

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY — FACULTY OF ARTS  
RELS 609.03/709.03 L01: Critical Discourses in the Study of Religion**

***Work of Jonathan Z. Smith***  
**Winter 2012, M 2:00-4:45 p.m., SS 1332**

(University of Calgary Policy about course outlines may be found from page 43 of the *University Calendar*)

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**Required Texts**

Jonathan Z. Smith. 2004. *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion*.

Jonathan Z. Smith. 1982. *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown*.

Jonathan Z. Smith. 1990. *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity*.

Jonathan Z. Smith. 1987. *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual*.

Jonathan Z. Smith. 1978. *Map is not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions*.

Willi Braun and Russell T. McCutcheon. 2000. *Guide to the Study of Religion*.

**Course Description:**

This graduate seminar focuses upon the work of Jonathan Z. Smith in the study of religion. Jonathan Z. Smith is one of the most widely read theorists of religion and is best known for his critical analysis of religious studies as a discipline as well as his refinement of the comparative enterprise in the study of religion. This course examines fundamental theoretical and methodological issues in the scholarly study of religion within the map of Smith's intellectual project. Topics include: working with the data of religion, issues in definition, classification and taxonomy, the disciplined inquiry of comparison and the consequences of provocative juxtaposition, incongruity and difference, redescription, and theoretical translation.

**Course Ethos**

This course requires a high degree of self-motivation. The study of the work of J.Z. Smith is a truly demanding intellectual task, for which a robust reading requirement is a necessary component. Furthermore, this is a seminar course. Rather than following the lecture format, we will have discussions, and for discussions to be substantive, disciplined, and thought-creating, seminar members must do the readings and attend the

seminar with the intention to contribute to the course Conferences.

**Grading**

A letter grade will be assigned to each component of the course according to the University’s Graduate Studies Calendar 2011-2012:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Grade Point Value</b>	<b>Graduate Description</b>
A+	4.0	Outstanding
A	4.0	Excellent – superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.7	Very good performance
B+	3.3	Good performance
B	3.0	Satisfactory performance Note: The grade point value (3.0) associated with this grade is the minimum acceptable average that a graduate student must maintain throughout the program as computed at the end of each registration anniversary year of the program.
B-	2.7	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies Note: A student who receives a B- or lower in two or more courses will be required to withdraw regardless of their grade point average unless the program recommends otherwise. Individual programs may require a higher minimum passing grade.
C+	2.3	
C	2.0	
C-	1.7	
D+	1.3	
D	1.0	
F	0.0	

All grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements. A student who receives a grade of F will normally be required to withdraw unless the program recommends otherwise.

**Course Requirements explained:**

**1. Attendance and Seminar Discussion Moderator [10%]:** All attendees will be required to lead a seminar discussion (or maybe more than one, depending on our numbers). This entails a short presentation in which the discussion leader identifies the central themes brought out by the course readings and then proposes a series of questions for the class to consider. A schedule for presentations and conference session talking points will be determined in the first two weeks of the term.

**2. Four Short critical response essays due on the following dates:** 1/30, 2/27, 3/12 and 4/2. **[60% total; 15% each]**. These reports will serve as documentation of your presence and as evidence of your engagement with the reading material. The short essay guidelines and topics will be distributed in class.

**3. Research Paper worth 30%** of the final course grade, is due on Monday, April 9 at the beginning of class. The requirement is an essay reflecting detailed research and critical reflection relating a key insight from your reading of Smith to your thesis research area. **PAPER PARAMETERS AND GUIDELINES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS.**

Research Paper Requirements: Students enrolled in 609 – 3000-3500 words  
 Students enrolled in 709 – 4000-4500 words

**There will be NO registrar scheduled final exam in this course.**

**Recording of the course discussions** is not permitted, except by special permission (see Tape Recording of Lectures, *University of Calgary Calendar*, p. 44).

