
RELI 390.07/ INST 303.02: @ 10:50-12:05, College Hall 425

→ Final Exam Wed. May 4th 10:30-12:30

Reli 390.06/ INST 303.01: @ 1:15-2:30, Tilford 105

→ Final Exam Thurs May 5th 3:30-5:30

John N. Sheveland, Ph.D., Associate Professor

- Office location: Robinson House 009
- Office hours: Mon./Wed. 10:00-12:00; Tues./Thurs. 9:40-10:40; & by appointment
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- Gonzaga's lecture series [Being Religious Interreligiously](#) and [YouTube](#) channel

Description

What is the relationship between religious belief and the violence done in the name of religion? In today's world of alarming growth in sectarianism, radicalization, and terrorism across many continents, does religious commitment simply give rise to human division or, is it— as some say – peaceful? Are its roles in public spaces destructive or constructive? Or are religious people prepared to reflect beyond these easy options?

We investigate recent examples of religious group violence and consult a variety of religious responses. We study sacred texts, theological and ethical traditions, but also films, podcasts, and webinars analyzing a range of events from the early twentieth century through 2015.

Not satisfied with theological approaches alone, the course turns also to the disciplines of history, psychology, and science to provide interdisciplinary accounts of human weakness and vulnerability. Our course does not merely study religious violence. It responds to it, and encourages Gonzaga students to think with and beyond a variety of academic disciplines.

Three broad learning outcomes capture our attention this semester:

1. ***A comparative theological approach:*** students will utilize an interreligious or comparative approach to analyze difficult questions arising from religious commitment, violence, and majority-minority dynamics. A comparative approach empowers:
 - a. *receptivity toward religious persons and ideas that are unfamiliar,*

- b. *fresh thinking about one's home tradition or common human experience,*
 - c. *complex views of religious similarity and difference,*
 - d. *working knowledge of resources for solidarity and reconciliation in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism*
2. **A multidisciplinary approach:** students will be able to understand and *apply* historical, political, scientific, and psychological analyses to violent behavior, which empowers them to:
 - a. *interact with the Humanities,*
 - b. *think critically,*
 - c. *develop and arrange multiple vocabularies to assess complex phenomena*
3. **A student-centered approach:** students will cultivate their own judgment, empathy, citizenship, and sense for justice in global and complex contexts of human living.

Literature

1. ***Religion and Violence Spring 2016*** course book. Produced by *Professor's Choice*. A collection of assigned readings.
2. **Jessica Stern and J.M. Berger, *ISIS: The State of Terror***. HarperCollins, 2015. Hardback: \$18.84. *The first book-length study of the terrorist group by a leading expert on terrorism who teaches at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.*
3. **Martha Nussbaum, *The Clash Within: Democracy, Religious Violence, and India's Future***. Harvard Belknap Press, 2007. Paper \$15.41, E-book \$12.99. *A penetrating analysis of Hindu nationalism and violence by one of North America's premier philosophers, attentive to implications for religion and politics in the U.S.*

Assignments [100 total points]

1. **Engagement** [5 points]. [*Learning Outcomes 1-3*] Presumes attendance – third absence merits a course grade of “V” which is a functional “F” – and consists of engaged participation in a hospitable climate of academic inquiry and debate. Includes all of the following:
 - *Texts*: possession and discussion of appropriate texts each class;
 - *Technology*: refraining from technology in the classroom, before or during class. Laptops permitted in front rows only.

- *Tolerance*: of views and opinions you do not share but which can be challenged and debated academically and responsibly, with respect for persons.
2. **Multimedia reviews** [30 points]. [*Learning outcomes 1 & 2*] For all six “multimedia assignments” noted in the Calendar below, please view/listen and upload to Blackboard a 1-2 page response before class. Focus your writing on:
- a. *Summarizing the argument of the speaker(s),*
 - b. *Noting any connections to other materials in this or other courses,*
 - c. *sketching your own reflective view or assessment of the presentation,*
 - d. *uploading your review to Blackboard before class on the due date. Blackboard will not accept late reviews.*
3. **Public lecture and response** [10 points.] [*Learning outcomes: 1 & 3*] Required attendance of one outside lecture and a written response. Three options appear below. Pick one. Students with legitimate conflicts can work out a suitable alternative with me. You will be asked in class on Thursday January 21st to commit to one event.
- Dr. John Kelsay (Florida State University) lecture: “The Debate over the Islamic State group,” Thursday January 21, 5:00-6:30, Wolff auditorium.
 - Dr. Amy Jill Levine lecture: “Hearing Jesus’ Parables through Jewish Ears,” Thursday February 4, 5:30-6:30, Hemmingson ballroom.
 - Dr. John Haught lecture: “Theology, Science, and Pope Francis’ ecological vision,” Wednesday, March 2, 6:30-7:30, Cataldo Hall.

