. It is cross-cultural and historical in scope, ranging from the colonial era to late-20th century “secular religion”, from the indigenous religions of small-scale societies to world religions, such as Christianity. By the end of the course, you should:

- Understand religion and worldviews as social and cultural phenomena
- Recognize relationships between religious phenomena and wider social structures and issues
- Broadly understand a range of anthropological perspectives and theories
- Be able to place religious topics in comparative perspective
- Be able to draw upon relevant theoretical and comparative material to analyze religious phenomena.

It is possible that some components of the course may change because of unanticipated problems. If so, I will advise as early as possible.

Class Times:

Mon. 11.00 am – 1.00 pm
Thurs. 11.00 am – 12 md

Convenor:

Dr Christine Dureau
HSB 852
Ph.: 88409
e-mail: cm.dureau@auckland.ac.nz

Office Hours:

Mon. 2.00 – 3.00 pm

Thurs. 1.00 – 2.00 pm

(I am on annual leave and unavailable for Office Hours or email help 24th – 27th April)

For minor matters (*not* including assignment extensions), feel free to speak to me immediately following the lecture or tutorial. Otherwise, please respect these hours or email for an appointment, including the course number in your subject line, so I can be sure to catch your message.

Voicemails and emails will be answered before or during the office hours following receipt. I will make one attempt to return voicemails. In emailing, I use **your university email** address, which is an official mode of communication. You should check your email regularly and ensure that you have set up an auto-forward if you prefer not to use your university account.

An Invitation:

This subject is far broader than a single course can encompass. I welcome suggestions for topics, themes or case studies. If possible, I will address your ideas during the course; otherwise, future students will benefit from your input, as you are benefiting from previous students' ideas.

This year, the course has been completely revised, so I particularly welcome your ideas.

A Caution:

Our focus is on *anthropological* understanding of social, cultural and political phenomenon, not on essential beliefs or ir/religious truth. Some find this enjoyable, others find it threatening or upsetting. If you

have difficulties or object to my approach or the coverage, there are a number of things you can do:

- Talk to me: I will try to help.
- Approach the class representative if you prefer to remain anonymous to me.
- Confer with the Anthropology undergraduate advisor, Prof. Peter Sheppard: p.sheppard@auckland.ac.nz
- Contact our counselling service, which provides general and urgent counselling sessions: (09) 923-7681 (www.auckland.ac.nz/en/on-campus/student-support/personal-support/student-health-counselling/counselling-services.html)
- Un-enrol before the end of week two.

Disabilities, Other Issues

Please let me know early in the course of any difficulties you may have or assistance I may reasonably render. I'm happy to help.

Information about Disabilities Services can be found here: <https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/on-campus/student-support/personal-support/students-with-disabilities.html>. They can be contacted in the clocktower building (Basement Level, Room 036) or via: disability@auckland.ac.nz or (09) 373-7599 Ext. 82936.

Important Dates

See below re extensions and late work penalties

Irrespective of circumstances, ALL COURSEWORK MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 10.00 AM MONDAY 17TH JUNE. If you cannot complete your coursework and have not already reached a mark of 50% or more, you may be eligible for a late deletion https://uoa.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1464 or aegrotat uoa.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/2716/p/212;213/kw/Aegrotat

[rotat and compassionate consideration for exams](#): Let me know if I can help.

See the Assignment Sheet for Details of All of the Following:

Weekly 4.00 pm Thursday Optional Summaries

From Week 2, you can earn up to 1 additional mark/week by submitting a 300-word synopsis of one reading by 4 pm on the Wednesday of the week for which that reading is set. These summaries will not be graded, but we will check that they are good-faith efforts. Turnitin will not accept submissions after the weekly deadline.

4th April 4.00 pm (Thurs) Topic Analysis (30%)

2nd May 4.00 pm (Thurs) Essay Proposal (10%)

16th May 4.00 pm (Thurs) Book Review (30%)

13th June 4.00 pm (Thurs) Essay (30%)

Course Content, Expectations

The **workload commitment** for a 15-pt course is approximately 10 hours/week throughout the semester, including classes and study break. You should therefore be dedicating about seven hours/week to reading, preparing for assignments and revising your notes. This course is predicated on this workload and designed to allow you to work in-depth by linking coursework, lectures and readings/videos.

Lectures introduce you to major course themes, anthropological issues and socio-cultural illustrations. You must attend lectures if you are to do well (recordings are a poor substitute). Questions, thoughts, requests for clarification, etc., are welcome.

Lectures are of variable content—films, workshops, reading seminars and straight lectures.