**E-mail policy:** E-mails will be responded to within 24 hours during weekdays. I do not reply to email messages that are poorly written, unclear or disrespectful.

**Academic Honesty:** *Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contributions of others be acknowledged. As a result, cheating or plagiarisms on any assignments or examinations are regarded as extremely serious academic offenses. Students are advised to consult pp 54-56 of the University Calendar which provides a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with plagiarism, cheating, and other academic misconduct. If you have questions about correct referencing, please consult your instructor.*

**Academic Accommodation:** If you are a student with a disability who requires academic accommodation and you have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. Once registered, please discuss any upcoming tests/examinations with the instructor **two weeks** before the scheduled date. (DRC web address is: [http://www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/Others/DRC/.](http://www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/Others/DRC/))

#### **Student Ombudsperson and Students' Union Representative**

The Office of the Student Ombuds provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. See [www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds](http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds) for more information.

#### **Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point**

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at [www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints](http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints). Please check this website and not the nearest assembly point for this course.

#### **Safewalk**

The Safewalk program provides volunteers to walk students safely to their destination anywhere on campus (including McMahon Stadium, Health Sciences, Student Family Housing, the Alberta Children's Hospital and the University LRT station). This service is free and available to students, staff and campus visitors 24 hrs/day, 365 days a year. Call 403-220-5333 or use one of the Help phones located throughout campus to request a walk.

#### **Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule:**

This outline is subject to change. It may be modified if it appears to the instructor that the material is not being adequately covered in the allotted time. The amount of time devoted to particular topics is contingent on the instructor's sense of what deserves greater emphasis as the course progresses. **Remember, to be aware of changes occurring in the schedule and to receive any crucial information regarding the course, regular attendance in class is necessary.** The instructor is not responsible for accommodating those with inexcusable absences. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and to ask a fellow student to lend you their notes. In addition, important materials are regularly handed out during class. The instructor is not responsible for providing handouts at a later date for those with an inexcusable absence from class.

### Tentative Lecture and Reading Schedule

Jan. 9	<b>Introducing Smith</b>	<p>Introduction to the Seminar</p> <p>*Smith, “When the Chips are Down” in <i>Relating Religion</i></p> <p>*Smith, “The Necessary Lie” (PDF)</p> <p>*Smith, “Religion in the Liberal Arts” (PDF)</p>
Jan. 16	<p>CONFERENCE 1:</p> <p><b>Relating Religion</b></p>	<p>*Smith, “Religion, Religions, Religious” and “A Twice-told Tale” in <i>Relating Religion</i>;</p> <p>*Lincoln, “Culture” in <i>Guide to the Study of Religion</i>;</p> <p>*Lincoln, “Theses on Method,” <i>Method &amp; Theory in the Study of Religion</i> 8-3 (1996): 225-227 (PDF)</p>
Jan 23	<p>CONFERENCE 2</p> <p><b>Definition</b></p>	<p>*Braun, “Religion” in <i>Guide to the Study of Religion</i>;</p> <p>*Arnal, “Definition” in <i>Guide to the Study of Religion</i>;</p> <p>*Smith, <i>Map is not Territory</i>, chapter 13</p> <p>* Smith, “Are Theological and Religious Studies Compatible?;</p> <p>* Smith “‘Religion’ and ‘Religious Studies: No Difference at All,” <i>Soundings</i> 71 (1988): 231-44 (PDF)</p>
January 30	<p>CONFERENCE 3</p> <p><b>Classification</b></p>	<p><b>[First Short Critical Essay due]</b></p> <p>*Smith, “Classification” in <i>Guide to the Study of Religion</i>;</p> <p>*Smith, “A Matter of Class: Taxonomies of Religion” in <i>Relating Religion</i>;</p> <p>*Bruce Lincoln, “The Tyranny of Taxonomy” in <i>Discourse and the Construction of Society: Comparative Studies in Myth, Ritual, and Classification</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 131-41.</p>
Feb. 6	<p>CONFERENCE 4</p> <p><b>Putting the ‘Sacred’ in Place</b></p>	<p>*Anttonen, “Sacred” in <i>Guide to the Study of Religion</i>;</p> <p>* Smith, “The Topography of the Sacred” and</p> <p>*“Here, There and Anywhere” in <i>Relating Religion</i>.</p>

