READINGS IN AMERICAN RELIGIOUS HISTORY TO 1860

G. K. Chesterton called the United States a “nation with the soul of a church.” Perhaps at the end of this course we will understand what he meant.

Readings

Each week everyone will read the core assignment. All core readings may be bought at Room of One’s Own, 307 W. Johnson Street (608-257-7888; room@chorus.net; www.roomofonesown.com); the Pestana and Rohrer books have been published only in hardcover, so you may want to find used copies (or, in the case of Rohrer, a Kindle version). The Wisconsin Historical Society Library [WHS] has placed the core readings on three-hour reserve for the semester.

Beginning in the second week, each person will select their own secondary reading. Generally, you will be free to choose the work that most interests you, but some “volunteers” may be sacrificed to ensure coverage across the topics. The great majority of secondary readings live in WHS (if an item’s location is not indicated, assume WHS), but if you cannot find an item, there, check MadCat for other locations, including (as indicated on the syllabus): C = College Library, Helen C. White Hall; CLC = in my possession; E = Ethnic Studies Collection, Helen C. White Hall; G = Geography Library, Science Hall; I = Internet via MadCat; L = Law School Library, Law School; M = Memorial Library; RR = Reading Room, Wisconsin Historical Society Library; UGR = 1191 Collection, Helen C. White Hall]. If your secondary reading is not available, you are responsible for choosing a replacement from among the unassigned selections.

Written Assignments

You will write three papers, 7-8 pages, typed, double-spaced. You may choose which two of the first four papers to confront, but everyone must write the final essay. You need advert only to course readings but may include any relevant materials. If you wish to write on a different topic, please discuss your proposal with me.

Due Friday, Oct. 1 - Taking the Puritans, Catherine Tekawitha, and Rebecca Proten as examples, analyze the construction of religious identity in early North America.

Due Friday, Oct. 22 - To what degree did the imperial relationship configure American religion?

Due Friday, Nov. 5 - Evaluate the relationship between evangelicalism and democracy in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Due Friday, Nov. 19 - For the period under discussion, assess the division of American religion in terms of the categories “head” and “heart.”

Due Monday, Dec. 20 - Determine the religious character of the American national state in the mid-nineteenth century.
History 963, Readings in American Religious History to 1860, 2

Paper Format


Rewrite Policy

You may rewrite either or both of the first two assigned papers (time constraints prohibit rewriting the final one), but only after talking with me about such details as the new due date and the kinds of changes to be made. You must inform me of your decision to rewrite a paper by the Friday following the class session at which I first return the original version. You will ordinarily receive one week to rewrite, but I will be flexible about negotiating extensions for good cause. The old draft (plus any separate sheet of comments) must accompany the new version. Rewriting cannot lower your grade (nor can changing your mind about handing in a revised paper), but it does not by itself guarantee a higher one; you must substantially rework the essay, following my comments and initiating your own improvements too.

Grading

Simplicity itself. The papers and class discussion each count 25%.

Incompletes

The Gendzel Protocol governs the assigning of Incompletes: in fairness to those students who turn their work in on time, I will not grant an Incomplete for reasons other than Acts of God or other extraordinary disasters (covered in the Proclamation, p. 17 below). You may have an Incomplete without penalty only in such cases; in all other instances, an Incomplete carries a grade penalty of ½-step.

Email

Everyone in the class must have a Wiscmail account, available from DoIT. To contact me alone, send messages to: [clcohen@wisc.edu](mailto:clcohen@wisc.edu). To contact everyone in the class (including me) simultaneously, send messages to:

I. INTRODUCTION

SEPT. 7 - THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN REASON AND PASSION

Core reading: Garry Wills, *Head and Heart: A History of Christianity in America*
II. RELIGIOUS WORLDVIEWS

SEPT. 14 - DO YOU BELIEVE IN MAGIC?


Secondary Reading:

Overviews


Negotiations of Ministerial Authority

James Cooper, *Tenacious of Their Liberties: The Congregationalists in Colonial Massachusetts*, 23-45
Richard Gildrie, *The Profane, the Civil, & the Godly: The Reformation of Manners in Orthodox New England, 1679-1749*, 133-56

Prodigies and Providentialism

Alexandra Walsham, *Piety and Power: Gender and Religious Culture in the American Colonies, 1630-1700*, 43-68

Popular Piety and Magic

Charles E. Hambrick-Stowe, *The Practice of Piety*, 93-135
Leslie J. Lindenauer, *Piety and Power: Gender and Religious Culture in the American Colonies, 1630-1700*, 43-68
Emma Wilby, *Cunning Folk and Familiar Spirits: Shamanistic Visionary Traditions in Early Modern British Witchcraft and Magic*, 26-45

