



WELCOME & MISSION STATEMENT  
GROUP PROFILES, LINKS & INFO  
CULT GROUP CONTROVERSIES  
REL. MOV. COURSE MATERIALS



[ THE RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS PAGE ]

SR@  
UVA

## Soc. of Religious Movements Course Materials

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The Religious Freedom Page

Religious Broadcasting

### Sociology 257, New Religious Movements: Course Syllabus

Also available in this site section:

- [Why Study NRMs?](#)
- [Course Requirements](#)
- [Course Goals](#)
- [Course Lectures](#)
- [Course Readings \(U.Va Only\)](#)
- [Profile Page Web Development Resources](#)



• Why Study New Religious Movements?

• Course Syllabus

• Course Requirements

• Course Goals

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• Profile Page Web Development Resources



### UNIT I:

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE COURSE

JAN 21

[Introduction and Overview](#)

JAN 26

A Guided Tour of Cults and Sects on the World Wide Web

**Assignment Before Class:** Spend at least two hours familiarizing yourself with the class home page. This class meeting will be a hands-on presentation. When you get to class, open your machine to the class home page. Check out [site links](#) for a helpful guide to key locations of the class site. Four discrete tasks will be presented: (1) how to use the class home page as a resource for navigating the Web; (2) how to use search engines to locate materials not accessible from the home page; (3) introduction of the term project [building a web page]; and (4) a brief demonstration on how to use the class home page resources to create your own page.

At the conclusion of the class period, a list of groups available for individual projects will be distributed. See [Course Requirements](#) for information on how to claim a group. You should select and confirm a group by class on February 11. Persons who have not selected a group by

that date will have a group assigned by the instructor.

JAN 28 [Locating Cults and Sects on the American Religious Landscape](#)

## UNIT II:

### **CONCEPTUAL TOOLS FOR ANALYZING RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS**

FEB 2

[How Are We To Understand Religion in the Modern World?: Paradigms in Conflict](#)

FEB 4

[The Concepts of Our Inquiry](#)

READ: Stark and Bainbridge, "Of Churches, Sects, and Cults"

FEB 9

[How Do New Religions Get Started?](#)

READ: Bainbridge and Stark, "Cult Formation:..."

FEB 11

[Why People Join NRMs: Social Science Models](#)

READ: Stark, "On Conversion"; Machalek and Snow, "Conversion to NRMs"

WEB SITE SELECTION DUE: Those who have not yet claimed a group by class time, must sign up for an appointment with Mr. Hadden to discuss your term project.

FEB 16

[Leaving Movements: Rational Perspectives](#)

READ: Wright & Ebaugh, "Leaving New..."

FEB 18

[Group Survival: Succession and Institutionalization](#)

READ: Roberts, "Emergence and Viability of Religious Movements"

### **INTERLUDE: Web Page Development**

FEB 23

Workshop on Web Page Development

**ASSIGNMENT BEFORE CLASS:** We will create student

web pages today. For everyone to succeed, it is critical that two tasks be completed before class: (1) assemble as much information as you can on your group so that you can insert it into your page, and (2) read the materials in the section entitled [Soc 257 HTML Project Resources](#), and carefully examine the materials under the section entitled [NRM HTML Project Templates](#)

### UNIT III:

#### **POPULAR CULTURE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF EVIL**

FEB 25

##### [Why People Join NRMs: The Brainwashing Model](#)

READ: Barker, Ch 2; Anthony and Robbins, "Brainwashing...."

MAR 2

##### [Leaving Movements: Deprogramming](#)

READ: Barker, "Forcible Deprogramming"; Kelley, "Deprogramming and Religious Liberty"; Bromley, "Deprogramming as a Mode of Exit from NRMs"

MAR 4

##### [Organizing to Fight Religious and Cultural Evil: the Counter-Cult and Anti-Cult Movements](#)

READ: Bromley and Shupe, "Organized Opposition to NRMs"

WEB ASSIGNMENT: Use the class web page as a jumping off spot to explore anti-cult and counter-cult organizations on the Internet. A written homework assignment will be added later

MAR 9

##### [A Social Psychology Perspective: A Case for the Normalization of Influence](#)

Recommended Reading: Cialdina, Robert. *Influence: Science and Practice*

MAR 11

#### **Mid-Term Examination**

The examination is objective and comprehensive of all readings, web assignments and class presentations to date. Important: There is no make-up exam. See [Hour Exam](#) under [Course Requirements](#).

