

A Performative Approach to the Comparative Study of Religions
A Discussion of the Course Design

EXPERIENCES OF HUMAN RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION

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[**Note:** Since writing this paper and developing the syllabus contained within, the Grateful Dead have ceased touring as a group due to the death of Jerry Garcia. Other bands can be substituted for observation, and can be scheduled in conjunction with who is in the area at the time of the class.]

I. OVERVIEW OF THIS PROJECT

The overarching purpose of this particular paper is to formulate a description of how a Performance Studies methodology and approach affects the design and pedagogy of a course in the comparative study of religion. Of course, much of the discussion concerning Performance Studies which follows could be applied to the teaching of many different subjects, particularly subjects in the Humanities. However, there are certain natural affinities between the study of performance(s) and the study of religions which makes this particular combination especially engaging. Included among the affinities are the study of rituals and ritual behavior, the study of cultural expressivity, the international and multicultural scope of investigation, etc.

It is an additional project of this paper to begin the development of a pedagogy which creates a space and opportunity for students to develop critical, creative and synthetic skills for observing and studying human cultures and religions. But even more than these cognitive and imaginative abilities, I hope to begin the development of a pedagogy which will help students to become more humane, understanding, tolerant, and even loving toward other human beings. Naturally, the hopes I have for the development of attitudes of tolerance and openness can neither be required nor programmed into a course. However, what I can do as a teacher is to set a tone in the classroom which allows for the students to bring their questions and cultural differences with them into the classroom and to accept those questions and differences and the students who embody them as well. That tone of acceptance and tolerance can be demonstrated, for example, by not insisting that students acquire a particularly quantifiable set of facts or that they amass or “master” a certain body of knowledge. (Feminist theory and scholarship provides a thorough critique of the idea of “mastery” of knowledge as being an example and practice of the domination of the (male) researcher or student over the subservient material [fr. *mater*, “mother”] wherein the object of knowledge is “used” or “handled” by the researcher according to a set of criteria or purposes defined by the researcher and not the object of research. More on this later.) Instead, I can focus my attention on the process of the class, and each student’s individual process of learning and personal growth through this class.

Finally, I hope to develop a style of teaching and a class design that will provide a time and space for students to gain access to and further develop their bodily, sensual, emotional, intuitive and feeling-centered sensitivities and awareness in addition to their rational and analytical faculties, as well as create an experiential context for mutual human-to-human meetings with persons from a variety of religious practices and cultures. Rather than view the study of religions and religious cultures in a strictly rational, dispassionate and detached fashion, I am committed to the presentation of religion as a phenomenon that engages the whole person. In order to understand religion *as* a holistic phenomenon, students need to be encouraged and allowed to engage their study of religions and religious cultures as emotionally, physically and rationally constituted and integrated persons. I understand this process of personal integration to be a fundamentally spiritual process, and although I will not advocate *for* a particular spirituality or religious practice, it is my hope that the design of this course and my teaching style will create the conditions wherein each student will have the opportunity to begin or continue their own spiritual process of personal integration.

II. SOME PRESUPPOSITIONS

This paper is based upon a few presuppositions concerning the academic setting of the course as well as the academic level of the students. I am designing this class for undergraduate students, although it is aimed at an upper class level. Actually, I can see using this class for second-year and higher students. It is intended to be an introductory class, but a certain maturity and academic self-discipline is required for the student to derive the full benefit from this approach.

In addition, I see this approach working best at a university that encourages experimentation with class design and research work. For example, this class would work well in an interdisciplinary program such as the Cultural Studies program at the University of California at Santa Cruz, or in Liberal Arts colleges that stress a core curricular experience for all students in their first year of study. After the first year's experience, students would have some experience in thinking in a more comprehensive and inter-disciplinary fashion, and could easily move into a course such as this, which is designed to increase their analytical and inter-disciplinary skills.

With few modifications, it could be used at a Graduate School level, as an introductory level class in the comparative study of religion. It also could be situated in a department of Performance Studies with the focus of the course slightly shifted toward the study of religious performative behaviors, such as ritual, festival, etc. It could also be used as a joint class offered between a Performance Studies department and a Religious Studies department, or an Anthropology department and a Religious Studies department, particularly if the Anthropology department stressed the study of Cultural Anthropology, as exemplified in the work of Victor and Edith Turner, Clifford Geertz, and so on.

III. PERFORMANCE STUDIES AS A FIELD AND PROCESS OF INQUIRY.

Performance Studies as a field of fields. Performance Studies itself is a constellation of various disciplines, including, but not limited to, anthropology, literary criticism, dance, acting, performance art, feminist criticism, ritual studies, etc. Perhaps a better

analogy is that of a potlatch wherein scholars, religious/ritual practitioners, performers and artists gather to share and trade from the abundance of their research, discoveries, gifts, ideas, experiences and experiments.

In an article published in the Summer 1990 issue of **National Forum**, the journal of the Phi Kappa Phi, Richard Schechner discusses Performance Studies at length:

Performance studies is intensely interdisciplinary, intercultural, and intergeneric. Performance studies builds on the fact that we live in a post-colonial world where cultures are colliding, interfering with, and fertilizing each other. Similarly, academic disciplines are most active at their ever-changing boundaries - between theatre and anthropology, folklore and sociology, history and performance theory.... In addition, there are "performative behaviors" - rituals, plays, healing arts, sports and other popular entertainments, performances in everyday life - that need to be studied from a performance perspective.

... Performance studies needs to be made available not only within performing arts departments but to the university community at large. Performative thinking must be seen as a prime means of cultural analysis.¹

Performance Studies represents a new way of looking at texts and what constitutes performers, audience and performance.² Ronald J. Pelias and James VanOosting describe it this way:

Performance studies asserts a new theoretical orientation framed squarely within the discipline of human communication and enriched by such fields as anthropology, theatre, folklore, and popular culture. From within speech communication, performance studies derives from the interpretation of literature and focuses on the performative and aesthetic nature of human discourse. It is based in art, carries epistemological claims, posits methodological procedures, and calls for new pedagogical approaches.³

Performance Studies has natural affinities with many established academic fields or disciplines. Among these can be listed Speech Communication, Communication Studies, Cultural Studies, Performance Studies (such as that at Tisch School for the Arts), Ethnographic Studies, Oral Interpretation, Theatre, Ritual Studies, and Cultural Anthropology. These are just a few examples.

Participation, transcendence and relationality. Perhaps the outstanding characteristic of Performance Studies is that it is highly participatory, requiring the fully engaged

¹ Richard Schechner, "Performance Studies: The Broad-Spectrum Approach," in **National Forum: Phi Kappa Phi Journal**, (Summer 1990):16.

² See, for instance Jill Taft-Kaufman, "Oral Interpretation: Twentieth Century Theory and Practice," in **Speech Communication in the 20th Century**, ed. Thomas W. Benson. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985, p. 157ff.