Protestantism and Print Culture

Lori Anne Ferrell, *The Bible and the People*, 56-94 [M]
**SEPT. 21 - CANONIZATION FODDER**

**Core reading:** Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits*

**Secondary reading:**

**Missions**

- James Axtell, *The Invasion Within*, 131-78
- Juliana Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands*, 27-68
- Nicholas P. Cushner, *Why Have You Come Here?: The Jesuits and the First Evangelization of Native America*, 149-69
- Steven W. Hackel, *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769-1850*, 127-81

**Native Beliefs and Christianity**

- James Axtell, “Were Indian Conversions *Bona Fide*?” in *idem*, *After Columbus*, 100-21
- Ramón A. Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away*, 39-94
- Erik R. Seeman, *Death in the New World: Cross-Cultural Encounters*, 1492-1800, 106-42

**Tekakwitha and the Iroquois**

III. EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY REVIVALS

SEPT. 28 - THE SOULS OF MORAVIAN BLACK FOLK

Core reading:Jon F. Sensbach, *Rebecca’s Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World*

Secondary reading:

Overviews

Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People*, 129-63

African Influences

Margaret W. Creel, “A Peculiar People”: *Slave Religion and Community-Culture Among the Gullahs*, 45-63
Michael A. Gomez, *Black Crescent: The Experience and Legacy of African Muslims in the Americas*, 143-84 [CLC]
Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South*, 244-90

Moravians

S. Scott Rohrer, *Hope’s Promise: Religion and Acculturation in the Southern Backcountry*, 35-65

The Religions of Eighteenth-Century Slaves

Sylvia R. Frey and Betty Wood, *Come Shouting to Zion: African American Protestantism in the American South and British Caribbean to 1830*, 80-117
John Catron, “Early Black-Atlantic Christianity in the Middle Colonies: Social Mobility and Race in Moravian Bethlehem,” *Pennsylvania History*, 76 (2009), 301-45
OCT. 5 - THE BIRTH OF THE BORN-AGAIN

Core reading: Thomas S. Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America*

Secondary reading:

Overview


Evangelicalism

Randall Balmer, *The Making of Evangelicalism: From Revivalism to Politics and Beyond*, 9-26 [CLC]


The Great Awakening


Frank Lambert, *Inventing the “Great Awakening,”* 87-124


Religious Experience


Ann Taves, *Fits, Trances & Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James*, 46-75

Revivals and Politics


Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*, 243-69

IV. BIG PICTURES

OCT. 12 - ONE EMPIRE UNDER GOD

Core reading: Carla Gardina Pestana, Protestant Empire: Religion and the Making of the British Atlantic World

Secondary reading:

Overview

Religions and Empires
Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, Puritan Conquistadores: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550-1700, 83-119 [CLC]
J. H. Elliott, Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America 1492-1830, 185-218 [WHS, C]
Cornelius Jaenen, The Role of the Church in New France, 39-68
George L. Smith, Religion and Trade in New Netherland: Dutch Origins and American Development, 114-28

Religion and Politics in the British Empire
James B. Bell, A War of Religion: Dissenters, Anglicans and the American Revolution, 42-57
J.C.D. Clark, The Language of Liberty 1660-1832: Political Discourse and Social Dynamics in the Anglo-American World, 296-339
Peter Doll, Revolution, Religion, and National Identity: Imperial Anglicanism in British North America, 1745-1795, 155-209,
Andrew R. Murphy, Conscience and Community: Revisiting Toleration and Religious Dissent in Early Modern England and America, 123-63
Kevin Phillips, The Cousins’ Wars: Religion, Politics, & the Triumph of Anglo-America, 35-78
Nancy L. Rhoden, Revolutionary Anglicanism: The Colonial Church of England Clergy during the American Revolution, 37-63
John Frederick Woolverton, Colonial Anglicanism in North America, 107-135

Transatlantic Revivalism
Leigh Eric Schmidt, Holy Fairs: Scottish Communions and American Revivals in the Early Modern Period, 115-68
Marilyn Westerkamp, Triumph of the Laity: Scots-Irish Piety and the Great Awakening, 1625-1760, 195-213
**OCT. 19 - FREE MARKET, FREE CONSCIENCE**

**Core reading:** Frank Lambert, *The Founding Fathers and the Place of Religion in America*

**Secondary reading:**

**Churches and States**

- Thomas Buckley, *Church and State in Revolutionary Virginia*, 144-72
- Derek Davis, *Religion and the Continental Congress*, 151-73
- James H. Hutson, *Church and State in America: The First Two Centuries*, 47-93 [WHS, C]
- Monica Najar, *Evangelizing the South: A Social History of Church and State in Early America*, 115-36