Assignment directions:

- a. *Attend the lecture and take notes.*
 - b. *Write a 2-page response paper which (1.) describes the major points or arguments, (2.) places these into dialogue with this or other courses, and (3.) presents your own reflective evaluation to the lecture.*
 - c. *Upload your response paper to Blackboard within one week of the event.*
4. **Analytical Essay** [25 points.] [*Learning Outcomes: 1-3*] Take-home essay due **March 3rd by midnight** submitted on Blackboard. Topic prompt will pertain to the study of ISIS by Stern and Berger. Some general writing guidelines:
- a. *Edit! Written assignments should exemplify clean academic writing with evidence of careful editing, spellchecking, and revising. The Gonzaga Writing Center can be a tremendous help. So, too, your professor. Essays marred by poor mechanics will be*

returned or penalized. Students for whom English is a second language should plan extra time for writing and consultation with the Professor and/or the GU Writing Center.

- b. Source material: Please realize that no written assignment in this course will require you to seek out information from non-scholarly websites or search engines. Papers with content or citations from these sources will be penalized and returned for correction. Our own texts are sufficient for assignment completion.
 - c. DREAM: Students with documented disabilities from DREAM will be accommodated fully. Please make contact with me the first week of class.
 - d. Academic Integrity: GU does not tolerate plagiarism of any kind. Violations will result in at least a failing grade for the plagiarized assignment. Some examples of plagiarism are:
 1. Failing to cite direct quotes.
 2. Failing to cite borrowed ideas, even if rephrased in your own language.
 3. Sloppy or inadequate citation of a work you intend to cite.
 4. Cutting and pasting from internet sites.
 5. Writing or submitting another student's paper.
 6. For guidance with writing, see the professor and/or the GU Writing Center [Here](#), and help with thesis development is available through me and the guides from Harvard Divinity School [Here](#) and from Dartmouth [Here](#)
5. **Case Study: Paper & Oral Report** [30 points.] [*Learning Outcomes 1c.-d; 2a.-c.; 3*] During the final two weeks of our semester, students will present a brief report (i.e., maximum 10 minutes) on a specific, historically concrete example of religious violence of their choosing (i.e., not a movement, not a period of time, but a concrete experience of violence), in which they reflect upon perpetrators/victims of the episode in the light of at least three scholarly sources found at Foley and at least one of our religious/theological sources encountered in the course. This roughly ten minute report will include:
- a. relevant data of the event or episode (historical, political, religious, etc.) and it will:
 - b. apply to the case/event the insights available from your outside research and from your research from at least one theological/religious source inside the course, concluding with:
 - c. your own judgment of whether and how these sources shed more light on the event and persons involved.

Both the case study and the resources will be of your own choosing and may reflect your own interests. A good place to start is the "[religion guide](#)" at Foley Library and, for current events, a range of apps and podcasts for smartphones may prove useful in discerning a topic such as *The Economist*, *The Atlantic*, *NYT*, *The Guardian*, *Times of India*, *Al Jazeera*, *Deutsche Welle*, NPR's *Fresh Air*, NPR's *On Point*, *Democracy*

Now!. Your topic must be cleared by me. Further instructions will be distributed around midterm week. For now, keep these in mind:

d. **Paper directions** [10 points]:

- i. Clear your **topic** with me by **March 24th**
- ii. **Bibliography**: it will combine [A.] at least three scholarly sources of research from Foley library stacks or data bases (i.e., scholarly books and journal articles, not simply an internet or media search) and [B.] at least one theological/religious source from our course.
- iii. **Peer review** five-page hard copy draft due in class Thurs. **April 14th**.
Suggestion:
 1. One page describing your case.
 2. Two pages analyzing the role of religion in the case.
 3. Two pages of your troubleshooting/applying sources from our course to the case.
- iv. Roughly five page **final draft** uploaded to Blackboard on Friday **April 15th by midnight**.

