

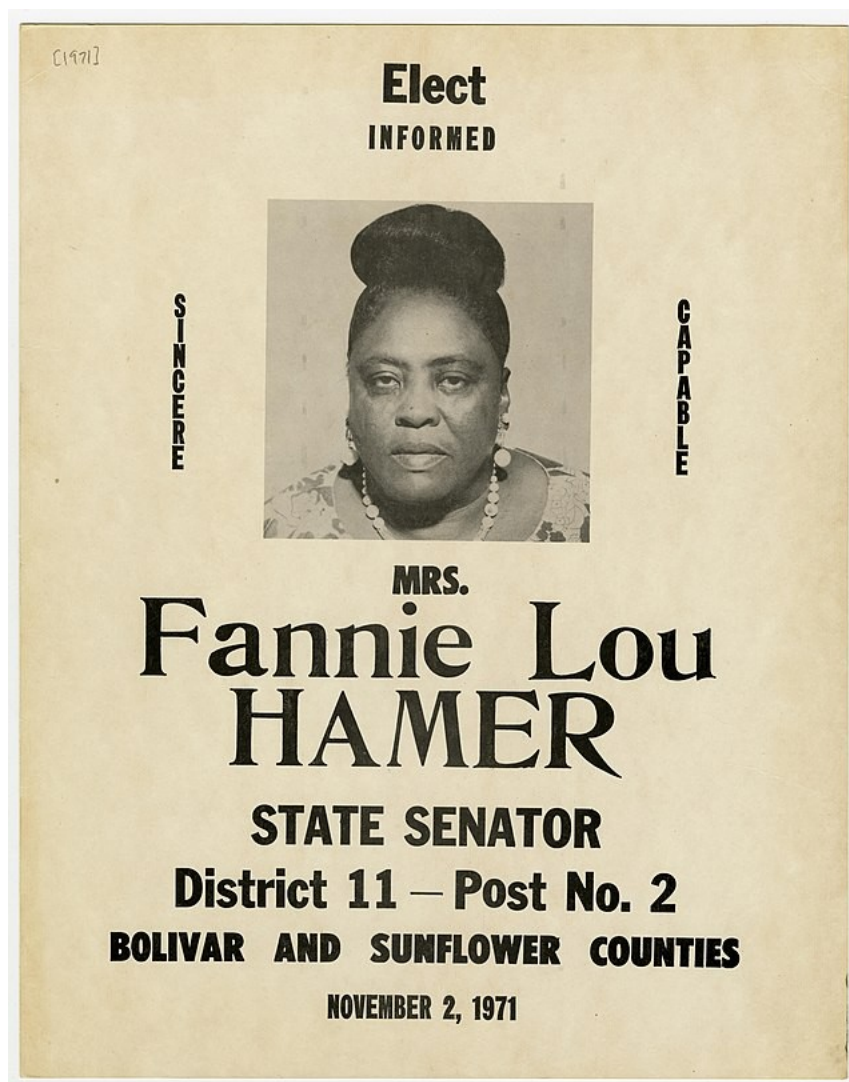
Boston University  
College of Arts and Sciences

# Religion in American Culture

CAS RN 111

Room 685-725 Comm Avenue CAS 306

Tue/Thu: 12:30-1:45 pm



Fannie Lou Hamer. "Elect Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, state senator."  
Public domain.

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## Our Endeavor

This statement is shaped by my time as a student in Dr. Jennifer C. Nash's "Black Genders and Sexualities" course—a classroom that changed me. Her "Statement of Endeavor" became a blueprint I've returned to time and again. What follows is my own reworking, grounded in her example and in the pedagogical commitments of those who have taught me to believe that education is not merely about what we know, but about what we are willing to become.

We are not here to rehearse what we already think we know. That is not the task. The task is to create a space spacious enough for vulnerability, for intellectual risk, for experimentation, for discomfort, and for care. Following thinkers like Jennifer C. Nash and Kyla Wazana Tompkins, I believe that the classroom must remain a site where freedom is practiced, not presumed. And if bell hooks is right—and I believe she is—then the classroom is still the most radical space of possibility inside the university.

So, what does it mean to gather here, in this moment, with these people, and practice freedom?