If the lecture theatre allows, lectures will be recorded and available on Canvas within a couple of days. You may not make your own recordings and downloaded lectures are to be deleted at the end of semester. I strongly recommend against trying to memorize lectures: the point is to *understand* them, not to be able to recapitulate every statement made. Recordings will be deleted by 3rd June.

Tutorials and workshops complement lectures, developing depth of perspective, working on tough issues and providing new material. They also enhance group-work skills, an important vocational skill. This course is co-taught with Anthro250. You share lectures and some readings, but your tutorials are separate. Tutorials for Anthro250 are on Thurs. 12 md – 1 pm in the same room as your own. If you cannot make your own tutorial, you are welcome to attend and participate in them, but note that content will differ.

Reading is important. It reinforces lectures, provides a wider understanding than you can get from lectures alone and demonstrates anthropological modes of thought and expression.

You should **read the set readings**, which are not onerous. I would make them the starting point for all of your assignments.

Recommended readings are listed for each lecture topic. If you read one or two of these/week, you will find yourself getting far more out of this course and doing much better on assignments.

Finally, **AV materials** can be a fantastic way of learning. In addition to those shown in classes, consider watching some or all of the recommended videos.

Course Readings/Videos

1. **Required and recommend readings** are available through Canvas. There can be a few issues with these—please let me know if links disappear or the library is late in scanning hard copy materials. See individual cases for availability of videos.

2. **The textbook** for this course is:

Eller, Jack David, 2014. *Introducing Anthropology of Religion*. 2nd ed. NY: Routledge.

This provides a valuable overview of anthropological issues and approaches as well as providing helpful foundational material for your assignments. A copy has been ordered for the library and the bookshop is ordering some copies.

3. You will review one of these books for Assignment 2. (I recommend that you start reading your chosen ethnography immediately.)

Frey, Nancy Louise, 1998. *Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago*. Berkeley: University of California Press. OR

Kwon, Heonik, 2006. *After the Massacre: Commemoration and Consolation in Ha My and My Lai*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Frey focuses on the classic topic of pilgrimage in a contemporary context in one of the world's most famous pilgrimages. Kwon is more focused on the classic question of relationships between religion and human suffering.

Canvas Resources

These have been, or will be, uploaded

- **Lecture recordings, if available, and PPTs** will generally be uploaded within a week of the lecture. Feel free to remind me. I am sorry that I cannot provide PPTs in advance of classes this year. There are many new lectures and older ones will have to be edited in view of the course revamp. I'll almost certainly be working on them right up to the last minute, but will email you

on Canvas any week that I finish earlier. Recordings will be deleted by 3rd June.

- By End of Week 1: Course Coversheet. (Assignments lacking the coversheet copied and pasted in the front of the assignment will be penalized one mark.)
- By End of Week 1: Assignment Sheet. You must download and follow this.
- By End of Week 1: Weekly summary template. You must use this if you are completing the optional summaries.
- Before 1st Assignment: Anthropology Essay Writing Guide
- How to Read.
- Summaries and Reviews (How to...)
- How Not To Plagiarize.
- University of Auckland Guidelines on Conduct of Coursework.
- Supplementary Materials. (Others may follow):

Week 1: Alpers, Daniel & Karen Armstrong, 2005. *A History of God*

This has anthropological weaknesses. However, it is informative and a model of ecumenicalism. Given how little most people know about the monotheisms (including many who belong to one of them), this is highly recommended on the grounds of:

- Relevant background information for a fair portion of the lectures
- It's overall quality (and it's very interesting)
- The importance of getting outside what you think you know.

Week X: *Holy Ghost People*, 1967. (An amazing film, despite its age.)

Week X: Dawkins, Richard, *Militant Atheism*, 2002, TED

Week X: Religion & the Rwandan Genocide, 2012. ABC Podcast

LECTURE, TUTORIAL & READING SCHEDULE

Note: Keywords are in reference to lectures, tutorials and readings

Week 1: Issues of Definition

Keywords: Religion, Concepts, Supernatural, Political Religion, Ojibwa.

No Tutorials This Week

Required Readings/Videos:

Eller, Chapter One, Studying Religion Anthropologically: Definitions and Theories, pp. 1 – 26.

Gusterson, Hugh, 1996. Nuclear Weapons Testing: Scientific Experiment as Political Ritual. In Laura Nader (ed.), *Naked Science: Anthropological Inquiry into Boundaries, Power, and Knowledge*. New York: Routledge, pp. 131 – 47.

Recommended Readings/Videos:

Bellah, Robert N., 1970, Civil Religion in America, In *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World*, NY: Harper & Row pp. 168 – 87.