³ Ronald J. Pelias and James VanOosting, "A Paradigm for Performance Studies," in **Quarterly Journal of Speech** 73 (May, 1987):219.

involvement of the whole person. Ronald J. Pelias and James VanOosting describe it this way:

Performance Studies takes **participation as its working procedure**. Its mode of inquiry demands **physical, sensuous involvement in a performance event**. The methodology depends upon **personal responsiveness, somatic engagement, and cognitive analysis**. Performance Studies mandates a methodology of participation.⁴

It is the participatory nature of Performance Studies that brings persons into an engaged involvement and relationship with one another. This is more than simply an academic exercise. I believe it is, in fact, an experience of transcendence, but of a kind of transcendence that is rooted in relationality. It is this blending of transcendence and relationality that makes a Performance Studies approach all the more vital to the study of religions. However, this idea of transcendence and relationality needs to be explored a little further.

Transcendence is central to religious experience. But it is also central to being a person. To understand the transcendent aspects of the human person, it is important to consider the relational aspects of the human person. It can be said that to be a person means to be in relation. Personality is the potential to be in relation as well as the particular qualities of relating that an individual manifests. Martin Buber describes this when he says, "Individuality makes its appearance by being differentiated from other individualities. A person makes his (sic) appearance by entering into relation with other persons."⁵

Relationship and relationality are a necessary part of transcendence. It is not enough to describe transcendence simply in terms of going beyond one's limits and boundaries, but also to understand that one is going beyond those limits to make contact with an other, with that which lies beyond oneself. To be in relationship, in fact, requires transcendence. In order to make contact with an other, whether it be a person, a thing or God, I must go beyond the narrow confines of myself in order to approach and make contact with the other. But in order to be truly in relation I must also open myself up, let down my own boundaries or "guard," as it were, in order to allow the other to make contact with me. Relationship, then, is not only an extending beyond myself, but it is also an inviting and letting in.

Performance and Religious Studies: Ethics and etiquette.

To enter into relationship with another person, to experience this sort of person-to-person transcendence, carries with it certain moral and ethical responsibilities and considerations. Dwight Conquergood argues for the moral responsibility of ethnographers and performers of ethnographic research to become familiar with rather than removed from the people they study.

...[E]thnographers work with expressivity, which is inextricable from its human creators. They must work with real people, humankind alive, instead of printed texts. Opening and interpreting lives is very different from opening

⁴ Ronald J. Pelias and James VanOosting, "A Paradigm for Performance Studies," in *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 73 (May, 1987):219 (bold emphasis mine).

⁵ Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, 2nd ed., trans. Ronald Gregor Smith, (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 62.

and closing books. Perhaps that is why ethnographers worry more about acquiring experiential insight than maintaining aesthetic distance. Indeed they are calling for empathic performance as a way of intensifying the participative nature of fieldwork, and as a corrective to foreshorten the textual distance that results from writing monographs about the people with whom one lives and studies. When one keeps intellectual, aesthetic, or any other kind of distance from the other, ethnographers worry that other people will be held at an ethical and moral remove as well.⁶

Speaking in regard to the academic study of religions, Judith Berling, in her 1991 Presidential Address to the American Academy of Religion, describes members of our culture engaging in "what might be termed 'broadening conversations.'" ⁷ She says that these conversations serve a number of roles, such as helping students imaginatively experience the world through another person's eyes, becoming aware of their own personal and cultural idiosyncrasies, acknowledging the plurality of approaches to the normative in humans cultures, and so on. One particular function of these broadening conversations relates directly to the manner in which we interact with persons of different cultural and religious backgrounds. "Such conversations provide information about how to treat persons with due regard for their experiences and circumstances. They contribute to our cognitive map of considerate and appropriate behavior."⁸

This suggests the idea of doing research as guests and observing the proper rules and etiquette of hospitality. When studying another religion, it is important to keep in mind that it is also *another's* religion, that is, it is a religion that is practiced and believed (to varying degrees) by other people, by our fellow human beings. Thus, as in any human encounter and interaction, certain rules of etiquette and social conduct pertain. But it also is reminiscent of some of the concerns expressed by Wilfred Cantwell Smith in his essay, "Methodology and the Study of Religion: Some Misgivings."⁹ In that essay, Smith argues against a reliance upon methodology for its own sake when studying the religion of other people. Instead, the approach of the humanities is to set the context for encounters between human beings as fellow human beings, not as objects to be studied and categorized according to some set of methodological presuppositions.

Humane knowing - the knowledge of man by man (sic) - is an exercise in the meeting between persons, be it across the centuries or across the world. It is, therefore, not technical, not subordinate to methodological rules. In personal relations, whether face-to-face or mediated by man's symbolic forms of expression, the use of technical procedures, unless rigorously subordinated to primarily personalist considerations, is not merely inappropriate but poten-

⁶ Conquergood, Dwight. "Performing as a Moral Act: Ethical Dimensions of the Ethnography of Performance." *Literature in Performance* 5/2 (April 1985): 2.

⁷ Berling, Judith. "Is Conversation about Religion Possible?" 1991 Presidential Address, American Academy of Religion. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 61/1 (Spring 1993):1-22.

⁸ *Ibid.* p.9

⁹ Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Methodology and the Study of Religion: Some Misgivings," in: Baird, Robert D., ed. *Methodological Issues in Religious Studies*. The School of Religion of the University of Iowa, 1975.

tially disruptive. Man cannot know man except in mutuality: in respect, trust, and equality, if not ultimately love.¹⁰

The academic study of religion above all should be sensitive to the fact that one is studying human beings in all their human complexity. Smith is afraid that too great a stress upon methodology will result in a disregard for and discounting of the human practitioners of a religion, and that methodology will be studied for its own sake rather than as being simply one way of thinking about what a person observes in a religion. "The characteristically human is not accessible to technical devices; and most of all, the religious does not lend itself to formalized impersonalism. 'We cannot engineer our way into the sacred,' as I have heard a colleague put it."¹¹

In addition, Smith is concerned that a stress upon methodology will lead to a breakdown in scholarly integrity, wherein the academic researcher will seek out proofs and confirmations of certain methodological theories and procedures, and ignore those phenomena which do not fit predetermined criteria.

One problem here, in addition to all others, is that for the study of religion - especially other cultures' religion - centrally requisite is a readiness critically to revise one's presuppositions. Few things stand in the way of a genuine awareness of other's religious life more firmly than the imposing of one's own presuppositional categories upon the data of one's observation, ordering the material in terms of one's preformulated conceptual scheme. Surely we all know that. But do we also recognize it here? The methodological presupposition - whatever the method chosen: the sheer presupposition that a given method, especially one thought up by Western intellects, is important - works at least as well as any other *a priori* stance, and indeed better than most, in obstructing one's sensitive perception of what one is studying.¹²

Smith's comments and concerns serve as a necessary reminder to us of what our purpose is in studying religions. It is not to advance scholarly careers nor to gather anthropological information which might serve military interests nor to prove the superiority of one religion over another. Rather, it is to help human beings to understand other human beings better, if still only partially and imperfectly. It is to bring human beings together in order to share together our discoveries and questions about what it means to be human on this world in this universe, and to marvel at our extravagantly complex diversity.