### UNIT IV:

# RELIGIONS MOVEMENTS IN AMERICA HISTORY

## 19th and Early 20th Century Movements

MAR 23

[Religious Outsiders and the Making of America](#)

MAR 25

19th Century Religious Movements: [Mormons](#) & Catholics

READ: Bromley and Shupe, Ch 2, "Nineteenth Century Cult Scars: Mormons and Catholics as Subversives" [NB: this is two separate readings in the electronic text file.]

WEB ASSIGNMENT: Examine the LDS official home page and at least one anti-cult page

MAR 30

Early 20th Century Religious Movements: [Fundamentalists](#) and [Pentecostalism](#).

READ: Hadden, "Religious Fundamentalism"

WEB ASSIGNMENT: Explore the materials available on Pentecostalism from the class web page: Pentecostalism, Toronto Blessing, Brownsville Revival.

APR 1

Televangelism and the Shape of American Religion in the Late 20th Century

READ: Hadden, "The Rise and Fall of Religious Broadcasting"

## Contemporary Religious Movements

APR 6

[Unification Church](#)

READ: Bromley and Shupe, "Unification Church " [read introduction and the segment on the Moonies]

WEB ASSIGNMENT: Examine the Unification Church home page; Steve Hassan's home page is a good illustration of an apostate activist.

APR 8

Scientology

READ: Bromley and Shupe, "Scientology"

WEB ASSIGNMENT: Use the [Scientology page](#) created by Craig Hirsh as a jumping off place for learning about Scientology and the anti-cult movement.

APR 13

The Family

READ: Bromley and Shupe, "The Family"; and "Our Family's Origins"

WEB ASSIGNMENT: Read Profile on [The Family](#) and then examine the Home Page of The Family.

APR 15

## The Millennium and Failed Prophecies

ASSIGNMENT: As we enter the last year of this millennium, there are more media pundits predicting that 1999 will produce a bumper crop of religious fanatics doing crazy things. So far, every religious movement that has predicted the return of Christ, has been wrong. So far, neither journalists, social scientists, or theologians have successfully predicted an eruption that has resulted in tragedy for a religious movement. We'll see if they do any better in 1999. We'll be exploring some sociological studies of groups that experienced failed prophecies. Read the materials on [Chen Tao](#) page. This is a group that predicted God would appear last March. We'll also keep our eye on a group called Concerned Christians, a group predicts they will have a significant role in the return of Christ. They mysteriously disappeared from Denver last Fall. In January a group of them were deported from Israel because authorities believed them to be dangerous.

APR 20

## [Branch Davidians: Some Resources for Understanding Waco](#)

READ: Ammerman, "Report to the Justice and Treasury..."; and Shupe and Hadden, "Cops, News Copy and Public Opinion"  
WEB ASSIGNMENT: There is a lot of good material on the Branch Davidians. I urge you to look at the [Waco Holocaust Electronic Museum](#). The creators of this site substantially hold to a conspiracy theory to which I don't subscribe, but it presents much information for serious consideration. [Waco-Inside Story](#) was created by PBS's *Frontline*. The general tone of the presentation is more objective than most of the coverage of the standoff between the Davidians and the BATF/FBI. One can access a lot of material from this site.

APR 22

## Heaven's Gate

READ: Rob Balch, a sociologist at the University of Montana, studied this group from near their beginning. This selection from his extensive writings provides a good historical account. Patti Gorman, a University of Virginia student, demonstrates the utility of the concepts we have learned in this course for understanding and interpreting the mass suicide of this group.

APR 27

[Introduction: New Age Religions](#)

WEB ASSIGNMENT: Several Profile pages have been developed by students in this course which help to understand the origins of New Age in the East and the syncretism that has happened in the West. Examine several sites. I especially recommend [Synchronicity Meditation Foundation](#), a group that is located in Nelson County, only a short drive from Charlottesville.

APR 29

Topic to be announced

MAY 4:

Showcasing Student Web Pages; Concluding Remarks; and Evaluation

MAY 13

Final Examination [1400-1700] in Wilson 308

The examination will be comprehensive of the entire course and will include both objective and essay questions. Essay questions may be written on computer, or bring Blue Book. If you choose to write on the computer, bring a disk for back up in case printer should malfunction

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