PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

RLG 211

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COURSE SYLLABUS [2017]

SEPTEMBER 11

INTRODUCTION:

What is ‘Psychology of Religion’?

What is ‘Religious Psychology’?

How are they to be distinguished from the ‘psychoanalytic (depth psychology) study of religion’?

These questions become further complicated in sorting out what is a viable and reasonable working definition of ‘religion.’

How is it possible to think about the academic study of religion in ways that distinguish it from religious studies and theology?

What are the differences between ‘psychology’ and ‘psychoanalysis’ and how do these differences shape and contribute to scholarly theories of religious beliefs, experiences and practices from a psychological and/or psychoanalytic perspective?

How does the study of religion approach subjective experience and explanatory analysis?
Are these approaches (emic/etic) mutually exclusive or complementary with respect to a theoretically adequate psychology of religion?

These issues will allow for a consideration of the interrelated questions concerning the source of religious beliefs, experiences and practices.

**SITUATING/DEFINING THE DISCIPLINE**

**SEPTEMBER 18**


**PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACHES TO RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE & BELIEF**

**SEPTEMBER 25**


**OCTOBER 2**


OCTOBER 9----THANKSGIVING--NO CLASS

PSYCHOLOGIES OF MYSTICISM

OCTOBER 16 (ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE: 25%)


OCTOBER 23


OCTOBER 30


NOVEMBER 6---- NO CLASS

COMPARATIVE APPROACHES: CULTURAL & HISTORICAL

NOVEMBER 13


Edith Turner. 1993. The Reality of Spirits: A Tabooed or Permitted Field of Study?” *Anthropology of Consciousness.* 4/1:

**NOVEMBER 20 (ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE: 35%)**


**CONCLUSION: NOTE ON METHODOLOGY: EMIC, ETIC, BOTH?**

**NOVEMBER 27**


**DECEMBER 4 (ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE: 20%)**

**REVIEW/DISCUSSION**

**EVALUATION**
Students will be asked to write THREE (3) PAPERS. These papers must be written in formal academic style, i.e. title page, clearly indicated references and bibliography. Specific topics will be suggested. Hand your papers in at the beginning of class on the due date.

DO NOT SEND PAPERS ELECTRONICALLY TO EITHER THE PROFESSOR OR THE TA.

Essay #1: 25%. (four to five pages).* Due: October 16.

Essay #2: 35%. (five to six pages).* Due: November 20.

Essay #3: 20% (three to five pages)* Due: December 4.

*Note: A penalty of 2% per day applies against assignments handed in after the deadline.

Class attendance/participation: 20%**

**Note: Class attendance and participation is part of the assigned work for this course. If you miss class due to illness or an unforeseen event, please email the professor with a copy to the TA to let them know, in advance wherever possible.