Berling's concern about "(treating) persons with due regard for their experiences and circumstances," and Smith's concern with the humane study of religion as a meeting between persons are addressed by a Performance Studies approach in which human behaviors, feelings, ideas, creativity and expressiveness are studied in the concrete cultural situations in which the various religions and religious communities and persons are found. Human expressiveness is studied as a means of having access to the inner life of an other. This access is sought not to have dominion or power over the other, but rather

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 18.

as an act of compassion and empathy. As Ninian Smart describes it, "Empathy literally means 'feeling in': it is getting at the feel of what is inside another person or group of persons. It is not quite the same as sympathy, 'feeling with' (*pathy sym* rather than *pathy em*), for sympathy means I agree with the other. Even [if] I do not agree with the other person, however, I can still have empathy."¹³

Arvind Sharma identifies this capacity for empathy as perhaps a maximum qualification for studying religion, or, more to the point, for practicing a religion, but it is not a *necessity* for the study of a religion: "...no 'special qualifications' are *needed*, howsoever desirable they may be, except that of any academic study, that the investigator be 'positively interested in the subject' and not that his or her interest should be positive" (i.e. positively empathetic).¹⁴ In fact, citing Geo Widengren, Sharma maintains that empathy is not even a method, but rather a "...personal aptitude for using the existing methods."¹⁵ However, it seems that hidden in Sharma's distinction are echoes of a Cartesian dualism which posits a detached observer investigating an object and deriving a set of universally valid principles from that observation, principles which maintain their validity because the researcher is separate from the object under study, and thus neither "taints" the object studied nor is tainted by it.

A Performance Studies approach, on the other hand, maintains that such detachment is neither truly attainable, nor is it desirable. Researchers such as Ronald Grimes have argued for the subjective experiences of the researcher to be part of the data¹⁶ and Victor and Edith Turner have used re-enacted rituals as a pedagogical process.¹⁷

Performance Studies and development of imagination.

The study of the craft of acting as a particular form of performance is an example of how insights from Performance Studies provide a means for entering imaginatively into another person's experience. The humanity of the actor is where the kind of transcendence and relationality I have been describing occurs. It is by the actor existing fully in the body, expressing emotions, psychological tensions, desires, failures and achievements through the body that transcendence can occur. Whatever problem or task set before the actor becomes a voice, an emotion, a sound, a physical gripping of the body, and is expressed *by the imagination* through the body. This expression occurs instantaneously, not as a product of reflective thought, or carefully considered pre-planning. The imagination transforms the abstract acting problem into an embodied reality. The imagination makes manifest in the entire organism of the actor that which previously was only an idea, a question, an abstraction.

A Performance Studies approach helps to develop the imagination's capacities and employs these capacities as part of the learning and research process. The student or researcher moves constantly between participation in a performance, ritual or other event

¹³ Ninian Smart, **Worldviews: Crosscultural Explorations of Human Beliefs**. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1983: p. 16, quoted in Arvind Sharma, "Is there a Minimum Requirement of Studying Religion?" **Bulletin of the Council of Societies for the Study of Religions**, 23/4 (Nov. 1994): 91.

¹⁴ Arvind Sharma, "...Minimum Requirement..." p. 92.

¹⁵ Geo Widengren, "An Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion." In Walter H. Capps, ed., **Ways of Understanding Religion**.

¹⁶ Ronald Grimes. **Beginnings in Ritual Studies**. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982.

¹⁷ Victor Turner and Edith Turner, "Performing Ethnography," in **The Drama Review** 26/2 [94], (Summer 1982): 33-50.

and analysis and reflection upon that participation. The whole organism of the student or researcher - senses, feelings, emotions, thoughts, body movement and kinesthetic perceptions - is involved in the collection of information and its processing, as well as the analysis and synthesis of ideas, conclusions (however tentative), and theories.

IV. PERFORMANCE STUDIES AND FEMINISM.

A final concern which flows throughout Berling's description of broadening conversations has to do with recognizing the limitations, cultural specificity and relativity of one's own religious understanding and practice as well as the limitations, etc., of another's religion. These concerns echo the critique which Feminist scholarship has raised concerning the production of knowledge and epistemological claims concerning access to universal truth. Feminist theory, for example, begins with an examination of the gender and power-based constructions of knowledge and epistemology. One of the strongest critiques is leveled at the Cartesian dichotomy between subjectivity and objectivity, with objectivity being prized (and supposedly exhibited to a greater extent by men) over subjectivity (supposedly exhibited, of course, by women).¹⁸

The rationality of the Enlightenment and the development of the Empiricism of Bacon and others was premised upon the singularity and universality of truth, which exists as an object outside of the individual and thus is untainted by the subjective feelings and impressions of the individual. In order to have access to this realm of universal truth, the individual must learn to think in an objective and detached manner.

Feminists have challenged both the gender division of objectivity and subjectivity as well as the claims of any group to have privileged access to universal truth. This has resulted in a different style of speaking about what is known and discovered through research, reflection and communal processing.¹⁹

Moving from a gender-based critique of objectivity, Feminist thinkers turned to a critique of the notions of objectivity and universal truth.²⁰ Feminist thought focuses upon the idea of a multiplicity of truths, which are grounded in the particularities of one's material existence: particularities such as gender, race, sexual orientation, nationality and cultural identity, class background, etc. Truth is bound up with subjectivity. But it is not to be abandoned or disregarded because of this. Rather, the task becomes one of sharing our particularities and listening for expressions of truths in the experiences of others.

The critique of universal truth and objectivity carries with it a critique of the idea of the detached observer:

[Feminists] have been extremely critical of the way in which knowledge has for so long been presented as a *fait accompli* with little or no acknowledgment of the part played by the personal in the process of producing such knowledge. Instead of trying to be 'detached', feminists are blatantly 'involved' in the knowledge which they are producing and unlike the traditional model in which the researcher is presumed to be 'outside' the subject matter

¹⁸ See the discussion by Dale Spender, "Introduction," in Dale Spender, ed., **Men's Studies Modified: The Impact of Feminism on the Academic Disciplines**, (Elmsford, NY: Pergamon Press, 1981), pages 1-9.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

being researched, feminist contributions frequently testify to the way in which women are changed by the research process. This is a concrete example of the way women are trying to bring politics and knowledge together.²¹

Performance Studies is influenced by Feminism in recognizing the role of subjectivity and the spuriousness of claims to pure objectivity, the multiplicity of centers of knowledge and experience, the multiplicity of truths, the suspicion of universalizing, and the role of the personal in the production of knowledge. Performance Studies can offer back to Feminist thought a pedagogical process which engages the researcher/student bodily, sensually, emotionally, personally, subjectively, and experientially.