It means we extend generosity—to the readings, to each other, and to ourselves. The university often incentivizes competition and performance. But I invite us to let those instincts fall away. I am not here to perform perfection, and I don't want you to either. I am not looking for students to posture as experts. I am much more interested in what happens when we dare to say, "I don't know," or "I'm still working through this," or "That made me feel something I don't yet have words for." I am drawn to the haunted, the mysterious, the unmastered, and the unseen. I believe that knowledge is not just about accumulation; it is about transformation. And I believe, sincerely, that we can be changed in these few weeks together.

Is that idealistic? Maybe. Is it impossible? Not at all.

Disagreement is welcome here—so long as it is rooted in dignity. I expect us to wrestle with hard questions: about the world, about ourselves, about the systems we move through and the stories we carry. The work of the intellectual is not to offer neat conclusions but to turn simple answers into deeper inquiries. Socrates is

said to have claimed that “the unexamined life is not worth living.” My hope is that this semester helps you examine life more fully—and that, in doing so, you find even more reason to live it with conviction, courage, and care.

Let’s begin.

**This course meets the learning outcomes for Social Inquiry I, Individual in Community, and Teamwork/Collaboration through the following Course Objectives:**

### **Social Inquiry I:**

This course fulfills the Social Inquiry learning outcome by critically examining the intersection of religion with the production and maintenance of the United States. Through a critical lens and interdisciplinary approach, topics such as race, class, political theory, immigration, carcerality, ecology, public health, law, and culture are analyzed, illuminating the power relations that shape religious identities and practices. By challenging disciplinary boundaries and emphasizing the production of religion by social, political, and cultural forces, students develop skills in social inquiry, gain deeper understanding of power dynamics, and enhance their ability to critically analyze complex social phenomena in relation to U.S. governance.

The course description further fulfills the Social Inquiry learning outcome by encouraging students to critically analyze knowledge production and the power dynamics that shape the study of religion and its relation to U.S. governance. By going beyond disciplinary frameworks and challenging established norms, students develop a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between religion, power, and society. Through the exploration of various topics and the examination of power relations, students refine their social inquiry skills, enhancing their ability to analyze, interpret, and engage with diverse sources of information and perspectives. The course actively fosters an environment of critical inquiry, providing students with the tools and knowledge to critically assess existing systems and advocate for justice using the language and resources cultivated within the critical study of religion.

### **Global Citizenship**

In this US Religions course, one of the key learning objectives is to cultivate global citizenship among students. Throughout the semester, we will delve into the complex nature of citizenship, emphasizing that it is not a fixed concept but rather

a subject of contestation and a product of power dynamics. By critically analyzing various perspectives, we aim to challenge traditional notions of citizenship and encourage students to question what truly constitutes the global.

An essential component of this course is the exploration of how sovereign indigenous nations within US boundaries engage with notions of the global. We will examine their unique struggles and contributions, providing an opportunity for students to reflect on the intricate relationship between indigenous sovereignty and citizenship. Additionally, we will critically examine the experiences of marginalized communities and migrant populations, focusing on their ongoing efforts to shape and redefine the meaning of citizenship within the United States. Through this comprehensive examination, students will gain a deeper understanding of the complexities inherent in global citizenship and develop the critical thinking skills necessary to navigate these intricate dynamics.

### **Intercultural Literacy**

Our final Hub Learning Outcome in this course is intercultural literacy. Throughout the semester, we will explore the intricate relationship between intercultural understanding and the concept of undecidability. Undecidability suggests that our attempts to fully understand and interpret cultures, particularly those different from our own, are inherently limited and subject to uncertainty. It is important to emphasize that intercultural literacy is not detached from power dynamics. Throughout the semester, we will critically examine how power structures influence the production and dissemination of knowledge about different cultures. We will question and interrogate how certain interpretations become authoritative within nation-states, recognizing that these processes are deeply embedded within a history of colonialism and modernity.

A central focus of this course is to collectively investigate how intercultural literacy is often contingent upon Western knowledge structures. These structures, rooted in historical power imbalances, dictate how knowledge of non-Protestant, non-European peoples is produced and legitimized as authoritative. By exploring this critical perspective, we will unveil the politics embedded within the production of cultural literacy and challenge the assumed universality of Western knowledge structures. By incorporating the concept of undecidability into our discussions, we will highlight the inherent limitations and uncertainties associated with intercultural literacy. Students will be encouraged to critically engage with the complexities of understanding and interpreting cultures, acknowledging that

complete comprehension may be elusive. Through this lens of undecidability, we will foster a nuanced understanding of the challenges and complexities of intercultural literacy, inviting students to question dominant narratives and engage in a critical approach to cultural understanding.

