

RELIGION VERSUS THE ACADEMY

Religion W4803, fall, 2014

Wednesdays, 4:10-6:00. Location TBA.

Instructor: Jack Hawley (jsh3@columbia.edu)

Location: Room 201, 80 Claremont

Office hours: Thursdays, 4:15-6:00, 219a Milbank

Course Rationale

The proper aims of education in relation to those of religion have long been a matter of public debate, but in recent years the intensity and terms of that debate have changed significantly. The impact of the David Project's "Columbia Unbecoming" on the Department of MESAAS and the university as a whole (2008) is a case in point. The fight about tenuring Nadia Abu El-Haj at Barnard continued the theme. More recently (2014), in response to threatened legal action from the Hindu right, Penguin Press of India has withdrawn Wendy Doniger's book *The Hindus: An Alternative History* from circulation, generating an international controversy. Using as its primary materials case studies such as these, this course focuses on instances of confrontation between religion and the academy that have arisen in India and the United States, the world's largest and most influential democracies. These case studies are sometimes parallel, sometimes divergent, sometimes overlapping.

Assignments and Evaluations

1. Complete and attentive reading in preparation for the seminar week by week, followed by active participation in the seminar itself. Each student plays a leadership role in one seminar. (25% of the course grade)
2. Students write short weekly analyses of issues that should be discussed in that week's seminar. These may not exceed 500 words and must be posted to CourseWorks by 5:00 Tuesday of the week in question. (25% of the course grade)
3. The course culminates in a term paper, due just before the Thanksgiving vacation (on Wednesday, November 26). These papers will be discussed by the seminar in the final two sessions of the course, with each student giving a very brief oral introduction. A paper prospectus and working bibliography are due in Week 7—to be specific, on Friday, October 24. (50% of the course grade).

Academic Integrity

Approved by the student body in 1912, the Barnard College Honor Code states:

We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by refraining from every form of dishonesty in our academic life. We consider it dishonest to ask for, give, or receive help in examinations or quizzes, to use any papers or books not authorized by the instructor in examinations, or to present oral work or written work which is not entirely our own, unless otherwise approved by the instructor. We consider it dishonest to remove without authorization, alter, or deface library and other academic materials. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake.

The complexities of technology and of our cognition sometimes make it difficult to determine what constitutes plagiarism (e.g., Did I come up with that idea myself or did I read it somewhere? Was that sentence something I cut and pasted from the internet and intended to reformulate later but never got around to?). Please feel free to consult me if you encounter ambiguous situations in the course of your work.

I gratefully acknowledge that I have plagiarized the paragraphs appearing immediately above from my colleague Beth Berkowitz, who composed them as a part of the syllabus for her course *Introduction to Talmud Text Study* (Spring, 2014).

Books Available for Purchase at BookCulture

Diana L. Eck, *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2001).

Wendy Doniger, *The Hindus: An Alternative History* (New York: Penguin, 2010).

Edward Humes, *Monkey Girl: Evolution, Education, Religion, and the Battle for America's Soul* (New York: Ecco, 2007).

Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Clash Within: Democracy, Religious Violence, and India's Future* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007).

Krishnan Ramaswamy, Antonio de Nicolas, and Aditi Banerjee, eds., *Invading the Sacred* (New Delhi: Rupa, 2007).

Key to the Syllabus

Items listed without an asterisk are available either as required texts or online through CourseWorks. Items that appear with asterisks are supplemental. A number of these can also be found on CourseWorks.

Course Syllabus

I. Introduction to the Course (9/3)

II. Academic Freedom; India Background (9/10)

John Dewey et al., *The AAUP's 1915 Declaration of Principles*.

Evan Gerstmann and Matthew J. Streb, eds., *Academic Freedom at the Dawn of a New Century: How Terrorism, Governments, and Culture Wars Impact Free Speech* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), pp. x-xiv, 3-40.

Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Clash Within: Democracy, Religious Violence, and India's Future* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), preface and chapters 1-3, pp. ix-121.

* "A Not-So-Professorial Watchdog," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 10, 2006, pp. A10-A13.