There are implications for me as a teacher as well. Feminism offers a critique of the notion of the teacher/instructor being the one who possesses and controls access to knowledge, and students as being ignorant or unenlightened, passive recipients, or as being inducted into some hierarchical system of knowing. From a Feminist perspective, I can acknowledge the extent of my own knowledge of and familiarity with a subject. But I need to also acknowledge the limits of my knowledge and to stress that in this class we will all be exploring together. What I can offer is my experience and perspective, and my knowledge of certain topics and methods and approaches to learning and inquiry.

V. PERFORMANCE STUDIES METHODOLOGY AND PEDAGOGY

Perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of a Performance Studies approach to research and teaching is its highly participatory procedure. Within the last two decades, research done into human learning and intelligence by people such as Howard Gardner²² has demonstrated the multiplicity of ways in which people learn, process knowledge and generate new problems to investigate and/or solve. A pedagogical methodology which combines discursive, linear thought with feeling-based intuitive perceiving with artistic expressivity and sensual, whole-body (or "somatic") involvement provides the best environment for learning for students, who represent all styles of learning and intelligence. A performance pedagogy is designed to provide just such an environment. Linear thought is encouraged through class presentations, lectures and discussions, as well as analysis of written texts and careful examination of the subjective experiences of the students during their field research. Intuitive feeling and perception is invited through the strong emphasis placed upon doing field research and constantly asking such questions as, "What did you see, hear, feel, etc.?" By encouraging students to notice particular movements or gestures and to try and recreate them (in a very cursory or representational fashion, of course), it becomes possible to involve the kinesthetic and artistic dimensions of intelligence and learning. These procedures are examples of what Pelias and VanOosting refer to as "personal responsiveness, somatic engagement, and cognitive analysis."²³

²¹ Spender, p. 7.

²² Howard Gardner, **Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences**, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1983).

²³ Ronald J. Pelias and James VanOosting, "A Paradigm for Performance Studies," in **Quarterly Journal of Speech**, 73 (May, 1987):219 (bold emphasis mine).

A Performance pedagogy for the study of Religion is one in which students bodily go out from the classroom and engage the traditions and people they study face to face. It is a teaching style that is process-oriented, and focuses upon human interactions and responses of the whole person, not just formulations of logic or discursive thought. Thus dialogue and the sharing of experiences and perceptions among the students and teacher is important. A certain open-endedness is also required in order to allow the learning process to unfold within each student. Thus, the students do field research not in order to learn anything predetermined or required, but in order to experience the religious activity *as it is*, and as it is performed by its adherents. This field research is then compared to what the religious tradition says and claims about itself and its understanding of the world through its sacred texts, devotional writings and apologetic literature. Each student is encouraged to develop their own understanding of the religious traditions studied, but also to acknowledge and take responsibility for the limitedness of that knowledge. Because that knowledge is limited, the students are then encouraged to participate together in the act of research and analysis of what is observed and experienced. Thus, learning also occurs as a joint enterprise: students participate in each other's processes of learning.

VI. BASIC COURSE DESIGN

The Metaphor of the Weaver.

The operative metaphor for this class is that of the tapestry weaver. In weaving a tapestry, the weaver separates out the various threads according to color, size, texture, and so on. Then they carefully weave these separate, diverse threads together in patterns of color, shape, rhythm, balance, symmetry and asymmetry, etc. What emerges is a picture, which is known in its totality, as a whole. What is seen and experienced is a *gestalt*. And yet, if viewed closely enough, each thread can be seen distinctly. The components of the gestalt can be separated out into their constituent elements. The picture, the tapestry does not exist apart from the threads which make it up. At the same time, the threads are not a tapestry until they are woven together and juxtaposed to one another forming a pattern, a picture, an image. Thus weaving a tapestry is both a process of separation - analysis - and of bringing together - synthesis. Analysis and synthesis can occur simultaneously, as when the weaver holds separate threads while weaving them together, or as when the eye moves from the completed tapestry to the individual threads back to the whole image again.

The craft and science of weaving becomes one of the methodological metaphors for this class by demonstrating the balance that is needed between analysis and synthesis. Students will be encouraged to develop, practice and sharpen their analytical skills through the use of their senses as well as their skills of logic, deduction and discussion. Rituals as well as readings will be separated into their constituent elements and examined. The students will simultaneously, or at least concurrently, be encouraged to develop, practice and sharpen their synthetic skills through participation in ritual, devotional and festival events as well as through class discussions, presentations and papers. Part of the work of analysis and synthesis will take place in the context of the research groups, the "Tradition Study Groups." Students will sign up to work in a group which will focus intensively on one particular tradition. Research will be divided and shared among the members of the group. They will go as a group to observe and participate where possible

in the rituals and festivals of their tradition of focus. As a group they will analyze their shared experience, and work out a joint presentation for the rest of the class. This joint presentation will require a certain amount of synthetic work, which will be the result of the collaborative efforts of the members of the Tradition Study Groups.

Feminist Theory and the Sharing of Knowledge.

One of the commitments of Feminist scholarship is the idea that knowledge or knowing is a shared, multi-centered endeavor where many partial "knowledges" or "knowings" are brought together. The implications of this for the design of this course also relate to the intentional inclusion of the subjective experiences of the students as part of the data gathered, as well as a recognition that there is not one central expression of truth that is more valid than other expressions of truth. It is not necessary to determine whether there is an underlying principle or truth which has many expressions or if there is simply a multiplicity of truths coexisting and evolving continuously - which are two possible results of the Feminist critique. The question is how to incorporate the Feminist critique into the course. One way is to discuss what the critique is, and then to demonstrate how that critique can be applied by allowing the subjective experiences of the students to remain as part of the data gathered, and allow those experiences to be discussed in class without insisting upon adjudicating what is a more accurate or "true" experience. Also, being conscious of the socio-economic setting of the investigators is important. Thus, there is a certain amount of self-examination and self-situating that each student needs to engage in as part of this course. This can be one of the activities of the "Tradition Study Groups" as they begin their work together.

Performative Aspects.

The performative aspects of this course are divided between field research, academic and scholarly research and classroom discussions and presentations. Great emphasis is placed upon the active involvement of the students in observing religious rituals and practices as well as in sharing research and discussing together their observations and explorations.

One of the distinctive characteristics of the design of this course is the inclusion of the visit to a rock concert, specifically a Grateful Dead concert. The purpose of attending a Rock Concert early in the course is to expose the students to the ritual structuring of a performance event. A rock concert is an event that is probably familiar to most of the students, yet is not necessarily an event that the students may have viewed in terms of a ritual. Thus it is an event which is familiar to them, but when viewed in terms of the study of ritual, can become unfamiliar, and worthy of re-viewing from a different perspective. It thus becomes a good vehicle for talking about the nature of performance, ritual, and human cultural expression. The Grateful Dead is particularly interesting to study for its ritual aspects because of several phenomena.

