

AMERICAN RELIGION
(TH 2403)
Fall, 2009

Dianne Reistroffer
Jim Lewis
Monday 2-5, Schlegel 120

This course is an introduction to American religious history, designed specifically for Protestant seminary students at LPTS. Consequently, our survey of the major themes and developments of American religious history will focus on American Protestantism, especially the so-called "mainstream" Protestant denominations and African-American Protestantism. But, given the increasing impact of religious pluralism in the United States on the practice of ministry, we will also include some lectures and readings dealing with American Catholicism, Judaism, and certain other religious movements. Class sessions include both lectures and discussions.

The principal course text is: Edwin Gaustad and Leigh Schmidt, The Religious History of America (revised edition). Reserve readings, generally primary sources (original documents), are on library reserve. Most readings are found in one of the following two-volume works: H. Shelton Smith, Robert T. Handy, and Lefferts A. Loetscher, American Christianity: An Historical Interpretation with Representative Documents, and Edwin S. Gaustad and Mark A. Noll, A Documentary History of Religion in America. (The syllabus abbreviates them "SHL" and "GN".) Several other readings are from: Patrick Allitt, Major Problems in American Religious History and Sydney E. Ahlstrom, Theology in America: The Major Protestant Voices from Puritanism to Neo-Orthodoxy.

Students might also find it useful to consult Bret E. Carroll, The Routledge Historical Atlas of Religion in America (one copy on reserve and another in the Reserve Room of the library).

In addition to the readings listed in this syllabus, all students should read regularly one general interest publication that covers religion and American public life (e.g. Christian Century, Christianity Today, or the New York Times). The purpose of this exercise is to illustrate the pervasive, varied ways in which religion impacts contemporary American culture. Not so subtly, it also seeks to encourage an important habit of lifelong learning.

All students are expected to abide by Seminary policies and expectations concerning inclusive language, student honesty, and plagiarism. For details, see pages 19-23 of the Student Handbook (available on the Louisville Seminary Intranet or from the Dean of Students Office). Assistance with academic writing is available from Kathy Mapes, the Coordinator of Academic Support Services.

The main objectives of this course are as follows:

- 1) Students will achieve a basic comprehension of the broad picture of American religious history, especially Protestant history.
- 2) Students will enhance their capacity to interpret contemporary North American religious life by contextualizing it historically.
- 3) Students will become aware of the historical context of the increasing religious pluralism in the US.
- 4) Students will refine their ability to reflect on contemporary Christian ministry in light of this historical perspective.

Grades will be based on the following:

1. Class attendance and participation on the November 30 ARDA assignment **(10% of final grade)**
2. Mid-term examination **(25% of final grade)**
3. 50-word assignments **(25% of final grade)**
4. Final examination **(40% of final grade)**.

Students should see Dianne Reistroffer (ext. 294 or dreistroffer@lpts.edu) or Jim Lewis (ext. 341 or jlewis@louisville-institute.org) about any other issues related to the course.

September 14: Introduction to American Religious History (Dianne Reistroffer & Jim Lewis)

Required Text Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, pp. 3-29.

Reserve Reading:

Sydney Ahlstrom, "The Problem of the History of Religion," in Church History vol. 57 (1988 Supplement), pp. 127-138. (Please make a photocopy or printout of this essay and bring it to class—it is also available online through the ATLA Religion Database, which may be accessed through the library.)

In the latter part of this class session, Angela Morris will introduce us to major library and Internet sources for research and learning in American religion.

September 21: Religion and the English Colonies (1630-1730): the Puritan Experience (Jim Lewis)

Required Text Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, pp. 30-114

Reserve Reading:

The Mayflower Compact (SHL, vol. 1, pp. 91-97);

John Winthrop, "Model of Christian Charity" (SHL, vol. 1, pp.97-102);
The Cambridge Platform (SHL, vol. 1, pp. 128-140 (a fuller version is online at http://www.pragmatism.org/american/cambridge_platform.htm). (See the "guiding questions" for the Cambridge Platform reading on the CAMS site.)
Roger Williams, "Bloody Tenet of Persecution" (SHL, vol. 1, pp.151-153);
The Halfway Covenant (SHL, vol. 1, pp. 202-204);
Solomon Stoddard on communion (SHL, vol. 1, pp. 219-224);
Martin Copenhaver, "What's Confirmation For?" (Christian Century, June 2, 2009, pages 10-11.