### **Anchoring Guidelines for our Learning Community:**

*\*The following statement is adapted from a similar statement developed by Dr. Jorge Rodriguez*

When we enter the classroom, we do not leave ourselves behind. In fact, the most productive learning environments are created when we bring our personal stories, childhood experiences, family lives, and our diverse identities (such as race, gender, religion, and embodiment) into the classroom. It's important to acknowledge that we do not have all the answers, but we are shaped by our personal histories and the way we navigate the world.

However, in order to foster a classroom that embraces this multiplicity, we need a shared commitment to certain classroom principles that will anchor our time together. These norms include, but are not limited to:

1. **Respecting others' identities:** This means using the names and pronouns that individuals identify with (if known) and referring to them by their names when we build upon their ideas. I invite us to consider this an integral mode of acknowledging and honoring the contributions of our colleagues
2. **Being mindful of who is and is not participating:** Some of us are comfortable speaking up in class, while others may feel hesitant. Our socializations related to race, gender, ability, and embodiment can influence our behaviors. I encourage you to create space for your fellow classmates. For some, it means occasioning the opportunity for colleagues to speak by willfully stepping back in the conversation. For others, it means encouraging colleagues to participate by inviting them to contribute their critical insights. Holding space, claiming space, and redirecting space holds critical implications for learning. Let us be mindful of this as we endeavor to produce and maintain intellectual community.
3. **Citing and connecting with one another:** Conversations are not just random exchanges of ideas. They are opportunities to build connections and braid

together new ideas. Whenever you contribute to the conversation, challenge yourself to cite a classmate's contribution and connect your point to theirs. If your comment is unrelated, cite the texts we have studied or introduce new source material that contributes to the conversation. Be mindful of the connections you create with one another.

4. **Linking personal stories to the course material:** We all come from different backgrounds and perspectives, and it is important to recognize the value of incorporating our personal stories into our exploration of the course material. However, it is crucial to emphasize that our personal narratives should not be used as a means to mask a lack of engagement with the assigned readings. Instead, we should approach the intentional integration of our personal experiences into class discussions as a way to enhance our understanding of the text, allowing our stories to serve the course material rather than act as a distraction from it. By consciously braiding our personal narratives into our discussions, we can deepen our connection to the text and gain valuable insights that contribute to a more enriched learning experience.
5. **Asking thoughtful questions, avoiding assumptions, and respecting fellow learners:** We are all learners on an ever-evolving journey of growth. As we engage in dialogue and discourse, it is important to recognize that many of our thoughts and perspectives are in the process of formation and refinement. Instead of dismissing or judging others based on their initial positions, religious roots, or perceived political leanings, let us strive to ask thought-provoking questions that encourage deeper reflection and understanding of why these viewpoints hold significance to them. Through asking good questions, not only do we challenge others to delve deeper into their perspectives, but we also encourage ourselves to re-evaluate our own positions, fostering critical thinking and growth.

In this learning space, our goal is not to enforce conformity but to foster leadership development and contribute to a more just world. We understand that education is not a static state, but an integral part of a broader, never-ending process of becoming. Within this paradigm, we recognize that we are not simply fixed beings, but rather constantly evolving and transforming. It is through the exploration of diverse perspectives and the asking of good questions that we can navigate and shape our own path of growth. Let us embrace the idea that education is a dynamic journey of constant exploration and transformation, serving as a conduit for personal and societal

development. By engaging in meaningful dialogue and embracing the power of questioning, we can navigate the complexities of our world and build a more just and truthful society. May our collective pursuit of knowledge and understanding be fueled by the curiosity to explore, challenge, and evolve together.

### **Course Description:**

This course delves into the intricate dynamics between religion, geopolitics, economy, and ideological struggles in the context of the United States. By exploring the economies of space, time, and discourse, we aim to understand and reconfigure the materialities of Atlantic world formation (including the US). We critically examine the conditions that make the study of religion within modernity possible and investigate the role of Transatlantic empires, colonial enclosures, and political engagements as crucial forces in the production and preservation of religious formations. Throughout the course, we will examine the epistemic and methodological resources necessary to challenge prevailing notions associated with the study of religion in the United States. By doing so, we aim to open up avenues for new data and fresh perspectives. Students will engage in a rigorous critique of regnant ideas, exploring alternative frameworks and sources that offer a deeper understanding of religious phenomena.

Religion is situated within a conflicted network that intersects with geopolitics, economic exploitation, and ideological struggles over domination, race, and freedom. Through a multidisciplinary approach, we examine the complex interplay between these forces, unpacking their influence on religious beliefs, practices, and institutions in the American context. By analyzing historical and contemporary case studies, students will gain insight into the ways in which religion is intertwined with power dynamics, social hierarchies, and resistance movements. By the end of the course, students will have developed a comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationship between religion and various social, political, and economic forces in the United States. They will possess the analytical tools necessary to critically assess prevailing narratives and identify new avenues for research in the study of US religions.

### **Learning Outcomes:**



1. **Analyze** the interconnectedness between religion and geopolitical factors such as colonialism, empire, and political engagements in the formation and maintenance of religious traditions in the United States.
2. **Evaluate** the role of economic exploitation in shaping religious formations and practices within the context of the Atlantic world and its impact on issues of power, inequality, and social hierarchies.
3. **Critically assess** and challenge prevailing notions and frameworks associated with the study of religion in the United States, utilizing alternative epistemic and methodological resources to explore new data and perspectives.
4. **Examine** the ideological struggles over domination, race, and freedom and their influence on religious beliefs, institutions, and socio-political movements in the United States.
5. **Apply** critical conceptual and methodological approaches to analyze historical and contemporary case studies, enabling a braided understanding of the complex relationship between religion, power dynamics, and resistance movements in the American context.

### **Ghosting Statement: Commitment to Communication and Accompaniment**

In recognition of the varied challenges students may face throughout the semester, I acknowledge the importance of clear communication and mutual engagement in our academic community. In the context of this statement, “ghosting” refers to a pattern of behavior where a student fails to communicate, participate, or engage in the course without providing legitimate reasons or without prior notification to the instructor. It involves a lack of active involvement and communication that hinders the instructor's ability to provide support and accommodations, impairing the student's academic progress and the overall learning community. The following Ghosting outlines the expectations regarding communication, participation, and support within the course:

#### **1. Importance of Communication:**



- It is crucial for students to maintain open and consistent communication throughout the course.

- Students are encouraged to inform the instructor promptly of any circumstances that may affect their participation, academic progress, or ability to meet course requirements.

## **2. Commitment to Accompaniment:**

- As the instructor, it is my desire to accompany and support each student on their intellectual journey, ensuring a conducive environment for learning and growth.

- I am committed to advocating for students' wellbeing and academic success, particularly in challenging circumstances that may arise during the semester.

## **3. Expectation of Active Engagement:**

- Students are expected to actively participate in the production and maintenance of our academic community, which creates an environment conducive to intellectual thriving.

- Active engagement includes consistent attendance, active communication, and meaningful contributions to discussions and collaborative assignments.

## **4. Ghosting and Advocacy:**

- Ghosting, which involves failing to communicate, participate, or engage in the course without legitimate reasons, can inhibit the instructor's ability to provide necessary support.

- To ensure effective advocacy, students are required to actively engage, communicate, and seek assistance when facing severe or critical circumstances.

## **5. Timely Communication:**

- Students dealing with severe and critical circumstances must promptly reach out to the instructor within 72 hours of these circumstances arising.

- By initiating communication, students allow for timely and appropriate accommodation or support to be considered.

Please note that beyond the **72-hour window**, accommodation requests may not be possible due to administrative limitations or the impact on the overall learning experience of the class. While I am committed to supporting students, active and timely communication is essential for effective advocacy and accompaniment.

By adhering to this Ghosting Policy and maintaining ongoing communication, students can ensure that the necessary conditions for their intellectual and personal thriving are present within the course. Together, we can navigate challenges and foster a supportive academic community.

### **Attendance Agreement**

Because this course relies heavily on discussion and shared engagement, regular attendance in **both class meetings** is essential. You are allowed up to **3 unexcused absences** across the semester (including both class sessions and discussion groups). A 4th unexcused absence will lower your final grade by one full step (e.g., A to B). A 5th absence will result in an additional full-step deduction. Six or more absences may result in a failing grade. Late arrivals (15+ minutes) count as half an absence.

Attendance will be recorded for **all scheduled meetings**. Attendance, combined with in-class participation, will account for 25% of your final grade.

Of equal importance is your well-being. If you are struggling with your mental health (anxiety, depression, insomnia/lack of sleep, etc.), please reach out so I can help connect you with the necessary resources.

- A careful, critical reading of each week's text before the class period is essential to successfully completing this course. Classes will be a combination of lecture and discussion.
- **Cell Phone Policy:** Cell phones are not to be used in this class unless for emergency reasons. If the call or message is not about your or a loved one's wellness, I ask that you wait until class is over before responding. This policy is not about policing devices—it is about honoring the community we are cultivating by being present and actively engaged.

## Course Expectations:

- **Participation:**
  - A **careful, critical** reading of each week's text before the class period is essential to successfully completing this course. Classes will be a combination of lecture and discussion.
- **Cell Phone Agreement:** Cell phones are **not to be used** in this class unless for emergency reasons (if the call is not pertaining to your wellness or a loved-one's wellness, I ask you to hold off until class is over before responding/engaging). This policy is not implemented to protect my ego. As a community of learners (I, too, am a learner within this community), I ask that you honor the community we are cultivating by *actively* engaging in the course.

## Course Assignments:

- **Weekly Reflections** – Each week, you will submit a written reflection that synthesizes the week's assigned readings, lectures, and peer discussions. These reflections are not simply reviews of content; they are opportunities to articulate the ideas you are developing over time and to think critically and creatively about the questions this course raises. Reflections must be uploaded to Blackboard before **midnight each Sunday**, unless otherwise noted. Because these assignments draw from in-class discussions and student contributions, students who miss class or are not consistently engaged may find it difficult to complete them meaningfully.

Each response must be at least **250 words** and should demonstrate thoughtfulness, engagement with course texts, and attentiveness to the broader classroom dialogue. Please consult the course rubric for further details on evaluation.
- **Critical Prompts (4 Total)**- Throughout the semester, you will complete four Critical Prompts—comprehensive, unannounced written assignments designed to assess your understanding and engagement with the course material. These are not traditional quizzes, but they do require you to come to class prepared, having studied the readings closely and reflected critically on the themes we are exploring together.
  - Each prompt will ask you to engage deeply with assigned texts, synthesize key concepts, and offer clear, well-reasoned responses. You may be asked to analyze a passage, respond to a central question, or connect course themes to broader cultural, ethical, or political issues. Responses will typically be between

300–500 words and must demonstrate careful thought, textual understanding, and intellectual seriousness.

- Because the prompts are unannounced, consistent preparation and regular engagement with the course will be essential. You are expected to approach these assignments with the same professionalism, intentionality, and attention you would bring to any formal academic exercise.
- These Critical Prompts are a key component of your final grade and serve as an ongoing measure of your commitment to the work we are doing together.

## **FINAL ASSIGNMENT – Religion in American Culture**

**Due: Sunday, December 7th**

### **OPTION ONE: Final Research Essay in Creative Nonfiction Form**

**Length: approx. 7 pages**

This assignment invites you to write a **creative nonfiction essay** that explores how *culture functions as a site of antagonism in the United States* and how the equally contested concept and practice of *religion* informs such antagonisms.

#### **What is creative nonfiction?**

Creative nonfiction is a form of writing that uses storytelling techniques—scene, narrative, voice, reflection—to explore real histories, ideas, and events. Unlike a traditional research paper, it allows you to weave together analysis, critical reflection, and personal insight into a single, engaging narrative.

#### **Your task in this project:**

Your essay should analyze how religion interacts with culture in ways that produce tension, struggle, or conflict, and then reflect on what that means for how we understand American life. Possible directions might include (but are not limited to):

- Religion, race, and professional sports
- Religion and popular music
- Struggles over Indigenous freedom and sovereignty
- Civic religion and war
- Religion, culture, and ecology
- Religion, culture, and education

You are welcome to draw on course readings, lectures, films, or discussions, and you may also integrate personal experiences or cultural examples that feel relevant to your own life and interests.

**In short:** this essay should demonstrate how studying religion in American culture helps us see that neither “religion” nor “culture” are neutral. Both are lived, conflicted, and contested domains that shape the struggles, identities, and possibilities of American life.