The first is the longevity of the band. The Grateful Dead has been together since the late 60's and has developed a large and faithful following. The band itself has a history, which has been written about and recorded in various publications aimed at the popular market. Thus, there is a literature which is, if you will, apologetic and hagiographic in nature and can be examined and evaluated. There is also a substantial discography listing

the contents of the many albums produced by the band as well as lists of the songs played at each of the concerts given by the band since its earliest days.

One of the most interesting phenomena of the Grateful Dead, of course, is the almost fanatic loyalty of some of its fans, a group which is known as the "Deadheads." This group can be distinguished by the colorful, tie-dyed clothing it wears, as well as a variety of insignia and bumper-stickers applied to cars. Many Deadheads follow the band around the country, attending concerts whenever they can, and a whole social sub-class has developed with its own particular way of interacting and social placement within the concert itself. There are people at every concert who set up elaborate recording equipment in order not only to record the music, but also to develop a sound archive of each concert, as if to preserve this late Twentieth Century cultural event for future generations to study. A certain segment of the crowd are "spinners," who spend much of the time spinning in a manner not unlike the danced dhikr of the Mevlevi Sufis. The parking lot outside of the concert becomes a place where Deadheads and other concert-goers congregate and mingle, selling various items, including brightly-dyed T-shirts, concert tickets, etc. In short, there are many fascinating phenomena that can be examined from a Ritual Studies standpoint. Thus, the early part of the class will be spent discussing the process of studying rituals, mapping the ritual field, examining the constituent elements of rituals, etc.²⁴ The concert will provide the students with an experience of analyzing a performance in a manner that will develop their analytical and observational skills as well as emphasize the importance and role of the somatic participation of the researcher/observer.

These observational and participatory facilities will then be extended to the field research undertaken by each Tradition Study Group. The groups will be expected not only to research the background and some of the sacred writings of the tradition they study, but will also observe some of the ritual, devotional or cultivational practices (such as meditation sessions, prayer retreats, etc.) or celebrations and services of worship. The students will not be expected to fully recreate or perform the rituals for the class (although this remains an option if it can be done with integrity and respect for the tradition), but they will be expected to be able to describe the rituals they observed and to describe their experience of the ritual as participants, to the extent they were able to participate. The students will be encouraged to pay close attention to the movement and gestures of the people participating in the rituals, and to recreate certain aspects of that movement for the purposes of expressing some of what was observed and experienced during the research. If there are students who are talented in music, it is also possible for them to pay attention to melodies and musical structures. The same is true for the artwork, shape and textures involved in the religious activity, etc.

VII. BASIS FOR EVALUATION

The main basis for evaluation of the students in this class will be according to their participation in the field research, the study group research and analysis, and their participation in any presentations to the class (including their role in preparing the presentation). Students will be encouraged to keep a journal of their experiences and reflections. Each group will also work together on a paper summarizing their observations

²⁴ See Ronald Grimes, *Beginnings in Ritual Studies*, (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982).

and experiences of field research, which will be due two weeks following their presentation. In addition, I will meet with each student for a 30-minute conference at the beginning of the semester to get a sense of what the student hopes to learn and gain from the comparative study of religion. I will then meet with each student again near the end of the course to discuss with them what they have personally learned and struggled with in the class. (This is, of course, presuming that the class size is less than 50 students. Since this paper is a theoretical construction, I will base my comments upon the possibility of this class being taught in a small Liberal Arts College.) In recognition of the fact that some students process information more internally and are uncomfortable making public presentations, I will allow for the students to make detailed journal entries, which they would discuss with me during the 30-minute conference.²⁵ The main purpose for these meetings is to reinforce my basic commitment to the process of learning being a personal as well as a communal endeavor. Each individual student will gain something different from their explorations into various religious traditions and cultures, and the process of exploration and participation is what is most important. I do not believe in the hierarchalization of knowledge, nor do I believe that knowledge, knowing and learning can be quantified. Therefore, I place a great amount of trust in the process of learning, especially a performative process, and I recognize that as each student is engaged in that process, they will come to a certain understanding of themselves, as well as of the people and traditions with which they have come in contact, that will be specific to themselves individually.

I do not intend to grade hierarchically (A, B, C, etc.), but will give either an A or F, or Pass/Fail, with the basis for determining this being whether the student did the work or not. If they did not come to class, did not participate in the Tradition Study Groups, did not do any of the field research, did not work on the class presentation, then they will fail the class. But one has to work hard in order to fail the class. The design of the class is to involve the students at several levels, and each student will respond differently to that process. Thus, participation is stressed, whereas the accumulation of an objective, quantifiable body of knowledge is secondary.

What follows is a "master outline" of the course, which would be for my reference. It includes the bibliography for my reference as well as the assigned readings and the field experiences for the students. An example of the student syllabus follows.

²⁵ I am indebted to Priscilla Stuckey for calling to my attention the needs of students who are internal processors of information and their experiences.

OUTLINE OF THE COURSE

A. It is important to keep in mind that the course will be one semester long, thus 15 weeks long.

B. The course will meet twice a week, for 1.5 hours each time.

C. Field experiences will be in addition to class time, or may occur during a class.

1. Students will sign up to be in a particular field research group. In that group they will each become experts in a particular aspect of the tradition under study. They will research ahead of time various aspects of what they will observe in the field, and then report upon the experience to the entire class, offering some interpretive comments based upon their academic research and personal experiences.

2. Not all of the class will need to go to all the field experiences, although that will be an option available to all. (Obviously, the logistics of transportation will need to be worked out in advance, perhaps by having people sign up during the first week for how many field experiences they want to attend.) The members of a particular "Tradition Study Group" would need to participate in all the field experiences pertaining to their tradition, but that would be all that would be required for them to participate in.

D. There are three concentric levels to the readings. The first level or circle relates to the two texts which will be common to everyone in the class. The texts I have chosen are the most recent edition of Niels Nielsen, Jr., *et al*, **Religions of the World**, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988 [or later]), and Nancy A. Falk and Rita M Gross, eds., **Unspoken Worlds: Women's Religious Lives**. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Inc., 1989. The Nielsen, *et al* textbook contains good introductory material concerning not only religions of antiquity, and religions around the world, but it also contains overviews of different approaches to the study of religions. It does not deal with various new religious movements or phenomena such as cargo cults, neo-paganism and wicca, Rastafarianism, Japanese New Religions, etc., but it nonetheless contains a good deal of information about a wide variety of religions that is well-organized and accessible for students in an introductory class. It would thus serve, along with the book by Falk and Gross, as the common resource for the whole class. The book by Falk and Gross, which is an expanded edition of their 1980 book, brings into the class the religious experiences of women in many of the cultures we are studying in the class. The inclusion of the voices of these women only begins to address the Feminist concern for studying women as active subjects in their own right. Having a set of readings that are devoted to the religious experience of women would also help to set up the question of how and why women's voices and experiences are excluded from or presumed in descriptions of male religious experiences or practices. These concerns would be addressed in the second week's focus upon "Feminist Theory and the Study of Religions." Constantly having these readings in the students' awarenesses will help to draw their attention to voices and presences which might be overlooked or hidden, whether as a result of certain social constructions of gender, race, class, etc., or because of the acculturation of the students' perceptions and awareness.