Feb. 13	<b>CONFERENCE 5 Putting the ‘Sacred’ in Place</b>	*Map is not Territory, chapters 4, 8 *Imagining Religion, chapters 4, 5, 6
Feb. 19-26	<b>Reading Week- no class</b>	
Feb. 27	<b>CONFERENCE 6 Ritual</b>	*Smith, <i>To Take Place</i> , chapter 1-3  *Smith, <i>To Take Place</i> , chapters 4-5 [Second Short Critical Essay due]
March. 5	<b>CONFERENCE 7 Comparison</b>	*Smith, “ <i>Adde Parvum Magnus Acervus Erit</i> ,” repr. in <i>Map is Not Territory</i> , 240-64  *Smith, “Why Compare Religions?” (Unpublished lecture; photocopy).  *Martin, “Comparison” in <i>Guide to the Study of Religion</i> .  *Smith, <i>Drudgery Divine</i> , chap. 1-3
March. 12	<b>CONFERENCE 8 Comparison</b>	*Smith, <i>Drudgery Divine</i> , chap. 4-5;  *“Panel on Jonathan Z. Smith’s <i>Drudgery Divine</i> ” [articles by L. Alderink, Hans Kippenberg, Burton Mack, John Dominic Crossan, Marvin Meyer] in <i>Numen</i> 39 (1992), 217-38 [Third Short Critical Essay due]
March. 19	<b>CONFERENCE 9 The Difference that Difference Makes</b>	* Chidester, “Colonialism” in <i>Guide to the Study of Religion</i> ;  *Smith, “Differential Equations,” “What a Difference a Difference Makes” and  * “Close Encounters of Diverse Kinds” in <i>Relating Religion</i> .

<p>March 26</p>	<p><b>CONFERENCE 10 Scriptures and Canons</b></p>	<p>*Smith, “Sacred Persistence: Toward a Redescription of Canon” in <i>Imagining Religion</i></p> <p>*Smith, “Canons, Catalogues and Classics in A. van der Kooij and K. van der Toorn (eds), <i>Canonization and Decanonization</i> (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 295-311 (PDF)</p> <p>*Smith, “Bible and Religion” in <i>Relating Religion</i>.</p> <p>*Smith, “Religion and Bible” in <i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i> 128, no. 1 (2009) (PDF)</p>
<p>April. 2</p>	<p><b>CONFERENCE 11 Religion and Public Discourse</b></p>	<p>*Smith, “God Save this Honorable Court” in <i>Relating Religion</i>;</p> <p>* Smith, “The Devil in Mr. Jones,” in <i>Imagining Religion</i> [Fourth Short Critical Essay due]</p>
<p>April. 9</p>	<p><b>CONFERENCE 12 Inertia</b></p>	<p>*Smith, “Tillich[’s] Remains...” [PDF]</p> <p>*Thatamanil, “Comparing Professors Smith and Tillich” [PDF]</p>

**ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHIC SOURCES**

**Bibliographic tools:**

<http://eir.library.utoronto.ca/MandT/index.cfm> : a comprehensive and searchable bibliography of scholarly work on theory and method in the study of religion maintained and updated by retired University of Toronto professor Bruce Alton. See also the more than 1100 entries listed in Braun and McCutcheon (eds), *Guide to the Study of Religion*, 465-545.

**On the history of the academic study of religion:**

Russell T. McCutcheon. *Manufacturing Religion: The Discourse on Sui Generis Religion and the Politics of Nostalgia*. New York: Oxford, 1997.