Week 2: The Anthropologist as (Non-)Believer & Researcher

Keywords: Favret-Saada, Bocage, Witchcraft, Fieldwork, Reflexivity

Tutorial – Research Discussion

Required Readings/Videos:

No textbook chapter this week

Davies, Charlotte Aull, 2012. Observing, Participating. In *Reflexive Anthropology: A Guide to Researching Selves and Others*. NY: Routledge, pp.77 – 104.

Wesch, Michael, 2007. A Witch-Hunt in Papua New Guinea: Anthropology on Trial. *Anthropology and Humanism* 32(1):4 – 17.

Recommended Readings/Videos:

Pinto, Paulo G., 2010. The Anthropologist and the Initiated: Reflections on the Ethnography of Mystical Experience among the Sufis of Aleppo, Syria. *Social Compass* 57(4):464 – 78.

Week 3: Belief

Keywords: Belief, Sorcery, Stoller, Spirits, etc., Venezuela

Tutorial: Belief in Practice

Required Readings

Eller, Chapter 2, Religious Belief: Entities and Concepts, pp.27 – 49

Chua, Liana, 2011. Soul Encounters: Emotions, Corporeality, and the Matter of Belief in a Bornean Village. *Social Analysis* 55(3): 1 – 17.

Recommended Reading

Lindholm, Charles, 2012. What is Bread? The Anthropology of Belief. *Ethos* 40(3): 341 – 57.

Week 4: Symbolic Anthropologies

Keywords: Structuralism, Lévi –Strauss, Turner, Ndembu, Geertz, Ortner, Key Symbols, Virgin Mary, Olympics

Tutorial: Writing Book Reviews

Required Readings/Videos:

Eller, Chapter 3, Religious Symbols and Specialists, pp.50 – 66, 75

Chapter 4, Religious Language, pp. 76 – 85, 96 – 100

Wirtz, Kristina, 2009. Hazardous Waste: The Semiotics of Ritual Hygiene in Cuban Popular Religion. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15: 476 – 501.

Recommended Readings/Videos:

Douglas, Mary, 1966, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Ark, pp. 2 – 3, 41 – 57.
[re Structuralism]

Week 5: Ritualizing Life

Keywords: Rites of Passage, Maasai, Pilgrimage, Huichol, van Gennep, Hertz, Meyerhoff

Tutorial: Ritualized Lives

Required Readings/Videos:

Eller, Chapt. 5, Religious Action: Ritual, pp.101 – 24.

Turner, Victor, 1969. Liminality and Communitas, in *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Chicago: Aldine, pp. 94 – 130.

Recommended Readings/Videos:

Erickson, Brad, 2011. Utopian Virtues: Muslim Neighbours, Ritual Sociality and the Politics of *Convivència*. *American Ethnologist* 38(1):114 – 31.

Egan, Keith, Walking Back to Happiness? Modern Pilgrimage and the Expression of Suffering on Spain's Camino de Santiago. In Jonathon Skinner, ed., *Writing the Dark Side of Travel*. NY: Berghahn, 99 – 121.

Walker, Lucy, Steven Cantor & Daniel Kern, 2002. *Devil's Playground*. NY: Wellspring, 77 mins.

The library holds DVD versions, but it is unavailable for streaming via our web pages. You can find versions available online, e.g., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3xlKFkoB9Bg>. I have not checked their copyright status, so be sure that you do so before downloading.

Week 6: Questions of Function

Keywords: Ideology, Conscience Collective, Opium of the Masses, Durkheim, Marx, Turner, Rites of Passage, Witchcraft, Inequality, Social Order, Suffering

Tutorial: Social Situations – Religious Forms & Practices

Required Readings/Videos:

Eller, Chapter 6, Religion, Morality and Social Order, pp.125 – 49.

Turner, V. W., 1957. The Politically Integrative Function of Ritual. In *Schism and Continuity in an African Society*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 288 – 317.

Recommended Readings/Videos:

Bulukbāshī, ‘Alī, André Singer, Brian Moser & John Sheppard, 1973. *The Dervishes of Kurdistan*. 52 mins.

Video: available via streaming: <http://search.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/work/2193670>.

Gellner, David N., 1999. Religion, Politics and Religion: Remarks on Geertz and Bloch. *Social Anthropology* 7(2): 135 – 53.

Week 7: Socializing Religion

Keywords: Socialization/Enculturation, Fundamentalism, Children, Emotion, Belief, Embodiment

Tutorial: Socialization & Inculcating Religious Values

Required Readings/Videos:

No readings from textbook this week.

Hirschkind, Charles, 2001. The Ethics of Listening: Cassette-Sermon Audition in Contemporary Egypt. *American Ethnologist* 28 (3): 623 – 49.