50-word Assignment #1: In a sentence of no more than 50 words, from the perspective of a pastor and with Martin Copenhaver's Christian Century article in mind, describe the advantages of the Halfway Covenant and Stoddard's position on communion.

September 28: The First Great Awakening and American Revolution, 1730-1790 (Jim Lewis)

Required Text Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, pp. 121-138

Reserve Reading:

Jonathan Edwards on the revival in Northampton (Allitt, pp. 92-95);
Nathan Cole hears George Whitefield (Allitt, pp. 95-99);
Gilbert Tennent, "Danger of an Unconverted Ministry" (SHL, vol. 1, pp. 321-328);
Harvard faculty rebukes Whitefield (SHL, vol. 1, pp. 328-335);
Devereux Jarratt, "A Brief Narrative" (SHL, vol. 1, pp. 366-371);
Thomas Jefferson, "An Act for establishing religious freedom" (SHL, vol. 1, pp. 445-448). Also available online at:
<http://religiousfreedom.lib.virginia.edu/sacred/vaact.html>.

50-word Assignment #2: Based on today's readings, in a sentence of 50 words or less, describe what was at stake in the argument over revival in New England.

October 5: The Formative Period, part one (1790-1865): Methodists, Baptists, Revival, and Reform (Dianne Reistroffer)

Required Text Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, pp.139-183.

Reserve Reading:

Forming the American Bible Society (SHL, vol. 1, pp. 552-557);
Revival in Kentucky (SHL, vol. 1, pp. 566-570);
Francis Asbury (SHL, vol. 1, pp. 570-576);
“Last Will and Testament of Springfield Presbytery” (SHL, vol. 1, pp. 576-578);
Thomas Campbell, “Declaration and Address” (SHL, vol. 1, pp. 578-586);
Charles G. Finney, on revivalism (GN, vol. 1, pp. 321-324).

50-word Assignment #3: In a sentence of no more than 50 words, describe C.G. Finney’s case for revivalism as an essential part of American religion/evangelical religion.

October 12: African-American Religious Experience (Visiting Lecturer: Angela Cowser)

Required Text Reading: Gaustad & Schmidt, pp 184-202.

Reserve Reading:

Black Church Beginnings

Henry Mitchell, *Black Church Beginnings, chapters 1-6*

Black Nationalism/Abolitionism, Critical Race Theory

David Walker, *Walker’s Appeal*, Introduction, Articles 1-3

Black Abolitionism, Black Methodism, Critical Race Theory

Frederick Douglass, *The Narrative Life of Frederick Douglass*, Introduction: “A Psalm of Freedom”, pp. 1-20; Appendix, 104-109

**The Formative Period, part two (1790-1865):
Abolition and Resistance (Dianne Reistroffer)**

Reserve Reading:

Readings in Smith, Handy, and Loetscher on slavery (SHL, vol. 2, pp. 167-179);
Presbyterian indictment of slavery (SHL, vol. 2, pp. 179-182);
Declaration of the Anti-Slavery Society (SHL, vol. 2, pp. 186-190);
A southern Presbyterian defense of slavery by James Thornwell (SHL, vol. 21, pp. 205-210);
Angelina Grimke and Frederick Douglass attack slavery (Allitt, pp. 176-180).

**October 19: The Challenge of Modernity (1860-1914):
Immigration, Industrialization, Urbanization (Jim Lewis)**

Required Text Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, pp. 209-254

Reserve Reading:

Lyman Abbott defends evolution (Allitt, pp. 261-263);
Washington Gladden & William Jennings Bryan on Biblical authority (Allitt,
pp. 266-269);
Charles Hodge on theological method and the Bible (Ahlstrom, pp. 251-
265).

50-word Assignment #4: Based on today's readings, in a sentence of no more than 50 words, describe what was at stake in the battle over the Bible.

October 26-30: Research and Study

November 2: Mid-Term Examination

A post-exam conversation on 1865 as a "pivot point" in American religion between the evangelical consensus of 1850 and the challenges of modernity in later 19th century.

**November 9: Social Gospel, Fundamentalism, and
Pentecostalism (Dianne Reistroffer and Lewis Brogdon)**

Required Text Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, pp. 255-321

Reserve Reading:

Alan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, pages 19-63.
Walter Rauschenbusch on the Kingdom of God (SHL, vol. 2., pp. 401-
407);
Shailer Mathews on modernism (SHL, vol 2., pp. 238-245);
A. A. Hodge & Benjamin Warfield on Bible, (SHL, vol 2., pp. 324-332);
J. Gresham Machen attacks liberalism (SHL, vol 2., pp. 345-349);

50-word Assignment #5: In a sentence of no more than 50 words describe the Kingdom of God from Social Gospel, Millennial, and Pentecostal perspectives.