* "Anne Neal vs. Roger Bowen," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 7, 2007, pp. A8-A11.

* Robert M. O'Neil, "Colleges Face Ominous New Pressures on Academic Freedom," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 8, 2008, pp. A33-A35.

* John R. Bowen, *Why the French Don't Like Headscarves: Islam, the State, and Public Space* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

III. India Today: Secularism, Religious Identity, and Laine Controversy (9/17)

Nussbaum, *The Clash Within*, chapters 4-7, pp. 122-263.

James W. Laine, *Shivaji: Hindu King in Islamic India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), acknowledgments, introduction, chapter 1, and brief selections, pp. vii-19.

Christian Lee Novetzke, "The Laine Controversy and the Study of Hinduism," *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 8:1 (2005), pp. 183-201.

Shailaja Neelakantan, "Indian Court Overrules Effort to Prosecute American Scholar Whose Book Sparked a Riot," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 11, 2007.

IV. Hindu Religion and American Scholars (9/24)

J. S. Hawley, ed., *Defamation/Anti/Defamation: Hindus in Dialogue with the Western Academy*, 2002, containing papers presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Denver, November 17, 2001. Mounted simultaneously on RISA-L, the listserv of the Religion in South Asia section of the American Academy of Religion (<http://www.acusd.edu/lnelson/risa>), and on indictraditions (<http://www.indictraditions@egroups.com>). Continuing access is available at: <http://www.barnard.edu/religion>.

Wendy Doniger, *The Hindus: An Alternative History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2009), selections.

V. Dina Nath Batra vs. Wendy Doniger (10/1)

Guest: Wendy Doniger, University of Chicago

Wendy Doniger, "India: Censorship by the Batra Brigade," *New York Review of Books*, May 8, 2014, pp. 51-53.

[Other resources to come.]

Please note: Wendy Doniger will deliver a public lecture on campus in the evening: 208 Knox, 6:00.

VI. Religion in American Public Life: Christianity, Pluralism, Atheism (10/8)

Diana L. Eck, *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2001), selections TBA.

[Pluralism Project: Public Square; Supreme course case re: Greece, NY May 2014]

VII. Intelligent Design (10/15)

Please note: We will schedule this week's seminar for an alternate time.

Edward Humes, *Monkey Girl: Evolution, Education, Religion, and the Battle for America's Soul* (New York: Ecco, 2007), pp. xi-108, 146-352.

Randall Balmer, "Creationism by Design: The Religious Right's Quest for Intellectual Legitimacy," in *Thy Kingdom Come: How the Religious Right Distorts the Faith and Threatens America* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), pp. 109-142.

VIII. The Academy versus Religion? (10/22)

George M. Marsden, *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 3-27, 429-444.

_____, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 3-24, 113-119.

_____, "The Ambiguities of Academic Freedom," *Church History*, 62 (June 1993), 221-236.

Randall Balmer, "Response to George Marsden." **[Check publication information]**

IX. Rajiv Malhotra and "Wendy's Children" (10/29)

Rajiv Malhotra, "The Position of Hinduism in America's Higher Education," www.infinityfoundation.com/ECI/Hinduismframe.htm, downloaded December 4, 2000 and available online. E-correspondence from J. S. Hawley, Rupa Viswanath, and Nate Roberts will be supplied as a handout.

Rajiv Malhotra, "RISA Lila – 1: Wendy's Child Syndrome," <http://rajivmalhotra.sulekha.com/blog/post/2002/09/risa-lila-1-wendy-s-child-syndrome.htm>.

Krishnan Ramaswamy, Antonio de Nicolas, and Aditi Banerjee, eds., *Invading the Sacred* (New Delhi: Rupa., 2007), xi-60, 467-468, 473-481.

Paul Courtright, "Studying Religion in an Age of Terror," unpublished paper.

Paul Courtright, "Climbing Through Paradigms," unpublished paper.

J. S. Hawley, "The Damage of Separation: Krishna's Loves and Kali's Child," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 72:2 (2004), pp. 369-393 (<http://jaar.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/72/2/369>).