Walter H. Capps. *Religious Studies: The Making of a Discipline*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995.

Tomoko Masuzawa. *In Search of Dreamtime: The Quest for the Origin of Religion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

J. Samuel Preus. *Explaining Religion: Criticism and Theory from Bodin to Freud*. New Haven: Yale University

Press, 1987.

Eric J. Sharpe. *Comparative Religion: A History*. La Salle, IL : Open Court, 1986.

Gedaliahu A. Guy Stroumsa. *A New Science: The Discovery of Religion in the Age of Reason*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2010.

### **Dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and journals:**

Jonathan Z. Smith (ed.). *The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1995.

Mircea Eliade (ed.). *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, 10 vols. New York: Macmillan, 1987.

Journals: *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion*, *Numen*, *History of Religion*.

### **Other select resources:**

Urs App. *The Birth of Orientalism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010.

William E. Arnal. *The Symbolic Jesus: Historical Scholarship, Judaism and the Construction of Contemporary Identity*. London: Equinox Pub, 2005.

Talal Asad. *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.

———. *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003.

Robert D. Baird. *Category Formation and the History of Religions*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1991.

Roland Barthes. *Mythologies*. New York: Wang & Hill, 1972.

Maurice Bloch. *Prey into Hunter: The Politics of Religious Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Robert Boccock and Kenneth Thompson (eds). *Religion and Ideology: A Reader*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985.

Pierre Bourdieu. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

Pascal Boyer. *The Naturalness of Religious Ideas: A Cognitive Theory of Religion*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.

———. *Religion Explained: The Evolutionary Origins of Religious Thought*. New York: Basic Books, 2001.

Willi Braun and Russell T. McCutcheon. *Introducing Religion. Essays in Honour of Jonathan Z. Smith*. London: Equinox, 2008.

Ron Cameron, and Merrill P. Miller. *Redescribing Christian Origins*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004.

———. *Redescribing Paul and the Corinthians*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011.

Elizabeth Castelli (ed.). *Women, Gender, and Religion: A Reader*. New York: Palgrave, 2001.

Peter Connolly (ed.). *Approaches to the Study of Religion*. London: Cassell, 1999.

Jacques Derrida and Gianni Vattimo (eds). *Religion: Cultural Memory in the Present*. Stanford: Stanford

University Press, 1998.

Daniel Dubuisson. *Twentieth Century Mythologies: Dumézil, Lévi-Strauss, Eliade*. London: Equinox Pub, 2006.

———. *The Western Construction of Religion: Myths, Knowledge, and Ideology*. Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.

Howard Eilberg-Schwartz and Wendy Doniger (eds). *Off With Her Head! The Denial of Women's Identity in Myth, Religion, and Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

Steven Engler and Gregory P. Grieve. *Historicizing "Tradition" in the Study of Religion*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005.

Victoria Lee Erickson. *Where Silence Speaks: Feminism, Social Theory, and Religion*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002.

Timothy Fitzgerald. *Discourse on Civility and Barbarity: A Critical History of Religion and Related Categories*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

———. *The Ideology of Religious Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

———. *Religion and the Secular: Historical and Colonial Formations*. London: Equinox Pub, 2007.

Michel Foucault. *Religion and Culture*, selected and edited by Jeremy R. Carrette. New York: Routledge, 1999.

Nancy K. Frankenberry (ed.). *Radical Interpretation in Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Ernest Gellner. *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion*. London: Routledge, 1992.

Malcolm Hamilton. *The Sociology of Religion: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives*. London: Routledge, 1995.

Aaron W. Hughes. *Situating Islam: The Past and Future of an Academic Discipline*. London: Equinox Pub, 2007.

———. *Theorizing Islam : Disciplinary Deconstruction and Reconstruction*. Sheffield: Equinox Pub, 2012.

Thomas A. Idinopulos and Edward A. Yonan (eds). *The Sacred and its Scholars: Comparative Methodologies for the Study of Primary Religious Data*. Studies in the History of Religions, 73. Leiden: Brill, 1996.