**The Development of Religious Toleration**

- Thomas Curry, *The First Freedoms: Church and State in America to the Passage of the First Amendment*, 78-104

**Pluralism and Religious Rivalry**

V. RELIGION AND REVOLUTION

OCT. 26 - ORDINARY PROPHETS

Core reading: Susan Juster, *Doomsayers: Anglo-American Prophecy in the Age of Revolution*

Secondary reading:

Female Preachers

Catherine A. Brekus, *Strangers & Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America 1740-1845*, 68-113
Rebecca Larson, *Daughters of Light: Quaker Women Preaching and Prophesying in the Colonies and Abroad*, 170-1775, 133-71
Catharine Randall, *From A Far Country: Camisards and Huguenots in the Atlantic World*, 40-60

Millennialism

James W. Davidson, *The Logic of Millennial Thought*, 213-54 [M]
Melvin B. Endy, Jr., “Just War, Holy War, and Millennialism in Revolutionary America,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 42 (1985), 3-25
Nathan Hatch, *The Sacred Cause of Liberty*, 97-138
Stephen A. Marini, “Uncertain Dawn: Millennialism and Political Theology in Revolutionary America,” in Richard Connors and Andrew Colin Gow, eds., *Anglo-American Millennialism, from Milton to the Millerites*, 159-77 [M]

Women, Gender, Experience and Authority

Amanda Porterfield, *Feminine Spirituality in America*, 50-81 [M]
Aaron Spencer Fogelman, *Jesus Is Female: Moravians and the Challenge of Radical Religion in Early America*, 73-104
Karin E. Gedge, *Without Benefit of Clergy: Women and the Pastoral Relationship in Nineteenth-Century American Culture*, 163-95
Barry Levy, *Quakers and the American Family*, 193-230
Janet Moore Lindman, *Bodies of Belief: Baptist Community in Early America*, 156-78
Scott Stephan, *Redeeming the Southern Family: Evangelical Women and Domestic Devotion in the Antebellum South*, 1-19
**NOV. 2 - AN AMERICAN METHOD TO THEIR MADNESS**

**Core reading:** Dee Andrews, *The Methodists and Revolutionary America, 1760-1800: The Shaping of an Evangelical Culture*

**Secondary reading:**

**African American Methodism**

- Carol V. R. George, *Segregated Sabbaths: Richard Allen and the Emergence of Independent Black Churches 1760-1840*, 90-115
- Richard S. Newman, *Freedom’s Prophet: Bishop Richard Allen, the AME Church, and the Black Founding Fathers*, 159-82
- Ann Taves, *Fits, Trances, & Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James*, 76-117

**Anglo-American Methodism**

- Robert Bray, *Peter Cartwright, Legendary Frontier Preacher*, 75-100

**Religion, Democracy and Republicanism**

- Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity*, 17-46
- Cynthia Lynn Lyerly, *Methodism and the Southern Mind, 1770-1810*, 146-75
- Russell E. Richey, *Early American Methodism*, 82-97
- Ellis Sandoz, *Republicanism, Religion, and the Soul of America*, 1-52 [CLC]
- Gregory A. Wills, *Democratic Religion: Freedom, Authority, and Church Discipline in the Baptist South, 1785-1900*, 37-49
VI. FAITH AND REASON

NOV. 9 - EAR WITNESS

Core Reading: Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Hearing Things: Religion, Illusion, and the American Enlightenment*

Secondary Reading:

Overviews

Jon Butler, “Coercion, Miracle, Reason: Rethinking the American Religious Experience in the Revolutionary Age,” in Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert, eds., *Religion in a Revolutionary Age*, 1-30

Enlightenment and Religion


Henry F. May, *The Enlightenment in America*, 278-304


Orality


Richard Cullen Rath, *How Early America Sounded*, 97-119


Religion and Science

Theodore Dwight Bozeman, *Protestants in an Age of Science*, 44-70

Walter H. Conser, *God and the Natural World: Religion and Science in Antebellum America*, 105-35

James Delbourgo, *A Most Amazing Scene of Wonders: Electricity and Enlightenment in Early America*, 50-86


Craig James Hagen, *The Village Enlightenment in America: Popular Religion and Science in the Nineteenth Century*, 65-112


Liberalism and Deism

Jack Fruchtman, Jr., *Thomas Paine and the Religion of Nature*, 156-71 [M]


