# ABORIGINAL TRADITIONS

Sept 16

#### Schedule

Sept 18	"Aboriginal Myths"	Textbook 18-24
Sept 20	"Aboriginal Rituals"	Re-read Potlatch
Sept 23	Quiz  Colonialism and Indigenous Religion in Canada	TRC selections (posted to URCourses this afternoon)

#### Schedule

- "Discovering" of World Religions in Asia
- Start Confucianism Sept 25 with Dr. Ren

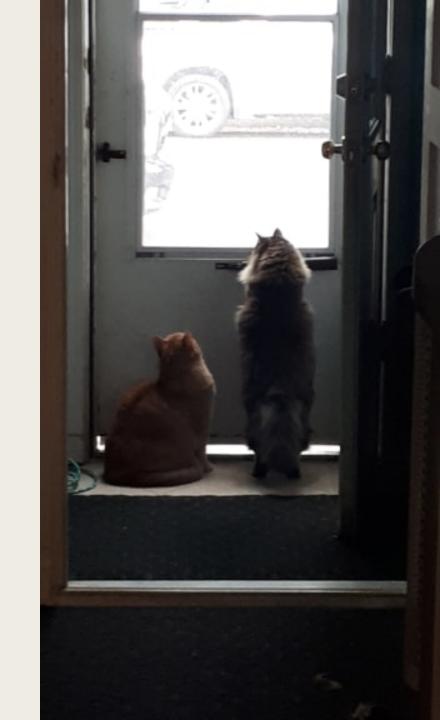
- Quiz Sept 23
- Will go over sample questions in class on Friday

### Contracts Due Oct 7 11:59pm

Religion (e.g,	Name of the Site (e.g.	Address	Date and Time of
Buddhism)	Holy Rosary	(include street	Visit
	Cathedral)	number)	
Buddhism	Dhammanjali	902 Rae Street	Friday Sept 15,
	Meditation Center		12:30pm

Student Full Name	Student Number	Theory of Ritual
Ian Brown	123456789	Ritual and Power
Gwen the Cat	987654321	Ritual and Memory
Juniper the Cat	123789456	Ritual and Society

Gwen and Juniper are excited to visit their field site!



## Indigenous Research Showcase <a href="https://www.uregina.ca/research/indigenous-research-day.html">https://www.uregina.ca/research/indigenous-research-day.html</a>

- Sept 23-28
- Blanket Ceremony
- Wednesday, September 25 from 1:00pm to 4:30pm in the Multi Purpose Room
- Student Union Multipurpose Room

Dr. Ken Derry

"Indigenous Traditions"



Serious Scholars of Religion



#### "Indigenous Traditions"

- A recent "world religion"
- Formerly identified as "primitive"
- This is wrong
- Cover vast geographical scope
- Describes people not genetically related

#### "Oral Religions"

- Means what is says
- Scholars treat oral stories less seriously than written stories
- Hence Religions have texts, primitive religions do no
- This is dumb
- Privileges a particular form of communication

#### "Oral Religions?"

- Are oral religions primitive or "non-literate"?
- NO!
- First, writing does not mean a culture is more "advanced
- Second, many indigenous groups have had writing for a long time
- Third, the vast majority of indigenous traditions are fully literate

#### Indigenous Religion

- Apr. 370 million indigenous people world wide
- 15-20% of whom practice some form of ancestral tradition
- Majority live in Africa and Asia
- Fewer than 10% in South and Central America
- Apr. 2% in North America and Oceania

#### Indigenous religions as "world religion"

- Thousands of traditions from every continent classified "indigenous religions"
- No genetic relationship between Maori in Polynesian and Xhosa in South Africa
- There are patterns, but they are our patterns

#### Defining "Indigenous"

- Very difficult
- Describes tremendously varied communities
- EG. New Guinea and surrounding islands contain more ethnic diversity than anywhere else on earth
- 1/4 of the world's cultures and languages
- How can we simple call them all "indigenous"?

#### Defining "Indigenous Religions"

- Broad commonalities
- Central importance of kinship and location
- Possible definition for "Indigenous community":
- "One defined both by its members' genealogical relations to one another and by its connection to a particular place." (Derry, 316)

#### Indigenous Religions Commonalities

- Orality
- Connection to space
- **■** Emphasis on community
- Time as rhythmic
- Greater emphasis on life than death and afterlife
- Significance of behaviour over belief
- Authority of elders
- Sacred as ongoing process rather than static revelation

#### Indigenous Religions: Authorities

- Many have reverence for authority figures such as:
- Elders
- Ritual specialists
- Diviners
- Healers

#### Indigenous Deities

- Vary widely
- Common thread: personal spiritual forces have active and ongoing influence on the world
- Teachings often bound to specific places where important spiritual forces have manifested themselves
- Tend to be more concerned with goings on during life as opposed to after death
- Greater emphasis on behaviours and beliefs that benefit or harm the community

#### "Aboriginal Traditions" (our chapter)

- Canadian Indigenous peoples
- First Nations
- Inuit
- Metis
- Designations: nation, band, tribe
- "Indian"