e. **Oral Report directions** [20 points]:

- i. **Isolate** the central facts of the violence.
- ii. **Explain** any roles of religious categories in the violence. What is the face of religion here? How did religious beliefs *function* in violence?
- iii. **Evaluate** the case study in the light of your chosen resources, perhaps commending, criticizing, putting questions to them, etc. What insights are learned?
- iv. **Apply** at least one religious resource from our course you judge to offer a constructive understanding of the episode of violence or the role religion played.
- v. In the presentation you are welcome to speak from notes, an outline, or tech like PowerPoint and Prezi (no more than 5 slides, please) but please do not read verbatim from a prepared text.

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Schedule**I. CONTEXT OF STUDY**

Week One. Jan. 12 & 14. Course orientation: the 'New Atheism' in the context of violent political extremism

In-class exercise:

- Debating the Tony Blair- Christopher Hitchens debate: [Here](#)

II. HERMENEUTICAL LENSES

Week Two. Jan. 19 & 21. Evolutionary Biology and the History of Violence

***Multimedia Assignment #1:**

- Due by Blackboard upload before class on Tuesday: "The Origins of Violence" (Pinker, Wrangham, Schechter), *Science Friday*, April 4, 2014, [Here](#)

Reading Assignments:

1. Course book: Richard Wrangham, "Killer Species," *Daedalus* (2004): 25-35.
2. Course book: Steven Pinker, "A History of Violence," *New Republic* (March 19, 2007).
*Note that a version of the lecture he gave in Spokane in November 2013 can be found [here](#)

In class exercise:

- TED Radio Hour Podcast: "The Violence Within Us," 4/12/13 (Zimbardo, Fallon, Steiner, Pinker) [Here](#)

Week Three. Jan. 26 & 28. Social Psychology: hate development

***Multimedia Assignment #2:**

- Due before class on Tuesday: *The Man Behind the Mosque*, PBS 2011, [Here](#)

Reading Assignments:

1. Course book: Robert J. Sternberg, "A Duplex Theory of Hate," *Review of General Psychology* 7 (2003): 299-328. [Note: focus on pp. 305-324]
2. *Optional*: Course book: John N. Sheveland, "Restoring Intimacy: Christian-Buddhist Resources toward Solidarity," *Studies in Interreligious Dialogue* 24/2 (2014): 152-170.

*In class exercises:

- Troubleshooting the duplex theory of hate
- Possible: *Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State* (“Orders & Initiatives”), BBC, 2005.

III. BEYOND VIOLENCE?: EXAMPLES & RESOURCES

Week Four. Feb. 2 & 4. ISIS in Syria and Iraq: *ultra-violence beyond Al-Qaeda*

*Multimedia Assignment #3

- Due by class on Tuesday: *The Road to 9/11*, PBS 2005. Find the Film on Demand at Foley library [Here](#)

Reading Assignment:

1. Jessica Stern, *ISIS: the State of Terror*, Introduction + chapters 1, 2, 4.
2. Course book: John N. Sheveland, “For all the Saints,” *The Expository Times*.

In class exercises:

- *Losing Iraq*, PBS Frontline 2014
- Anna Erelle, “Skyping with the Enemy,” *The Guardian*, May 26, 2015.

Week Five. Feb. 9 & 11. ISIS in Syria and Iraq: *ultra-violence beyond Al-Qaeda*

Reading Assignment:

1. Jessica Stern, *ISIS: the state of terror*, chapters 5, 6, 9, 10.
2. Audio: Ed Hussain, “Countering the Islamist Narrative,” *Council on Foreign Relations Conference Call* (January 2015). [HERE](#)

Week Six. Feb. 16 & 18. *Beyond Violence?— contesting Islamic identity*

Reading Assignment:

1. Jessica Stern, *ISIS: the state of terror*, chapter 11.
2. Handout: *Open Letter to al-Baghdadi*

In class exercise:

- *Inside Islam: what a billion Muslims really think*, Unity Productions Foundation, [Here](#)

- Note: Analytical Essay Assignment distributed in class

Week Seven. Feb. 23 & 25. *Islamic counter-narratives****Multimedia Assignment #4**

- Due before class Tuesday: Asma Afsaruddin, "Combatting Extremism," Univ. of Notre Dame, 2012, [Here](#)

Reading Assignment:

1. Course book: Asma Afsaruddin, "Creating Pluralism and Dialogue: Quranic Perspectives," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 42/3 (2007): 389-406.