These two basic readings would be supplemented by the second level or circle of readings, which are the readings for which the members of each Tradition Study Group

would be responsible. These readings, indicated by the notation "Tradition Study Group," are further readings specific to the tradition under study. They would be readings assigned only to the Tradition Study Groups. The third level or circle of readings is the bibliography that I would use for my own preparation, and is found in the Master Course Outline. This bibliography would also be made available to the members of each Tradition Study Group for their further research, but each student would be individually responsible for using only those materials that are helpful to their particular research.

Week 1: Introductory materials:

1. Discussion of course syllabus, expectations, field experiences, etc. Assignment of group to research materials concerning the Grateful Dead. Students sign up for Tradition Study Groups.
2. Lecture/Discussion of Performance Studies approach. Include discussion of plurality of religions, why study/converse about religion (cf. Berling, 1993), definition of religion (cf. Geertz, 1973).
3. Assigned Reading: R. Grimes, **Beginnings in Ritual Studies**, Chapters 2-4.
4. 2nd class session: Experiencing our own ritual. Signing a sheet of paper or parchment scroll, bringing shared objects to begin the class, ritual mapping of the class experience.
5. Bibliography for preparation of lecture:
 - Berling, Judith. "Is Conversation about Religion Possible?" 1991 Presidential Address, American Academy of Religion. **Journal of the American Academy of Religion**, 61/1 (Spring 1993):1-22.
 - Geertz, Clifford. "Religion as a Cultural System." In his **The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays**, 87-124. New York:Basic Books, 1973.
 - Kaufmann, Gordon D., "Religious Diversity, Historical Consciousness, and Christian Theology." In **The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions**, 3-15. Ed. by John Hick and Paul F. Knitter. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988.

Week 2: Introductory comments: Feminist Theory and the Study of Religions.

1. Assigned Class Readings:
 - a. Nielsen *et al*, "Introduction," pp. 1-19.
 - b. Photocopied article: "Studying Women and Religion: Conclusions Twenty-Five Years Later," in Arvind Sharma, ed., **Today's Woman in World Religions**, (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1994), pp. 327-361.
 - c. Handout prepared by me outlining some general concerns and tendencies in Feminist theories, their impact on the study of religion, and the process of learning.
2. Lecture and discussion about Feminist theory and the study of religion.
3. Meet in Tradition Study Groups. Begin processing as a group, practicing consensus and Feminist models of working.
4. Bibliography for preparation of lecture:

- Crowley, Helen, and Himmelweit, Susan, eds. **Knowing Women: Feminism and Knowledge**. Cambridge, UK: The Open University, 1992.
- Reinharz, Shulamit. **Feminist Methods in Social Research**. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Rich, Adrienne, **On Lies, Secrets and Silences**. New York: Norton, 1979.
- Spender, Dale, ed. **Men's Studies Modified: The Impact of Feminism on the Academic Disciplines**. Elmsford, NY: Pergamon Press, 1981.
- Swidler, Arlene, and Conn, Walter E., eds. **Mainstreaming: Feminist Research for Teaching Religious Studies**. Lanham, MD: The College Theology Society/ University Press of America, 1985.

Week 3: Preparation for Field Experience: Grateful Dead Concert. The process of Ritual and Performance.

1. Assigned Reading: V. Turner, **Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors**, Chapters 1, 6, 7. (Perhaps assign readings from V. Turner, **Ritual Process** instead?)
2. Lecture and discussion about ritual process.
3. Bibliography for preparation of lecture:

Turner, Victor, **Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors**,
 Bell, Catherine, **Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice**. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Bynum, Carolyn Walker, "Women's Stories, Women's Symbols: A Critique of Victor Turner's Theory of Liminality," in R.L. Moore and F.E. Reynolds, eds., **Anthropology and the Study of Religion**, pp. 105-125. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1984.

Durkheim, E., **Les Formes Elementaires de la Vie Religieuse**. Paris: Bibliothèque de philosophie contemporaine, 1912.

Durkheim, E., **The Elementary Forms of Religious Life**. London: Allen and Unwin, 1972.

Eliade, M., **Symbolism, the Sacred and the Arts**. New York: Crossroad, 1988.

Freud, S., "Totem und Tabu," (Orig. 1912/13). In: S. Freud, **Gesammelte Werke, Bd. IX**, pp. 115-127. Frankfurt: Fischer Verlag, 1973.

Geertz, C., "Ritual as a Cultural System," in M. Banton, ed., **Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion**, pp. 1-46. London: Tavistock Publications, 1966.

_____, **The Interpretation of Cultures**. New York: Basic Books, 1973.

_____, **Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretative Anthropology**. New York: Basic Books, 1983.

Gennep, A. van, **Les rites de passage. Etude systématique des rites**. New York: Johnson, 1969.

_____, **The Rites of Passage**. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960.

Grimes, Ronald, **Beginnings in Ritual Studies**. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982.

_____, **Research in Ritual Studies: A Programmatic Essay and Bibliography**. London: The Scarecrow Press, 1985.

_____, "Ritual," in M. Eliade, ed., **The Encyclopedia of Religion**, vol. 11, pp. 405-425. New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1987.

_____, "The Theatre of Sources," **TDR**, 25:3 [T91], Fall 1981, 67-74.

- Panikkar, R., "Man as a Ritual Being," in **Chicago Studies**, 16(1), pp. 5-28.
- Turner, V.W., **Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society**. Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 1974.
- _____, "Liminal to Liminoid, in Play, Flow, and Ritual," in **Rice University Studies**, 60, pp. 53-92.
- _____, **The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure**, Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 1977 [Orig. 1969].
- _____, **From Ritual to Theatre**. New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982.
- _____, "Liminality and the Performance Genres," in J. Macaloon, ed. **Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle**. Philadelphia: ISHI, 1984. Pp. 19-41.

Week 4: Discussion of Grateful Dead Concert and Ritual mapping of the experience.

1. Report of group researching Grateful Dead.
2. Classwide discussion of Grateful Dead as a ritual event, and as non-ritual. Performative aspects. Mapping and description and interpretation of observations.
3. Bibliography for preparation of lecture: *Same as above*.

Week 5: Hinduism:

1. Field experience: Visit a local Hindu temple/Cultural Center. Observe rituals of *puja*. Perhaps schedule special session with local Brahman priest.
 2. Assigned readings:
- Class:** Nielsen *et al*, "Part Two: Hinduism," Chapters 4-8, pp. 109-199. (To be read over the course of the next three weeks.)

Tradition Study Groups:

- Coward, Harold and Goa, David. **Mantra: Hearing the Divine in India**. Chambersburg, PA: Anima Books, 1991.
- Eck, Diana L. **Darsan: Seeing the Divine Image in India**. Chambersburg, PA: Anima Books, 1981. Revised edition, 1985.
3. Bibliography for preparation of lecture:

Ashby, Philip. **Modern Trends in Hinduism**. New York: Columbia University Press, 1969.