Laurie L. Patton, "Identity Politics, Moderate Voices, and a Common Good: Brief Notes on the Years After *Kali's Child*." Unpublished paper.

* Russell T. McCutcheon, "'It's a Lie. There's No Truth in It! It's a Sin!': On the Limits of the Humanistic Study of Religion and the Costs of Saving Others from Themselves," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 74:3 (2006), pp. 720-750, together with a response from Paul Courtright and a counter-response from Russell McCutcheon.

X. Textbook Wars in India and the USA (11/5)

Martha Nussbaum, *The Clash Within*, chapters 8-10, beginning with "The Education Wars," pp. 264-337.

Michele Moritis Verma, "Educational Controversy in India," unpublished paper, Columbia University, 2002. [On NCERT]

Prema Kurien, "Multiculturalism and School Curricula: The California Textbook Controversy," paper delivered to the Association for Asian Studies, Boston, 2007.

Christophe Jaffrelot, ed., "Documents on the California Textbook Controversy," in *Hindu Nationalism: A Reader* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 361-369.

Alan Cooperman, "A Timely Subject—and a Sore One: UNC Draws Fire, Lawsuit for Assigning Book on Islam," *Washington Post* August 7, 2002, p. A1: <http://pewforum.org/news/display.php?NewsID=1408>.

Kate Zernike, "Talk, and Debate, on Koran as Chapel Hill Classes Open," *New York Times*, August 20, 2002, p. A1.

XI. American Sikhs (11/12)

Guest: Gurinder Singh Mann, University of California, Santa Barbara

Pashaura Singh, "Recent Trends and Prospects in Sikh Studies," *Studies in Religion* 27:4 (1998), pp. 407-425.

W.H. McLeod, "Discord in the Sikh Panth," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 119:3 (1999), pp. 381-389. Accessible via JSTOR.

Harjot Oberoi, "What has a Whale Got to do with it? A Tale of Pogroms and Biblical Allegories," in Christopher Shackle, Gurharpal Singh, and Arvind-Pal Singh Mandair, eds., *Sikh Religion, Culture, and Ethnicity* (London: Curzon, 2001), pp. 186-206.

XII. Home Sweet Home: Controversies at Barnard and Columbia (11/19)

(1) *On Israel*: Joseph Massad and Nadia Abu El-Haj

The David Project's movie "Columbia Unbecoming" — in its original and most recent forms.

Joseph Massad as represented in the Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Massad.

Campus Watch on Joseph Massad (browse):
<http://www.campus-watch.org/docs/author/Joseph+Massad>;
<http://www.campus-watch.org/article/id/63>.

Joseph Massad on the controversy:
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/mealac/faculty/massad>;
<http://www.counterpunch.org/massad06032005.html>.

In the New York Times:
http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/organizations/c/columbia_university/index.html?query=MASSAD,%20JOSEPH&field=per&match=exact.

Tenure update:

"Closely Watched Tenure Case at Columbia U. Is Still Unsettled," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, p. A13, June 6, 2008

Jane Kramer, "The Petition," *The New Yorker* April 14, 2008, pp. 50-59.

(2) *On India: Hinduism Here* and the Infinity Foundation

The course website, posted at <http://www.barnard.edu/religion/hinduismhere>, especially "Challenges to the Course," together with a detailed log of correspondence between Rajiv Malhotra and Krishnan Ramaswamy of the Infinity Foundation, Jack Hawley, and Columbia and Barnard students.

In addition, J. S. Hawley, "Hinduism Here," Spotlight on Teaching, *Religious Studies News* 21:4 (October, 2006), pp. iii, vii.

XIII. No class; term papers due (11/26)

Please post them to the appropriate slot in CourseWorks and as hardcopy to Milbank 219.

And please read this:

Stanley Fish, "Religion without Truth," *New York Times*, March 31, 2007.

XIV. Student Presentations (12/3)

Students read and respond to one another's papers, as posted to CourseWorks. Depending on the number of students in the seminar, we may also schedule an additional meeting, either on 12/3 or on 12/10.