Kerry Walters, *Rational Infidels: The American Deists*, 3-43
NOV. 16 - MIND RELIGION

Core Reading: Catherine L. Albanese, *A Republic of Mind & Spirit: A Cultural History of American Metaphysical Religion*, 1-253

Secondary Reading:

Magic, Esotericism, and Occultism

Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People*, 225-56
D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, 112-49

Religions of Mind

Ann Lee Bressler, *The Universalist Movement in America*, 1770-1880, 9-30
Lawrence Buell, *Emerson*, 158-98 [M]
Steven C. Bullock, *Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order*, 1730-1840, 163-83
Mary Ann Clawson, *Constructing Brotherhood: Class, Gender, and Fraternalism*, 53-83
Colleen McDannell and Bernhard Lang, *Heaven: A History*, 181-227 [M]
Anne C. Rose, *Transcendentalism as a Social Movement*, 1830-1850, 38-69

Religions of Spirit

Anne Braude, *Radical Spirits: Spiritualism and Women's Rights in Nineteenth-Century America*, 82-115
Bret E. Carroll, *Spiritualism in Antebellum America*, 135-59
Richard Francis, *Transcendental Utopias: Individuality and Community at Brook Farm, Fruitlands, and Walden*, 100-39
Robert C. Fuller, *Mesmerism and the American Cure of Souls*, 69-104
R. Laurence Moore, *In Search of White Crows: Spiritualism, Parapsychology, and American Culture*, 3-39
Stephen J. Stein, *The Shaker Experience in America*, 165-84
VII. CHURCHES AND STATE

NOV. 23 - FEAR AND LOATHING ON THE TRAIL OF TOLERATION

Core Reading: Philip Hamburger, *Separation of Church and State*, 1-284

Secondary reading:

Anti-Catholicism

Tyler Anbinder, *Nativism and Slavery: The Northern Know Nothings and the Politics of the 1850s*, 103-26
Tracy Fessenden, *Culture and Redemption: Religion, the Secular, and American Literature*, 60-83
Jason K. Duncan, *Citizens or Papists?: The Politics of Anti-Catholicism in New York*, 1685-1821, 54-80
Michael F. Holt, *Political Parties and American Political Development from the Age of Jackson to the Age of Lincoln*, 265-90
Ryan K. Smith, *Gothic Arches, Latin Crosses: Anti-Catholicism and American Church Designs in the Nineteenth Century*, 1-18

Establishment and Disestablishment

Daniel Walker Howe, “Church, State and Education in the Young American Republic,” *Journal of the Early Republic*, 22 (2002), 1-24
John Witte, Jr., *Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment*, 2nd ed., 41-67 [CLC]

Republicanism and Walls of Separation

Daniel L. Driesbach, *Thomas Jefferson and the Wall of Separation between Church and State*, 25-54
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NOV. 30 - LOCAL OPTIONS

Core Reading: Sarah Barringer Gordon, *The Mormon Question: Polygamy and Constitutional Conflict in Nineteenth-Century America*

Secondary reading:

Politics, Law and Anti-Mormonism


Edwin Brown Firmage and Richard Collin Mangrum, *Zion in the Courts: A Legal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900*, 160-209

Terryl Givens, *The Viper on the Hearth: Mormons, Myths, and the Construction of Heresy*, 76-93


Klaus J. Hansen, *Quest for Empire: The Political Kingdom of God and the Council of Fifty in Mormon History*, 147-79


Polygamy and Sexuality


Lawrence Foster, *Religion and Sexuality: Three American Communal Experiments of the Nineteenth Century*, 181-225

Lawrence Foster, *Women, Family and Utopia: Communal Experiments of the Shakers, the Oneida Community, and the Mormons*, 123-69


Lewis J. Kern, *An Ordered Love: Sex Roles and Sexuality in Victorian Utopias—the Shakers, the Mormons, and the Oneida Community*, 170-89


George D. Smith, *Nauvoo Polygamy*: “… but we called it celestial marriage.” tbd

VIII. PROTESTANT AMERICA

DEC. 7 - MOVIN’ ON, HEADIN’ OUT

Core Reading: S. Scott Rohrer, *Wandering Souls: Protestant Migrations in America, 1630-1865*

Secondary reading:

