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
Jan 28  Located 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 NRM: Social Science Models

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

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 Joint NRMds: 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 NRMds"

MAR 4

Organizing to Fight Religious and Cultural Evil: the Counter-Cult and Anti-Cult Movements

READ: Bromley and Shupe,"Organized Opposition to NRMds"
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:
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 Scares: 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 ASSGNMENT: 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 Scientolgy 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.
ASSIGNMENT: As we enter the last year of this millennium, there are more media pundits predicting that 1999 will be 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.
**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.

Go [back](#) to the top of this page.

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