Jeppe Sinding Jensen and Luther H. Martin (eds). *Rationality and the Study of Religion*. Aarhus: University of Aarhus Press, 1997.

Tim Jensen and Mikael Rothstein (eds). *Secular Theories on Religion: Current Perspectives*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2000.

Morny Joy, Kathleen O'Grady and Judith L. Poxon (eds). *Religion in French Feminist Thought: Critical Perspectives*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

Darlene Juschka (ed.). *Feminism in the Study of Religion: A Reader*. New York: Continuum, 2001.

Richard King. *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and 'the Mystic East'*. London: Routledge, 1999.

Ursula King (ed.). *Religion and Gender*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995.

Michael Lambek (ed.). *A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion*. London: Blackwell, 2002.

E. Thomas Lawson and Robert N. McCauley. *Rethinking Religion: Connecting Cognition and Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

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———. *The Discipline of Religion: Structure, Meaning, Rhetoric*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

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Craig Martin. *Masking Hegemony: A Genealogy of Liberalism, Religion, and the Private Sphere*. London: Equinox Pub, 2010.

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Tim Murphy. *The Politics of Spirit: Phenomenology, Genealogy, Religion*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010.

———. *Representing Religion: Essays in History, Theory and Crisis*. London: Equinox Pub, 2007.

Carl Olson. *Theory and Method in the Study of Religion: A Selection of Critical Sources*. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 2003.

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Raymond Williams. *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. London: Fontana, 1976.

### **Some important ancestors in the modern history of the study of religion:**

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Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872). *Lectures on the Essence of Religion*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New York: Harper & Row, 1967); see also Van A. Harvey, *Feuerbach and the Interpretation of Religion* (Cambridge:

Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Karl Marx (1818-1883). Various writings of the earlier and later Marx in John Raines (ed.), *Marx on Religion* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002).

Friedrich Max Müller (1823-1900). *Introduction to the Science of Religion: Four Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institution, with Two Essays on False Analogies, and the Philosophy of Mythology* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1873); *Natural religion: The Gifford lectures delivered before the University of Glasgow in 1888* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1892); *Anthropological Religion: The Gifford lectures delivered before the University of Glasgow in 1891* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1903); see also Jon R. Stone (ed.), *The Essential Max Müller* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

Cornelis Petrus Tiele (1830-1902). *Outlines of the History of Religion* (London: Trubner, 1877). See also Tiele, "Religions," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 9th edition, vol. 20, 1884.

Edward B. Tylor (1832-1917). *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom* (London: John Murray, 1871).

James George Frazer (1854-1941). *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion* (1922), abridged ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1924). See also Robert Ackerman, *J. G. Frazer: His Life and Work* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

Pierre Daniel Chantepie de la Saussaye (1848-1920). *Manual of the Science of Religion* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1891).

William James (1842-1910). *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1997; originally published in 1902).

Andrew Lang (1844-1912). *The Making of Religion*. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1898.

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Sigmund Freud (1856-1940). In various writings collected in the *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (London: Hogarth; New York: Norton); recommended: *Totem and Taboo* and/or *The Future of and Illusion*; for an orientation and introduction for students of religion see now Diane Jonte-Pace, *Teaching Freud* (New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2003).

Max Weber (1864-1920). especially his 1920 *The Sociology of Religion*, trans. Ephraim Fischhoff (Boston: Beacon, 1963).

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Gerardus van der Leeuw (1890-1950). *Religion in Essence and Manifestation: A Study in Phenomenology*, trans. J. E. Turner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1938; original edn 1933).

Mircea Eliade (1907-1986). From his voluminous writings, begin with *The Myth of the Eternal Return: Or, Cosmos and History*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1971); and *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, 1959); see also Bryan S. Rennie and Mac Linscott Ricketts, *Reconstructing Eliade: Making Sense of Religion* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).