Babb, Lawrence A., **The Divine Hierarchy: Popular Hinduism in Central India**. New York: Columbia University Press, 1975.

_____. **Redemptive Encounters: Three Modern Styles in the Hindu Tradition**. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.

Basham, A.L. **The Wonder That Was India: A Survey of the Culture of the Indian Sub-Continent Before the Coming of the Muslims**. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1954.

Biardeau, M. **L'Hindouisme: Anthropologie d'un civilisation**. Paris: Flammarion, 1980.

Coward, Harold and Goa, David. **Mantra: Hearing the Divine in India**. Chambersburg, PA: Anima Books, 1991.

Eck, Diana L. **Banaras: City of Light**. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983, c1982.

- _____. **Darsan: Seeing the Divine Image in India.** Chambersburg, PA: Anima Books, 1981. Revised edition, 1985.
- Freeman, James. **Untouchable: An Indian Life History.** Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1979.
- Hawley, John Stratton. **At Play with Krishna: Pilgrimage Dramas from Brindavan.** Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981. (In association with Shrivatsa Goswami.)
- _____, and Donna Wulff, eds. **The Divine Consort: Radha and the Goddesses of India.** Boston: Beacon Press, 1986. Original edition, 1982.
- _____, and Mark Juergensmeyer. **Songs of the Saints of India.** New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Hiltebeitel, Alf. "Toward a Coherent Study of Hinduism," **Religious Studies Review** 9:3 (1983), pp. 206-212.
- Hopkins, Thomas J. **The Hindu Religious Tradition.** Encino, CA: Dickenson, 1971.
- Jacobson, Doranne, and Susan S. Wadley. **Women in India.** Columbia, MO: South Asia Books, 1977.
- Juergensmeyer, Mark. **Religion as Social Vision: The Movement Against Untouchability in 20th-Century Punjab.** Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982.
- Kinsley, David R. **The Sword and the Flute: Kali and Krsna, Dark Visions of The Terrible and the Sublime in Hindu Mythology.** Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975.
- _____. **Hinduism: A Cultural Perspective.** Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1982.
- _____. **Hindu Goddesses: Visions of the Divine Feminine in the Hindu Religious Tradition.** Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.
- Kishwar, Madhu, and Ruth Vanita, eds. **In Search of Answers: Indian Women's Voices from Manushi.** London: Zed Books, 1984.
- Lannoy, Richard. **The Speaking Tree: A Study of Indian Culture and Society.** London: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Maitra, Asim. **Religious Life of the Brahman.** New Delhi: Inter-India Publications, 1986.
- Mehta, Rama. **Inside the Haveli.** New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1977.
- Nielson, Niels, et al. **Religions of the World.** New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982.
- Radhakrishnan, Sarvapali. **The Hindu View of Life.** London: George Allen and Unwin, 1927.
- Ramanujan, A.K. **Speaking of Siva.** Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1973.
- Sen, K.M. **Hinduism.** Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1961.
- Sudarsen, V., Reddy, G. Prakash, and Suryanarayana, M., eds. **Religion and Society in South India: A Volume in Honour of Prof. N. Subba Reddy.** Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corp., 1987.
- Wiser, William and Charlotte. **Behind Mud Walls, 1930-1960.** Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.

Younger, Paul. **Introduction to Indian Religious Thought**. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972.

Zaehner, R.C. **Hinduism**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962.

Week 6: Hinduism:

1. Field experience: Hare Krishna temple visit? Or a local Shiva cultic center?
2. Assigned reading:

Class: *See above.*

Tradition Study Groups:

Chatterjee, R.K. **The Gîtâ and Its Culture**. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Ltd., 1987.

The ***Bhagavad Gîtâ*** in one of the following translations:

Edgerton, Franklin. **The Bhagavad Gîtâ**. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974.

van Buitenen, J.A.B., **The Bhagavadgîtâ in the Mahâbhârata**. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981.

Swarupananda, Swami. **Śrîmad- Bhagavad-Gîtâ**. Calcutta, India: Advaita Ashrama, 1976 (or latest).

3. Bibliography for preparation of lecture: *See above. Also:*
Chatterjee, R.K. **The Gîtâ and Its Culture**. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Ltd., 1987.

Week 7: Hinduism:

1. Field experience: Arrange a visit to a local meditation or yoga ashram and participate in some of the practice. Perhaps have a special session with the resident teacher/guru. Example: Visit with Eknath Easwaran at the Blue Mountain Center of Meditation, Petaluma, California.

2. Assigned reading:

Class: *See above assignment for Week 5.*

Tradition Study Groups: One or two of the following books:

Easwaran, Eknath. **Meditation: An Eight-Point Program**. Petaluma, CA: Nilgiri Press, 1978.

_____. **The Mantram Handbook**. Petaluma, CA: Nilgiri Press, 1977.

_____. **Dialogue with Death: The Spiritual Psychology of the Katha Upanishad**. Petaluma, CA: Nilgiri Press, 1981.

3. Bibliography for preparation of lecture: *See above. Also:*
Easwaran, Eknath. **Meditation: An Eight-Point Program**. Petaluma, CA: Nilgiri Press, 1978.

_____. **The Mantram Handbook**. Petaluma, CA: Nilgiri Press, 1977.

_____. **Dialogue with Death: The Spiritual Psychology of the Katha Upanishad**. Petaluma, CA: Nilgiri Press, 1981.

Week 8: Buddhism:

1. Field experience: Visit to either a Theravada temple/sangha or to a Chinese lineage temple, such as Hua Yen.
2. Assigned reading:

Class: Nielsen *et al*, "Part Three: Buddhism," Chapters 9-11, pp. 203-259.

Tradition Study Group:

Robinson, Richard H. and Willard L. Johnson, **The Buddhist Religion: A Historical Introduction**, Third Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1982.

Gross, Rita M., **Buddhism After Patriarchy: A Feminist History, Analysis and Reconstruction of Buddhism**. Albany: SUNY Press, 1993.

Vajranâna, Mahathera, **Buddhist Meditation in Theory and Practice**. Colombo, Sri Lanka: Gunasena, 1962.

3. Bibliography for preparation of lecture:

Falk, Nancy Auer, "The Case of the Vanishing Nuns: The Fruits of Ambivalence in Ancient Indian Buddhism," in Nancy A. Falk and Rita M Gross, eds., **Unspoken Worlds: Women's Religious Lives in Non-Western Cultures**. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1980, pp. 207-224.

Gross, Rita M., **Buddhism After Patriarchy: A Feminist History, Analysis and Reconstruction of Buddhism**. Albany: SUNY Press, 1993.

Johnson, E.H., **The Buddhacarita, or Acts of the Buddha. Part 2**, translation. Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1936.

Kalupahana, David J., **Causality: The Central Philosophy of Buddhism**. Honolulu: The University of Hawaii Press, 1975.