## **Option Two (Religion and American Culture): Creative Project**

**Due Dec. 7th**

In lieu of a conventional final essay, students may propose a **creative arts project** that engages the themes of *Religion and American Culture* in imaginative ways. Possible formats include (but are not limited to):

- A chapbook of poetry, prose, or hybrid writing
- A zine (digital or print)
- A video essay
- An original work of art (painting, collage, sculpture, photography, performance documentation, etc.)

Students are also welcome to propose other formats that draw upon their own creative practice. All creative project proposals must be submitted to and approved by your assigned Discussion Group Professor no later than **November 4**.

Your project should demonstrate how religion and culture operate as contested terrains in American life. In particular, you may wish to explore how religion shapes or is shaped by struggles over **race, power, belonging, and imagination**.

**Possible directions for your project include (but are not limited to):**

- A visual or poetic exploration of **civic religion, culture, and war**
- A zine on **religion, culture, and theories of public education** in the United States

- A video essay on **religion, culture, and protest** (e.g., the Civil Rights Movement, anti-war demonstrations, or contemporary student movements for justice)
- A collage or chapbook exploring **religion, culture, and immigration** (e.g., sanctuary movements, immigrant congregations, or debates over national identity)
- An art piece examining **religion, culture, and the production of racial meaning** (e.g., spirituality of student-based movements, stereotypes in media, or evangelical nationalism)
- A performance piece or poetic sequence on **religion, culture, and theories of freedom**
- A photo essay on **religion, culture, and public health** (e.g., AIDS activism and churches, COVID-19 responses, Black Panther Party free breakfast and health clinic programs, Young Lords and the Peoples/Patient's Bill of Rights, mutual aid initiatives, or faith-based health campaigns)

Each creative project must be accompanied by a short **explanatory write-up** that situates the work in relation to course topics, materials, and concepts. The length and structure of the write-up will be determined collaboratively between the student and professor, depending on the nature of the project.

**NOTE:** All work completed for this class should be written in a formal, academic style, with correct grammar and punctuation, attention to style, and the use of proper citation. For a guide to proper citation under the Chicago Manual of Style, see [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)

## Grading for the Course

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Reading Guides: 25% Attendance: 25%  
 Critical Prompts 25% Final Project: 25%

## Grading Scale

A	94–100%
A–	90–93.9%
B+	87–89.9%
B	84–86.9%
B–	80–83.9%
C+	77–79.9%
C	74–76.9%
C–	70–73.9%
D	60–69.9%
F	0–59.9%

### **POLICY ON PLAGIARISM / ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

You are responsible for knowing, understanding, and obeying the Academic Conduct Code and policies regarding plagiarism. This policy is outlined here: <http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/>. If you have questions, please ask the instructor.

### **SPECIAL SITUATIONS**

If you are a student with a disability and need special accommodations, please see the instructor and contact the appropriate program under BU's Disability Services: <http://www.bu.edu/disability/>.

### **Required Readings:**

- R. Marie Griffith, *American Religions: A Documentary History*

\*All other readings will be available on Blackboard



## **Course Schedule:**

\* I understand that the syllabus may seem overwhelming or confusing, especially for those who are unfamiliar with its structure. To help you navigate through the reading assignments, I would like to provide some guidance on how to read and understand the assignments listed below. Each bulleted reading assignment should be completed prior to the morning of the date it is listed under. This means that you should allocate sufficient time to read and digest the assigned materials before the start of the corresponding class. By doing so, you will be better prepared to actively engage in the lecture and participate in meaningful discussions with your peers.

To facilitate your understanding of the readings, I recommend adopting active reading strategies. Consider taking notes, highlighting key points, and reflecting on the main ideas as you progress through the material. This will not only help reinforce your comprehension but also enable you to ask insightful questions and contribute thoughtfully during class. I encourage you to set aside dedicated study time for each reading assignment, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the topics covered. In case you encounter any difficulties or have any queries regarding the readings, please feel free to reach out to me. I am here to provide clarification and support your learning journey. Remember, the readings are an integral part of your learning experience, and their completion will greatly contribute to your overall understanding of the subject matter. By actively engaging with the assigned materials, you will maximize the benefits of our class sessions and foster a deeper comprehension of the course content.

Thank you for your commitment to your education, and I am excited to embark on this learning journey together.