November 16: Church, Wars, Depression, and Neo-orthodoxy
(Jim Lewis)

Required Text Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, pp. 329-348

Reserve Reading:

Several 20th century texts on war (Allitt, pp. 327-339);
Robert Handy, "The American Religious Depression, 1925-1935" in
Church History 29 (1960), pp. 3-16 (available at JSTOR online at:
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/3161613.pdf>);
H. Richard Niebuhr on the church (Ahlstrom, pp. 587-618).

November 23: American Catholicism (Dianne Reistroffer)

Required Text Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, pp. 99-100, 169-175, 209-212,
241-245, 255-259, 274, 294-295, 341-348, 379-382, 390-396.

Reserve Reading:

Chester Gillis, Roman Catholicism in America, pp. 48-126;
Documents by Pope Leo XIII and John Courtney Murray (SHL, vol. 2. pp.
336-340, 536-542).

50-word Assignment #6: Can Catholics be Americans and Americans be Catholic? How do Pope Leo XIII and Father John Courtney Murray address this important question of state and religion?

November 30: Christianity, Conflict, and Cultural Change since 1950
(Jim Lewis)

Required Text Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, pp. 349-397

Reserve Reading:

Robert Wuthnow, Restructuring American Religion, pp 3-13;
James Lewis, "American Denominational Studies: A Critical Assessment"
(<http://www.resourcingchristianity.org/essay.aspx?ESYID=bfeebe61-819a-48f5-bbf6-58a27dc207a3>)
Mark Chaves, Shawna Anderson, and Jason Byassee, "American
Congregations at the Beginning of the 21st Century: A Report from the National
Congregations Study"
(http://www.soc.duke.edu/natcong/Docs/NCSII_report_final.pdf)

ARDA Assignment:

In groups of two or three, using the "Community Profile Builder" (<http://www.thearda.com/profile>) on the ARDA web site (www.thearda.com), identify a section of Louisville (or another community of your choice) and prepare a community profile, using the "Community Profile Worksheet" on the web site (pages 4-5 of "Community Profile Builder" by Heather S. Kindell and Edward C. Polson at the above URL.) It should be possible to find all (or at least most) of the data needed to fill out the Worksheet.

In a page or two, please answer the following questions:

- 1) What did you find most surprising about your community?
- 2) What are the implications of the community profile for the existing congregations in this part of town?
- 3) What are the implications for a new church start?

December 7: American Christianity in a Multicultural (Post-Christian?) Era, 1950-2004 (Dianne Reistroffer)

Required Text Reading: Gaustad and Schmidt, pp. 398-427

Reserve Reading:

R. Stephen Warner, "Coming to America: Immigrants and the Faith They Bring," in *Christian Century*, (February 10, 2004), pp. 20-23;
Diana Eck, *A New Religious America*, pp. 1-25;
Jehu J. Hanciles, "Beyond Christendom: African Migration and Transformations in Global Christianity," *Studies in World Christianity*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (2004): pp.93-113;
Articles from the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* (March 2008):
Michael Emerson, "Introduction: Why a Forum on Racially and Ethnically Diverse Congregations?", pp. 1-4; Korie L. Edwards, "Bring Race to the Center: The Importance of Race in Racially Diverse Religious Organizations," pp. 5-9;
Gerardo Marti, "Fluid Ethnicity and Ethnic Transcendence in Multiracial Churches," pp. 11-16; Kathleen Garces-Foley, "Comparing Catholic and Evangelical Integration Efforts," pp. 17-22.

