**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *In Light of Reverence:* Discussion Questions**

1. For purposes of religious freedom under the First Amendment, is it important that we define what a religion is? If so, who should define it and on what basis?

2. Would it be easier to accord the Wintu their religious rights if their religious practices were just like those practiced by a majority of Americans?

3. Would it be easier to accord the Wintu their rights if they were a tribe recognized by the U.S. government? How did California history conspire to make it very unlikely that the Wintu would have either the land or population of more powerful recognized nations such as the Hopi or Sioux?

4. Should the Wintu's religious practices be safeguarded by the First Amendment? Should the religious practices of the group spawned by the New Age Harmonic Convergence also be safeguarded?

5. What if two religions come into conflict with one another? On what basis would you decide whether the Wintu have a claim to the Mount Shasta spring which might take precedence over the claims of "New Age" religions?

6. Mount Shasta is on Federal land, administered by the Forest Service. The First Amendment guarantees the separation of church and state. Should the Federal government therefore prohibit all religious groups from worshipping on federal land? Some groups but not others? What rights would you accord or deny realty developers to Mount Shasta, and on what basis?

**Relationships with the Land**

1. Do you think the U.S. government has the right to interfere with private property rights? In which instances?

2. Why do you think climbers are banned from climbing Mount Rushmore but not Devils Tower? Do you agree with this distinction?

3. Some climbers and New Agers argue that they have equal access rights — at all times — to native sacred sites on public land, and that the right is a fundamental freedom. Native elders respond that it takes centuries to sink spiritual roots into land — to develop ceremonies and responsibility to the land — and that they should be granted privacy to conduct rituals in traditional places. Discuss the logic of these arguments. What criteria should determine land management policies on public land and on private land?

**Preserving Cultures, Protecting Freedoms**

1. Would you be willing to refrain from visiting a place that an American Indian culture considers sacred? Would you stay away permanently?
2. Where do you draw the line between learning from another culture’s traditions and appropriating them? For example, in the film, are the young visitors at Panther Meadows on Mt. Shasta celebrating native religion or abusing Wintu heritage?
3. At what point would another person’s religion or cultural practices interfere with your rights?