## **Week 1:**

- **Tuesday, September 2:** Introduction to the course (“What is religion?” “What is the meaning of US Religions?”), overview of syllabus, community expectations

- **Thursday, September 4th: Topic 1** – The Invention of Religion (Part 1)

**Reading:** William Cavanaugh, The Invention of Religion, Part 1 (pp. 57–68)

**Week 2:**

- **Tuesday, September 9th:** – The Invention of Religion (Part 2)

- **Reading:** William Cavanaugh, The Invention of Religion, Part 2, (pp. 69-100)

- **Thursday, September 11th:** – The Invention of Religion, Part 3

- **Reading:** Sylvester Johnson, Racializing Islam

**Week 3:**

- **Tuesday, September 16th:** – The Invention of Religion (Part 3)

- **Reading:** William Cavanaugh, The Invention of Religion, Part 3, (pp. 101–122)

**Thursday, September 18** – Antagonisms, Cultural Power, and the Black Fantastic

- **Reading:** James Howard Hill, Jr., Kneel Unto the Black Fantastic
- **Watch:** Stuart Hall Theory of Culture, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26hCAGzqOhU>

**Week 4:**

**Tuesday, September 23:** – Political Theology, Carl Schmitt, and the Critique of Liberalism

- **Reading:** Handout on Carl Schmitt and the Critique of Culture and Liberalism

- **Watch/Listen:** Philosophize This! Carl Schmitt on Liberalism, Part 1, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=am4WwcNkt10>
- **Watch/Listen:** Philosophize This! Carl Schmitt on Liberalism, Part 2, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1cevHnImBD4>

#### Thursday, September 25<sup>th</sup>

- **Reading:** Pope Alexander IV, *Inter Caetera* (1493)
- **Reading:** Bill Chappell (NPR), *The Vatican repudiates 'Doctrine of Discovery,' which was used to justify colonialism*
- **Watch: The Ghost Dance Movement**, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6R1n48QlUJg>

#### Week 5:

- **Tuesday, September 30:** –(Anti-) Indigeneity, Environmental Justice Theory and the Affirmation of Divine Providence

- **Reading:** Dina Gilio-Whitaker, *Introduction and Genocide by Any Other Name* (from *As Long as Grass Grows: The Indigenous Fight for Environmental Justice, from Colonization to Standing Rock*) **Available Online via BU Library**
- **Reading:** (from American Religions Textbook -Henceforth AR) *The Bull, Sublimis Deus* (1537)
- **Reading:** (AR) David Brainerd, *Journal* (1745)
- **Watch: Unspoken, Native American Boarding Schools (PBS Documentary)**, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-OtfBPE4u1U&t=5s>

#### Thursday, October 2

- **Reading:** (AR) John Winthrop, *A Model of Christian Charity* (1630)
- **Reading:** (AR), Jonathan Edwards, *Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England* (1743)
- **Reading:** Boston National Historical Park, Boston African American Historical Site, *Slavery and Law in 17<sup>th</sup> Century Massachusetts*, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/slavery-and-law-in-early-ma.htm>

## Week 6:

### - Tuesday, October 7: – Christian Perfection and Resistance to Slavery

- **Reading:** (AR), John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, (1777)
- **Reading:** (AR), Phillis Wheatley, *On Being Brought from Africa to America* (1773)
- **Watch:** Phyllis Wheatley, Crash Course Black American History, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a3l9Pmza7Gs>

### Thursday, October 9th: - U.S. Culture, U.S. Religion, and the Contested Legacy of Thomas Jefferson

- **Reading:** (AR) Thomas Jefferson, *A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom* (1779)
- **Reading:** Thomas Jefferson, *Equality from Notes on the State of Virginia, Queries 14 and 18, 137-143, 162-163*, <https://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch15s28.html>
- **Reading:** David Walker's Appeal <https://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/triumphnationalism/cman/text5/walker.pdf>

## Week 7: Not Like Us -Week 1

### Tuesday, October 14th:

- **NO CLASS (RESEARCH DAY)**

### Thursday, October 16th

- **Reading:** (AR) Angelina Emily Grimke, *Appeal to the Christian Women of the South* (1836)
- **Reading:** Maria W. Stewart, "Why Sit Ye Here and Die?", [https://www.funkdafied.org/uploads/2/5/5/9/25595205/maria\\_w.\\_stewart\\_22why\\_sit\\_ye\\_here\\_and\\_die\\_22.pdf](https://www.funkdafied.org/uploads/2/5/5/9/25595205/maria_w._stewart_22why_sit_ye_here_and_die_22.pdf)
- **Reading:** (AR) George D. Armstrong, *The Christian Doctrine of Slavery* (1857)