**Religion, Frontier, and Migration**

Richard E. Bennett, *We’ll Find the Place: The Mormon Exodus, 1846-1848*, 67-94
David Cressy, *Coming Over: Migration and Communication between England and New England in the Seventeenth Century*, 74-106
John R. Dichtl, *Frontiers of Faith: Bringing Catholicism to the West in the Early Republic*, 114-44
Patrick Griffin, *The People with No Name: Ireland’s Ulster Scots, America’s Scots Irish, and the Creation of a British Atlantic World, 1689-1764*, 65-98
David Hackett Fischer, *Albion’s Seed: Four British Folkways in America*, 419-55
David H. Fischer and James C. Kelley, *Bound Away: Virginia and the Westward Movement*, 74-134
Laurie Maffly-Kipp, *Religion and Society in Frontier California*, 13-37

**Sojourners and Communalists**

Craig Atwood, *Community of the Cross: Moravian Piety in Colonial Bethlehem*, 21-40
Diane L. Barthel, *amana: From Pietist Sect to American Community*, 42-62
Jacob M. Blosser, “Irreverent Empire: Anglican Inattention in an Atlantic World,” *Church History*, 77 (2008), 596-628
Katherine Carté Engel, *Religion and Profit: Moravians in Early America*, 13-37
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DECEMBER 14 - AN AMERICAN (THEOLOGICAL) TRAGEDY

Core Reading: Mark A. Noll, America’s God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln

Secondary reading:

Overviews


Edwards, Edwardseanism and the New Divinity

Joseph Conforti, Jonathan Edwards, Religious Tradition, & American Culture, 62-86
E. Brooks Holifield, Theology in America: Christian Thought from the Age of the Puritans to the Civil War, 102-26
George M. Marsden, Jonathan Edwards: A Life, 459-71

A Republic of Christians

Mark Hanley, Beyond a Christian Commonwealth: The Protestant Quarrel with the American Republic, 1830-1860, 32-57
Robert T. Handy, A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities, 27-64
Perry Miller, “From the Covenant to the Revival,” in idem, Nature's Nation, 90-120
Ernest Tuveson, Redeemer Nation, 91-136

Theology and Theologians

Paul Conkin, The Uneasy Center: Reformed Christianity in Antebellum America, 210-49
Bruce Kuklick, Churchmen and Philosophers: From Jonathan Edwards to John Dewey, 66-79
Peter Thuesen, Predestination: The American Career of a Contentious Doctrine, 100-35

Religion and Slavery

Larry Tise, Proslavery, 286-307
A PROCLAMATION
Regarding Late Papers

Whereas it may come to pass that one or more individuals, whether through dilatoriness, dereliction, irresponsibility, or chutzpah, may seek respite and surcease from escrorial demands through procrastination, delay, and downright evasion;

And whereas this unhappy happenstance contributes mightily to malfeasance on the part of parties of the second part (i.e., students, the instructed, you) and irascibility on the part of us (i.e., me);

Be it therefore known, understood, apprehended, and comprehended:

That all assignments must reach us on or by the exact hour announced in class, and that failure to comply with this wholesome and most generous regulation shall result in the assignment forfeiting one half of a letter grade each day for which it is tardy (i.e., an “A” shall become an “AB”), “one day” being defined as a 24-hour period commencing at the announced hour on which the assignment is due; and that the aforementioned reduction in grade shall continue for each succeeding day of delay until either the assignment shall be remitted or its value shrunk unto nothingness. And let all acknowledge that the responsibility for our receiving papers deposited surreptitio (i.e., in my mailbox or under my door), whether timely or belated, resides with the aforementioned second-part parties (i.e., you again), hence onus for the miscarriage of such items falls upon the writer’s head (i.e., until I clutch your scribbles to my breast, I assume you have not turned them in, all protestations to the contrary notwithstanding).

Be it nevertheless affirmed:

That the greater part of justice residing in mercy, it may behoove us, acting entirely through our gracious prerogative, to award an extension in meritorious cases, such sufferance being granted only upon consultation with us, in which case a negotiated due date shall be decreed; it being perfectly well understood that failure to observe this new deadline shall result in the immediate and irreversible failure of the assignment (i.e., an “F”), its value being accounted as a null set and less than that of a vile mote. And be it further noted, that routine disruptions to routine (i.e., lack of sleep occasioned by pink badgers dancing on the ceiling) do not conduce to mercy, but that severe dislocations brought on by Acts of God (exceedingly traumatic events to the body and/or soul, such as having the earth swallow one up on the way to delivering the assignment) perpetrated either on oneself or on one’s loving kindred, do.

And we wish to trumpet forth:

That our purpose in declaiming said proclamation, is not essentially to terminate the wanton flouting of our didactic intentions, but to encourage our beloved students to consult with us, and apprehend us of their difficulties aforehand (i.e., talk to me, baby), so that the cruel axe of the executioner fall not upon their Grade Point Average and smite it with a vengeance.

To which proclamation, we do affix our seal: