



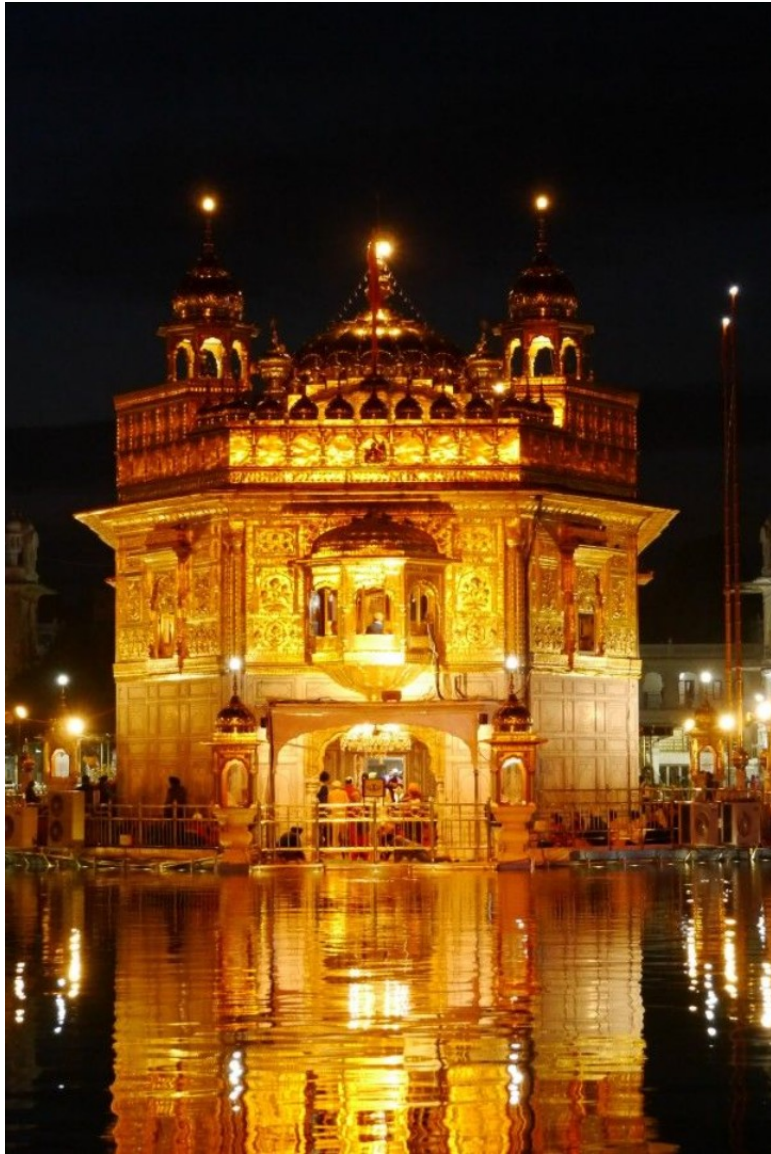
RLG101 Lecture 2: The Food and Religion Project

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Office Hours: Thursdays 2-3pm



Defining Religion

Re-cap from last week

We compared definitions to highlight the following points:

- Religion is difficult to define
- That definitions have changed over time
- Definitions over the past 100 years can be problematic and limited
- Definitions of religion will likely NOT encompass all traditions

William P. Alston's Nine "Religion-Making" Characteristics

- Belief in supernatural beings (gods)
- A distinction between sacred and profane objects
- Ritual acts focused on sacred objects
- A moral code believed to be sanctioned by god or gods
- Characteristically religious feelings (awe, sense of mystery, sense of guilt, adoration) connected with god or gods
- Prayer and other forms of communication with god or gods
- A worldview that provides a general picture of the world and the individual's place in it
- A more or less total organization of one's life based on that worldview
- A social group bound together by these characteristics

"The complexity inherent in defining religion adequately and satisfactorily is not ultimately a problem, even for scholars. It is common to most branches of learning. We routinely use words for a wide assortment of notions quite effectively without having to define them. The concept of "religion" is not particularly different from other subjects in this regard." - Rodriguez and Harding





Why Food and Religion?

"Food is a basic and universal human concern. It is central to religion—as symbol, as subject of prayers, as marker of sharing and unsharing, and as communion." (Anderson 189)

“Because of its primordial importance, food’s symbolic associations are found underpinning all aspects of human experience and imagination. Food links us vertically and imaginatively to the ultimate source of life. As the concrete, literal sustainer of individual life, food’s association with the mysterious source and sustainer of all existence is commonplace across religious traditions. For many, food is understood to be the material manifestation of that ultimate source.” (Valley 117)

Food, “links us horizontally, forging trans-historical and trans-geographical ties, collapsing time and space, and binding us in reciprocal webs of care that make society possible. Anthropologists have long noted its centrality in the literal and symbolic creation of human communities: food is the medium through which allegiances are forged and social bonds strengthened” (Valley 118).

Anderson on Religion

- Religious studies professors often focus on obscure theology, complex belief systems, and religious experiences
- According to Anderson, most people learn about religion from parents or peers - the social-emotional bonds come first
- For the vast majority of people, religion is a matter of sociability, festivals, and personal faith over formal theological concerns





"Religious Food Guidance" – Michel Desjardins

1. Permanent food restrictions
2. Temporary food restrictions
3. Food offerings
4. Charity
5. Special Occasions

1. The Ethics Course

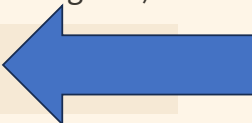
Complete the TCPS 2: Course on Research Ethics

Complete the TCPS 2: Course on Research Ethics and submit the Certificate of Completion. This step is worth 2% of your final grade and is due September 19th, 2023.



Assignment Summary

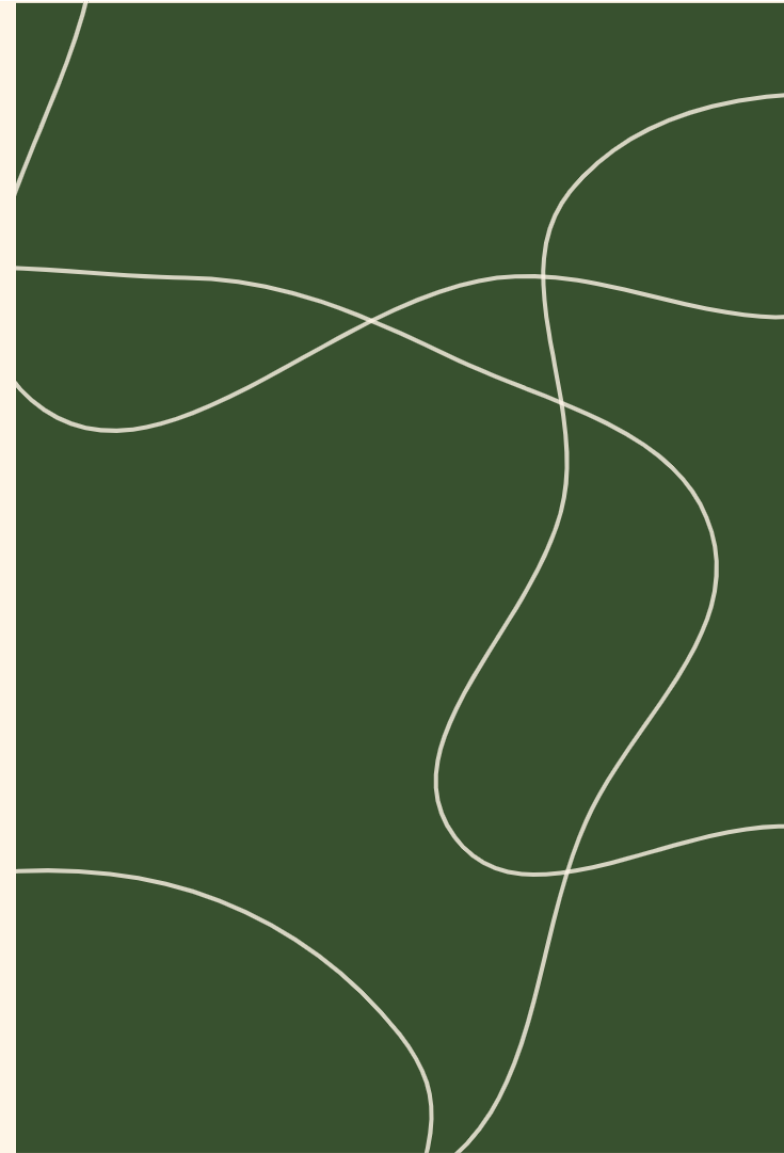
Assignment	Due Date	Total Weight (% of final grade)
Online Ethics Course	Sept 19th, 2023	2%
The Interview Information Survey	Oct 3rd, 2023	2%
The Research Assignment	Oct 24th, 2023	10%
The Interview Consent Form	Nov 21st, 2023	1%
The Interview Recording	Nov 21st, 2023	2%
The Interview Transcript	Nov 21st, 2023	2%
The Interview Report	Nov 30th, 2023	17%



2. The Interview Information Survey

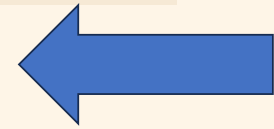
This survey is the second step in the Food and Religion Project.

The Interview Information Survey is worth 2% of your final course grade and is due October 3rd, 2023.



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Online Ethics Course	Sept 19th, 2023	2%
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The Interviewee

Choose your interviewee wisely!

- Able to give you the time you need for the interview
- Open to discussing their religious traditions
- Reliable in terms of being able to meet for your interview at the agreed upon date and time
- Willing to give their consent for the interview to be used for the purposes of this assignment



Formal Requirements for Choosing an Interviewee

- Must be 18+ years of age (i.e., legally an adult)
- Should self-identify as belonging to a different religious tradition than you practice (or your family practices)
- Cannot be students in RLG101H
- Should have at least some level of commitment to their religion
- Should not be "experts" in their religion (e.g., Imams, priests, religion professors, etc.)



Religious Traditions

- Bahá'í
- Buddhism
- Christianity
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Jainism
- Judaism
- Neo-Paganism
- Shinto
- Sikhism
- Taoism
- Wicca
- Zoroastrianism
- Indigenous Traditions (please consult me on this)
- Please ask permission for religions not on this list



The Interview Information Survey Asks the Following:

What is their name?

What is their age?

What religion are they a part of?

What is your religion?

Is the interviewee a student in RLG101?

Is the interviewee an expert on their religion?

Survey Asks for 3 Sources

First source: Academic source that provides general information about the religious tradition

Second source: Academic source that provides specific information about food traditions in that religion

Third source: Academic or media source that provides information on food traditions within the religion you are studying as they are practiced in North America






3. The Research Assignment

This is the 3rd step in the Food and Religion Project

Conduct preliminary research on the religion you plan to study. Respond to the prompts about your findings and develop three original interview questions. This assignment is worth 10% of your final grade and is due on October 24th, 2023.

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The Research Assignment Cont'd

- 5-6 sources
- First Prompt: Summarize and explain general information about religion of interviewee (2-3 paragraphs)
- Second Prompt: Summarize and explain 2 to 3 food traditions from interviewee's religion (2-3 paragraphs)
- Third prompt: Develop three original interview questions about food in your interviewee's religion





Conducting the Interview + Consent Form

- Must have interview sign consent form
- Must record interview (audio only)
- Must be **at least 15 mins**, but aim for 30 mins

The Consent Form is worth 1% of your final grade and is due November 21st, 2023



Recording and Transcript

- Submit an interview recording using MyMedia (audio only)
- Recording must be 15 mins from start of the first question to end of the last question
- Submit transcription of interview

The Recording is worth 2% and the Transcript is worth 2% of your final grade. They are both due on November 21st, 2023.



The Interview Report

Write a formal report on your interview findings

Write a formal report on your interview findings. Respond to specific questions and prompts to reflect on the interview, describe your findings, and interpret your interviewee's food traditions. Structure your report with coherent paragraphs, proper grammar and punctuation, and include formal citations.

The Interview Report is worth 17% of your final course grade and is due on November 30th.

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