## Week 8: Not Like Us -Part 2

### Tuesday, October 21

- **Reading:** Roger Daniels, *Not Like Us*, Immigrants and Minorities in America, 1890-1924, Prologue and Chapter 1 (The United States in the Grey Nineties)
- **Watch:** What was the Impact of the Chinese Exclusion Act  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FbBatK7JWYc>

### Thursday, October 23

- **Reading:** (AR) Isaiah Strong, *Our Country* (1886)
- **Reading:** (AR) Mabel Potter Daggett, *The Heathen Invasion of America* (1912)
- **Recommended:** (AR) Swami Vivekananda, *Hinduism as a Religion and Farewell* (1893)

## Week 9: Not Like Us -Part 3

### Tuesday, October 28:

- **Reading:** *Not Like Us*, The Limits of Progressivism
- **Watch:** Inside Japanese Internment Camps, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tp-msa4jBCw>
- **Watch:** Returning to a Japanese Internment Camp Through the Eyes of a Woman Who Lived It, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2hGDWDdAYX8>
- **Recommended:** Mary Antin, *The Promised Land* (1912)

### Thursday, October 30:

- **Reading:** The Ghostly Legacy of Michael Jackson
- **Watch:** *Michael Jackson, Thriller*, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOngjkJTMaA&list=RDsOngjkJTMaA&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOngjkJTMaA&list=RDsOngjkJTMaA&start_radio=1)

## Week 10: Religion and the Visceral Search for Meaning

### Tuesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>

- **Reading:** (AR) Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man*

### Thursday, November 6<sup>th</sup>

- **Reading:** Ibrahim Farajaje-Jones: *Breaking the Silence: Toward an In-the-Life Theology*
- **Watch** Ibrahim Farajaje-Jones, *Creating Change 1995 Detroit Keynote Speech* (1995), [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MwfjDNpJlrw&list=PLVrYxWSmJ47d\\_y-KL8L9hNAwmdnRD2UDZ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MwfjDNpJlrw&list=PLVrYxWSmJ47d_y-KL8L9hNAwmdnRD2UDZ)

## Week 11: Religion, U.S. Culture, and International Solidarities

### Tuesday, November 11<sup>th</sup>

- **Watch:** “A Cloud Never Dies:” Biographical Documentary of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh
- **Watch:** Martin Luther King, “Beyond Vietnam”

### - Thursday, November 13<sup>th</sup>

- **Reading:** (AR) Malcolm X, *Letters from Abroad*
- **Reading:** Fannie Lou Hamer, “*To Make Democracy a Reality*”
- **Watch:** **Fannie Lou Hamer’s America**, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5h2MzXavgEg>

## Week 12: Social Gospel

**Tuesday, November 18<sup>th</sup>**

- **Reading:** (AR) Walter Rauschenbusch, From A Theology for the Social Gospel (1917)
- **Watch:** William Buckley and James Baldwin Debate,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTEr7Cwc4cE&t=974s>

**Thursday, November 20**

- **Reading:** Jorge Rodriguez, “Young Lords”
- **Watch:** (Young Lords) How We Occupied a Hospital and Changed Public Health Care |  
Watch here on YouTube [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aK\\_ALMA1NMk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aK_ALMA1NMk)
- **Watch:** The Young Lords: A Revolution in New York City  
Watch here on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1G8Dthc0l4>

**(No class from November 22nd to November 30th)**

## Week 12: Dissidence, Rebellion, and Otherwise Possibility

**- Tuesday, December 2**

- **Reading:** (AR) Reinhold Niebuhr, The Irony of American History)
- **Watch:** The Cross and the Lynching Tree (James Hal Cone and Bill Moyers),  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BVyo5dzYs44>



**- Thursday, December 4 – The Wrap Up**

- **Reading:** (AR) Mary Daly, Beyond God the Father
- **Reading:** Audre Lorde, An Open Letter to Mary Daly,  
<https://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/lordeopenlettertomarydaly.html>
- **Recommended Reading:** (AR) Abraham Joshua Heschel, God in Search of Man

**FINAL PROJECTS DUE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7th**

**Week 13:**

**- Tuesday, December 9th: The Wrap-Up**

**No Reading**