December 14-15: Research and Study

December 16 or 17: Final examination (date and time to be announced)

GUIDE FOR 50-WORD WRITING ASSIGNMENT
AMERICAN RELIGION
Fall, 2009

Twenty-five percent of the course grade will be based on the 50-word assignment on the primary source (reserve) readings. There are six such assignments during the semester. We will grade all six but will drop the lowest score before calculating the grade for that portion of the course. Reflecting the importance of properly citing one's sources, we wish to acknowledge that this assignment is taken from Professor Charles Cohen, a professor of American religious history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Please note the following with respect to this assignment:

- 1) All 50-word assignments must be turned in on time. Late submissions will not be accepted. (They should be sent to both Jim Lewis and Dianne Reistroffer as a Word e-mail attachment no later than 10:00 AM of the assigned day.)
- 2) The 50-word assignments may not exceed 50 words (and we will count!), but they should approximate 50 words in length.
- 3) The point of the assignment is to assess the extent to which you can articulate the main point of the reserve readings.
- 4) Some may complain that a 50-word limit is too many while others may complain it is too few. But, as Professor Cohen says, "Had Goldilocks stumbled into my section instead of the three bears' den, she would have found the word limit 'just right.'" (See his article, "The 50-Word Assignment" in "Time to Write: The Newsletter of the L&S Program in Writing Across the Curriculum", vol. 8, no. 1, fall 2003.)

Following is a sample question and answer:

Question: In a sentence of no more than 50 words, describe the contribution of the covenant concept to the church in New England as well as its weaknesses.

Answer: The concept of the covenant provided the original colonists a biblically-based, rational basis for both political and ecclesiastical order, as seen in Winthrop and Bradford, but it also proved to be an inadequate way of assessing the faith of later generations as seen in the Halfway Covenant.

A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL APPENDIX

Confident that this course will leave you eager to read more about American religious history, the following works represent the rapidly growing literature on every conceivable aspect of American religious life and culture. (In the interest of full disclosure, neither instructor has read all the works on the list. But we've read a lot of them and want to read the others. We've marked ones we especially recommend with an *.) Students should also consult the bibliographical suggestions in Gaustad and Schmidt, page 428-435.

Survey Accounts of American Religious Life

Among the several fine surveys of American religious history are the following:

Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (older but still very useful, especially on the Protestant story)

Mark Noll's *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* provides a helpful comparative study of the Christian churches in North America.

Catherine Albanese, *America: Religions and Religion*—pays more attention to issues of religious pluralism in the United States.

Peter W. Williams, *America's Religions: From Their Origins to the Twenty-First Century*

Reference Works

Lindley, Susan Hill and Eleanor J. Stebner (eds), *The Westminster Handbook to Women in American Religious History*—brief historical accounts of important women and women's organizations in American religious life

Ruether, Rosemary Radford and Rosemary Skinner Keller (eds), *In Our Own Voices: Four Centuries of American Women's Religious Writing*—diverse documents introduced by leading women scholars

Books on special topics

Albanese, Catherine, *Nature Religion in America: From the Algonkian Indians to the New Age*

Ammerman, Nancy, *Baptist Battles: Social Change and Religious Conflict in the Southern Baptist Convention*

American Religion Syllabus, Fall 2009, p. 10

Angell, Stephen and Anthony Pinn, Social Protest Thought in the African American Episcopal Church, 1862-1939

Appleby, Scott, "Church and Age Unite!": the Modernist Impulse in American Catholicism

Bendroth, Margaret, Fundamentalism and Gender, 1875 to the Present

Best, Wallace, Passionately Human, No Less Divine: Religion and Culture in Black Chicago, 1915-1952

Bonomi, Patricia, Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America

Braude, Ann, Radical Spirits: Spiritualism and Women's Rights in Nineteenth-Century America

Brereton, Virginia, From Sin to Salvation: Stories of Women's Conversions, 1800 to the Present

*Butler, Jon, Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People

Caldwell, Patricia, The Puritan Conversion Narrative: The Beginnings of American Expression

*Carpenter, Joel, Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism

Curtis, Susan, A Consuming Faith: the Social Gospel and Modern American Culture

Davis, Cyprian, The History of Black Catholics in the United States

*DeBerg, Betty, Ungodly Women: Gender and the First Wave of American Fundamentalism

Dolan, Jay, The Immigrant Church

Dorrien, Gary, The Making of American Liberal Theology: Idealism, Realism, & Modernity 1900-1950

*Eck, Diana, A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Now Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation

Evans, Christopher, The Kingdom is Always But Coming: A Life of Walter

Rauschenbusch

Finke, Roger and Rodney Stark, The Churching of America 1776-1990: Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy

Fox, Richard Wightman, Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography

Gaustad, Edwin, The Great Awakening in New England

Genovese, Eugene, Roll, Jordan, Roll

*Hall, David, Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England

Hambrick-Stowe, Charles, Charles G. Finney and the Spirit of American Evangelicalism

Hambrick-Stowe, Charles, The Practice of Piety: Puritan Devotional Disciplines in 17th Century New England

Hanciles, Jehu, Beyond Christendom: Globalization, African Migration, and the Transformation of the West

Harris, Michael The Rise of Gospel Blues: The Music of Thomas Andrew Dorsey in the Urban Church

*Hatch, Nathan, The Democratization of American Christianity

Hempton, David, Methodism: Empire of the Spirit

Heyrman, Christine, Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt

Higginbotham, Evelyn Brooks, Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920

Hill, Patricia, The World Their Household: The American Woman's Mission Movement and Cultural Transformation, 1870-1920

Holifield, E. Brooks, Theology in America: Christian Thought from the Age of the Puritans to the Civil War

*Holifield, E. Brooks, God's Ambassadors: A History of the Christian Clergy in America

Hopkins, Dwight, Down, Up, and Over: Slave Religion and Black Theology

Hutchison, William R., ed., Between the Times: The Travail of the Protestant Establishment in America, 1900-1960

Hutchison, William R., The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism

*Hutchison, William R., Religious Pluralism in America: The Contentious History of a Founding Ideal

Kidd, Thomas S., American Christians and Islam: Evangelical Culture and Muslims from the Colonial Period to the Age of Terrorism

Leonard, Bill, God's Last and Only Hope

Lindley, Susan, "You Have Stept Out of Your Place": A History of Women and Religion in America

Luker, Ralph, The Social Gospel in Black and White: American Racial Reform, 1885-1912

*Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture

*Marsden, George, Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism

Marty, Martin, Modern American Religion, Vol 1., The Irony of it All 1893-1919

Marty, Martin, Modern American Religion, Vol 2, The Noise of Conflict 1919-1941

Marty, Martin, Modern American Religion, Vol 3, Under God, Indivisible, 1941-1960

Mathews, Donald, Religion in the Old South

Matovina, Timothy, Guadalupe and Her Faithful: Latino Catholics in San Antonio, from Colonial Origins to the Present

May, Henry, Protestant Churches and Industrial America

McDannell, Colleen, The Christian Home in Victorian America, 1840-1900

McGreevy, John, Catholicism and American Freedom: A History

*McGreevy, John, Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth-Century Urban North

McLoughlin, William, Revivals, Awakening, and Reform

Moore, R. Laurence, Religious Outsiders and the Making of America

Moorhead, James, World Without End: Mainstream American Protestant Visions of the Last Things, 1880-1925

*Noll, Mark, America's God: from Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln

*Orsi, Robert, The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem: 1880-1950

*Prothero, Stephen, American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon

Raboteau, Albert C., Slave Religion

Richey, Russell, Early American Methodism

Roof, Wade Clark A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of the Baby Boom Generation

*Roof, Wade Clark and William McKinney, American Mainline Religion

Sarna, Jonathan, American Judaism: A History

Scott, Daniel From Office to Profession: the New England Ministry, 1750-1850

Shippo, Jan, Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition

Sizer, Sandra, Gospel Hymns and Social Religion

Stein, Stephen, The Shaker Experience in America

Stout, Harry S., The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism

Stout, Harry S., Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the American Civil War

Taves, Ann, The Household of Faith: Roman Catholic Devotions in Mid-Nineteenth Century America

Thuesen, Peter, Predestination: The American Career of a Contentious Doctrine

Tracy, Patricia, Jonathan Edwards, Pastor

Turner, James, Without God, Without Creed: The Origins of Unbelief in America

*Wacker, Grant, Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture

Walls, Andrew, The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith

Washington, James Melvin, Frustrated Fellowship: The Black Baptist Quest for Social Power

Weber, Timothy, Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Pre-Millennialism, 1875-1925

White, Ronald C., Jr., Lincoln's Greatest Speech: The Second Inaugural

White, Ronald C., Jr. and C. Howard Hopkins, The Social Gospel: Religion and Reform in Changing America

Williamson, Scott, The Narrative Life: The Moral and Religious Thought of Frederick Douglass

Wilmore, Gayraud, Black Religion and Black Radicalism: An Interpretation of the Religious History of Afro-American People

Wilson, Charles Reagan, Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920

Winston, Diane, Red-Hot and Righteous: The Urban Religion of The Salvation Army

*Wuthnow, Robert, The Restructuring of American Religion

Wuthnow, Robert, America and the Challenges of Religious Diversity