In class exercises:

- *Quran*
- Parliament of Religions 2015, Salt Lake: [John Esposito and Tariq Ramadan](#)

Week Eight. March 1 & 3. *Clergy sex abuse scandal****Multimedia Assignment #5:**

- Due before class on Tuesday: *The Silence*, PBS 2011, [Here](#)

Reading Assignment:

1. Web: John Paull II, Address to the Cardinals of the United States, 2002, [Here](#)

Due Thursday by midnight: *Analytical Essay

In class exercise:

- *Secrets of the Vatican*, PBS 2014 [Here](#)

Week Nine. March 8 & 10. *SPRING BREAK WEEK***Week Ten. March 15 & 17. *Beyond Violence?—trauma and children: developing a new theological imperative***

Reading Assignments:

1. Course book: Susan Shooter, "How Survivors of Abuse Relate to God"

2. Course book: Serene Jones, *Trauma and Grace*, chs. 1-2.

In class activity:

- Parliament of Religions 2015, Salt Lake: [Serene Jones](#)

Week Eleven. March 22 & 24. *Beyond Violence?—pastoral theology and accompaniment*

Reading Assignments:

1. Course book: Serene Jones, *Trauma and Grace*, ch.9
2. Course book: John N. Sheveland, “Listening Church, Humbled Church,” and “Accepting Acceptance,” *The Expository Times*.

In class exercises:

- Pope Francis; Karl Barth

Week Twelve. March 29 & 31. *Hindutva and the Fantasies of Purity and Domination: Genocide in Gujarat*

***Multimedia Assignment #6:**

- Due before class on Tuesday: Martha Nussbaum book discussion, C-SPAN, 2007, [HERE](#)

Reading Assignment:

1. *The Clash Within*, chs. 1-2, 6.

In class exercise:

- *The Story of India* (“The Meeting of Two Oceans”)

Week Thirteen. April 5 & 7. *Beyond Violence?—Indian resources to quell the ‘clash within’*

Reading Assignment:

1. *The Clash Within*, ch.3.

In class exercises:

- *The Story of India* (“Freedom”)

Week Fourteen. April 12 & 14. *Indian Resources (continued) + Peer Review of Oral Reports*

→ **DUE Thursday in class: hard copy full draft of case study paper for peer review**

Reading Assignment:

1. Nussbaum, *The Clash Within*, ch.10
2. Handout: Gandhi

→ **DUE Friday by 12:00 midnight: final draft of case study paper uploaded to Blackboard**

Week Fifteen. April 19 & 21. Oral Reports begin

Reading Assignment:

- *none, in favor of research, writing, and preparation of oral reports*

Week 16: April 26 & 28. Oral Reports

Reading Assignment:

- *none, in favor of research, writing, and preparation for your oral report*
- Reading Days: April 30 – May 2.

Week 17: May 3-6. Final Exam Week (oral reports)

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ADDITIONAL UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

1. On harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct: Consistent with its mission, Gonzaga seeks to assure all community members learn and work in a welcoming and inclusive environment. If this information applies to you please see me and/or our Title IX resources at <http://www.gonzaga.edu/Campus-Resources/Offices-and-Services-A-Z/Human-Resources/TitleIX/>
2. Notice to students with disabilities and medical conditions: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. This legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability/medical condition requiring an accommodation, please call or visit the Disability Resources, Education and Access Management (DREAM) office (room 209 Foley Library).
3. Academic Honesty: Academic honesty is expected of all Gonzaga University students. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, and theft. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty is subject to disciplinary action, which may include, but is not limited to, (1) a failing grade for the test or assignment in question, (2) a failing grade for the course, or (3) a recommendation for dismissal from the University. (See also “Academic Honesty” on page 67 of the University’s online catalogue: <http://www.gonzaga.edu/catalogues/PDF-archive/2014-2015UGCatalogue.pdf>)