Lester, Rebecca J., 2003. The Immediacy of Eternity: Time and Transformation in a Roman Catholic Convent. *Religion* 33:201 – 19.

Recommended Readings/Videos:

Rowlands, Michael, 2007. The Sound of Witchcraft: Noise as Mediation in Religious Transmission. In David Berliner & Ramón Sarró, eds, *Learning Religion: Anthropological Approaches*. NY: Berghahn, pp.191 – 212.

Week 8: Remaking the World

Keywords: Utopianism, Charisma, Revitalization, NRMs, Power, Resistance, Colonization, Routinization, Oneida Community, Ghost Dance, Native American Church (Peyote Religion)

Tutorial: Witchcraft: Purification/Revitalization; Social Reflection

Required Readings/Videos:

Eller, Chapter 7, Religious Change and New Religious Movements, pp. 150 – 75.

Prophet, Erin, 2016. Charisma and Authority in New Religious Movements. In James R. Lewis & Inga Tøllefsen, eds, *The Oxford Handbook of New Religious Movements* Vol. II. Oxford Handbooks Online. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 16 pp.

Recommended Readings/Videos:

Harkin, Michael E., 2004. Introduction: Revitalization as History and Theory. In Michael E. Harkin, ed., *Reassessing Revitalization Movements: Perspectives from North America and the Pacific Islands*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, xv – xxviii.

Hébert, Martin, 2016. Worlds Not Yet in Being: Reconciling Anthropology and Utopianism. *Anthropology and Materialism* 3: 1 – 19.

Week 9: World Religions: Power, Meaning and Conversion

Keywords: Colonialism, Violence, Conversion, Syncretism/Vernacularization, Virgin of Guadalupe, World Religion, Key Symbols

Tutorial: Discussion – A Muslim Key Symbol

Required Readings/Videos:

Note: This week, the majority of your readings and videos are focused on Christianity and Islam but the kinds of processes and outcomes (entanglements in meaning, cultural translation, power, relationships to state societies, syncretism, etc.) they describe are also true for other world religions, such as Buddhism, Judaism, etc.: when religions move cross-culturally, they always change and are changed by their new locales.

Eller, Chapter 8, Translocal Religion: Islam & Christianity, pp.176 – 201.

Eller, Chapter 9, Vernacular Religion, pp. 202 – 207 (NB: no need to read entire chapter).

Gooren, Henri, 2014. Anthropology of Religious Conversion. In Lewis R. Rambo & Charles E. Farhadian, eds, *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*. Oxford Handbooks Online. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 38 pp.

Wolf, Eric R., 1958. The Virgin of Guadalupe. *The Journal of American Folklore* 71: 34 – 39.

Recommended Readings/Videos:

Stewart, Charles. 1999. Syncretism and Its Synonyms. *diacritics* 29(3):40 – 62.

Week 10: Religious Violence

Keywords: Violence, State, Gender, Family, Fundamentalism, IRA, Religious Politics

Tutorial: Women of Hezbollah

Required Readings/Videos

Eller, Chapt. 10, Religious Violence, pp.228 – 53.

Caldararo, Niccolo, 2006. Suicide Bombers, Terror, History, and Religion. *Anthropological Quarterly* 79 (1): 123 – 31.

Recommended Readings/Videos

Cavanaugh, William T., 2011. Religious Violence as Folklore. *Religion and Society: Advances in Research* 2: 122 – 28.

Lauder, M. A., 2003. Covert Participant Observation of a Deviant Community: Justifying the Use of Deception. *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 18(2), 185-196.

Week 11 Religion in Uncertain Times: Fundamentalisms, Relativisms, Creativities, Sociality

Keywords: Fundamentalism, Co-Existence, Pilgrimage, Transcending Conflict

Tutorial: Graduate Students and Research on Religion

Required Readings/Videos:

Eller, Chapt. 12, Religious Fundamentalism, pp. 279 – 304.

Lambek, Michael, 2009. Anthropology and Religion. In Philip Clayton, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Science*. Oxford: Oxford Handbooks Online, 20pp.

Recommended Readings/Videos:

Williams, Roger Ross (dir.), 2014. *God Loves Uganda*. NY: First Run Features

The library holds DVD versions, which you can play in the library, but it is unavailable for streaming via our web pages. There are various streaming versions available online. I have not checked their copyright status, so be sure that you do so before downloading.

Harding, Susan Friend, 1991. Representing Fundamentalism: The Problem of the Repugnant Cultural Other. *Social Research* 58(2): 373 – 93.

Week 12: No Lecture This Year (Public Holiday)

No Tutorial