Nârada, Thera, **The Buddha and His Teachings**. Colombo, Sri Lankâ: Vajirârâma, 1964.

Ray, Reginald A., "Accomplished Women in Tantric Buddhism of Medieval India and Tibet," in Falk and Gross, **Unspoken Worlds**, op. cit., pp. 227-242.

Robinson, Richard H. and Willard L. Johnson, **The Buddhist Religion: A Historical Introduction**, Third Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1982.

Swearer, Donald K., **Secrets of the Lotus**. New York: Macmillan, 1971.

Thomas, E.J., **The History of Buddhist Thought**. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1933.

Vajranâna, Mahathera, **Buddhist Meditation in Theory and Practice**. Colombo, Sri Lanka: Gunasena, 1962.

Vetter, Tilmann. **The Ideas and Meditative Practices of Early Buddhism**. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988.

Warren, Henry Clarke, **Buddhism in Translations: Passages Selected from the Buddhist Sacred Books and Translated from the Original Pali into English**. New York: Atheneum, 1962 (Orig. 1896).

Welbon, Guy Richard, **The Buddhist Nirvâna and Its Western Interpreters**. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.

Woodward, F.L., trans. **Some Sayings of the Buddha, According to the Pali Canon**. London: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Week 9: Buddhism:

1. Field experience: Visit to a worship service at a local Pure Land Temple (probably a BCA Jodo Shinshu Temple, since they are most numerous).
2. Assigned readings:

Class: *See above.*

Tradition Study Group: *See above.*

3. Bibliography for preparation of lecture:
 - Fujimoto, Ryukyo, **Shin Buddhism's Essence: The *Tannisho***. Ed. by Tetsuo Unno. Los Angeles, CA: Prof. Ryukyo Fujimoto Memorial Publication Ad Hoc Committee, 1993.
 - Williams, Paul. **Mahâyâna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations**. London: Routledge, 1989.
 - Cowell, E.B.; Müller, F. Max; and Takakusu, J., trans. **Buddha Mahâyâna Texts**. New York: Dover Publications, 1969. Vol. 49 of F. Max Müller, ed., **The Sacred Books of the East**. (Orig. published by Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1894.)

Week 10: Buddhism:

1. Field experience: Visit a Zen Center and do zazen, walking meditation, and experience any of the associated rituals.
2. Assigned reading:
 - Class:** *See above.*
 - Tradition Study Group:**
 - Suzuki, D.T. **Manual of Zen Buddhism**. New York: Grove Press, 1960.
3. Bibliography for preparation of lecture:
 - Kapleau, Philip. **The Three Pillars of Zen**.
 - Masunaga, Reihô. **A Primer of Sôtô Zen. A Translation of Dôgen's *Shôbôgenzô Zuimonki***. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1971.
 - Miura, Isshû, and Sasaki, Ruth Fuller. **The Zen Koan**. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1965.
 - Suzuki, D.T. **Manual of Zen Buddhism**. New York: Grove Press, 1960. Suzuki, Shunryu. **Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind: Informal Talks on Zen Meditation and Practice**. New York: John Weatherhill, Inc., 1970.

Week 11: Christianity:

1. Field experience: Visit a Catholic mass on a special feast day, or an Orthodox feast day celebration.
2. Assigned reading:
 - Class:** Nielsen *et al*, "Part VI: Christianity," Chapters 20-23, pp. 442-533.
 - Tradition Study Groups:**
 - Carmody, Denise L. and John T. Carmody. **Christianity: An Introduction**. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1983.
 - Smart, Ninian. **In Search of Christianity: Discovering the Diverse Vitality of Christian Life**. New York: Harper and Row, 1979; published in England as **The Phenomenon of Christianity**. London: Collins, 1979.
 - Wiggins, James B. and Robert S. Ellwood. **Christianity: A Cultural Perspective**. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988.
3. Bibliography for preparation of lecture:
 - Bynum, Carolyn Walker. **Holy Feast, Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women**. Berkeley: University of California, 1987.

- Carmody, Denise L. and John T. Carmody. **Christianity: An Introduction**. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1983.
- Eliade, Mircea. **Myth and Reality**, tr. Willard R. Trask. New York: Harper and Row, 1963.
- _____. **The Sacred and the Profane**, tr. Willard R. Trask. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1959.
- LeClerq, Jean. **The Love of Learning and the Desire for God**, tr. Catharine Misrahi. New York: Fordham University Press, 1961, 1974.
- McGinn, Bernard, et al., eds. **Christian Spirituality**. 2 vols. New York: Crossroad, 1985.
- Pelikan, Jaroslav. **Jesus Through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Cultures**. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.
- Perrin, Norman and Dennis Duling. **The New Testament: An Introduction**, 2nd ed. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1982.
- Rader, Rosemary. **Breaking Boundaries: Male/Female Friendship in Early Christian Communities**. New York: Paulist Press, 1983.
- Smart, Ninian. **In Search of Christianity: Discovering the Diverse Vitality of Christian Life**. New York: Harper and Row, 1979; published in England as **The Phenomenon of Christianity**. London: Collins, 1979.
- Ward, Benedicta. **The Sayings of the Desert Fathers**. Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, and Oxford: A.R. Mowbray, 1975, rev. 1984.
- Ware, Timothy. **The Orthodox Church**. London: Penguin books, Ltd., 1963. Rev. 1983.
- Weitzmann, Kurt, ed. **Age of Spirituality: Late Antique and Early Christian Art, Third to Seventh Centuries**. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1979.
- Wiggins, James B. and Robert S. Ellwood. **Christianity: A Cultural Perspective**. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988.

Week 12: Christianity:

1. Field experience: Attend a Taizé service of sung prayer around the cross.
2. Assigned reading:
Class: *See above for Week 11.*
Tradition Study Group: *See above.*
3. Bibliography for preparation of lecture: *See above.*

Week 13: Christianity:

1. Field experience: Attend a Black Gospel church, or a Pentecostal church or a church having a revival, preferably with a lot of good gospel singing.
2. Assigned reading:
Class: *See above for Week 11.*
Tradition Study Group:
Cone, James. **The Spirituals and the Blues**. New York: The Seabury Press, 1972.
3. Bibliography for preparation of lecture:

Cone, James. **The Spirituals and the Blues**. New York: The Seabury Press, 1972.

Week 14: Conclusions, Reflections

1. Students will meet in their Tradition Study Groups to reflect upon their experiences in the field, in the Study group and in class. As a group they will evaluate the methodology of a Performance Studies approach. They will then share their comments with the rest of the class.

Week 15: Conclusions, Reflections, and Closing Ritual

1. Concluding comments about the study of religion. Review of basic processes, methodologies, observations about a performance approach. Comments about hospitality and being a guest during fieldwork.
2. Closing ritual and reflections. Cutting apart the class scroll and distribution of names. Sharing highlights and significant events from the class. Share suggestions for improvement of the class. Share food and refreshment. Final dismissal.