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Waterboarding and United States History

by William Loren Katz

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While some U.S. officials claim not be aware of it, and Attorney General Michael Mukasey, prefers to equivocate, waterboarding has long been a form of torture that causes excruciating pain and can lead to death. It forces water into prisoner's lungs, usually over and over again. The Spanish Inquisition in the late 1400s used this torture to uncover and punish heretics, and then in the early 1500s Spain's inquisitors carried it overseas to root out heresy in the New World. It reappeared during the witch hysteria. Women accused of sorcery were "dunked" and held under water to see if they were witches.

In World War II, Japan and Germany routinely used waterboarding on prisoners. In Vietnam, U.S. forces held bound Viet Cong captives and "sympathizers" upside down in barrels of water. Waterboarding also has been associated with the Khmer Rouge.

U.S. Occupation of the Philippines

An extensive record of its use by the United States land forces exists in the records of the invasion and occupation of the Philippines that began in 1898. As the U.S. encountered armed resistance by the liberation army of Filipino General Emilio Aguinaldo, and sank into a 12-year quagmire on the archipelago, U.S. officers routinely resorted to what they called "the water cure." Stuart Miller's study of the Philippine war, *Benevolent Assimilation*, reveals this sordid story through Congressional testimony, letters from soldiers, court martial hearings, words of critics and defenders, and newspaper accounts. The pro-imperialist media of the day justified the "water cure" as necessary to gain information; the anti-imperialist media denounced its use by the U.S or any other civilized nation.

U.S. forces landed in the Philippines in 1898, led by American officers such Generals John "Black Jack" Pershing, Henry Lawton, William Shafter, Elwell Otis, Wesley Merritt, and Adna Chafee, who were veterans of wars against America's indigenous population. At least one officer had taken part in the infamous 1891 massacre of 350 Lakota men, women and children at Wounded Knee. A U.S. media that had supported the Army's brutal Indian campaigns rhapsodized about this new opportunity for distant racial warfare. The influential *San Francisco Argonaut* spoke candidly: "We do not want the Filipinos. We want the Philippines. The islands are enormously rich, but unfortunately they are infested with Filipinos. There are many millions there, and it is to be feared their extinction will be slow." The paper's solution was to recommend several unusually cruel methods of torture it believed "would impress the Malay mind."

President William McKinley dispatched Admiral George Dewey to the Philippines with a pledge to bestow civilization and Christianity on its people, and the promise of eventual independence. Perhaps he was unaware that most Filipinos were already Catholics. Perhaps he did not know that General Aguinaldo and his 40,000 troops were poised to remove Spain from the islands. Dewey supplied Aguinaldo with weapons and encouraged him, but that soon changed.

"These People Are Not Civilized"

From the White House and the U.S. high command to field officers and lowly enlistees the message became "these people are not civilized" and the United States had embarked on a glorious overseas adventure against "savages." Officers and enlisted men - and the media - were encouraged to see the conflict through a "white superiority" lens, much as they viewed their victories over Native Americans. The Philippine occupation also unfolded at the high tide of American segregation, lynching, and a triumphant white supremacy ideology. Officers of occupying Army routinely characterized the foe as "gooks," "redskins," and "Niggers." U.S. officers ordered massacres of entire villages and conducted a host of other shameful atrocities as the Philippine quagmire dragged on for more than a decade. "A white man seems to forget that

he is human," wrote a white soldier from the Philippines.

Atrocities abounded. To produce "a demoralized and obedient population" in Batangas, General Franklin Bell ordered the destruction of "humans, crops, food stores, domestic animals, houses and boats." He became known as the "butcher" of Batangas. Colonel Jacob Smith, who had been wounded fighting at Wounded Knee, said his overseas campaigns were "worse than fighting Indians." He promised to turn Samar province into a "howling wilderness." Smith defined the enemy as anyone "ten years and up."

The Water Cure

The "water cure" was probably first instituted when U.S. forces encountered local resistance. General Frederick Funston in 1901 may have used it to capture the Filipino General Emilio Aguinaldo. A *New York World* article described the "water cure" as forcing "water with handfuls of salt thrown in to make it more efficacious," down the throats of patients "until their bodies become distended to the point of bursting." This may have been only one on the versions used.

The water cure became front-page news when William Howard Taft, appointed U.S. Governor of the Philippines, testified under oath before Congress. The "so called water cure," he admitted, was used "on some occasions to extract information." The *Arena,* an opposition paper, called his words "a most humiliating admission that should strike horror in the mind of every American." Around the same time as Taft's admission a soldier boasted in a letter made public that he had used the water cure on 160 people and only 26 had survived. The man was compelled by the War Department to retract his damaging confession. But then another officer stated the "water cure" was being widely used when he reported, "the problem of the 'water cure' is in knowing how to apply it." Such statements leave unclear how often the form of torture was used for interrogation and how often it became a way to exhibit racial animosity or display contempt.

During a triumphal U.S. speaking tour, General Frederick Funston, bearing a Congressional Medal of Honor and harboring political ambitions, bellicosely promoted total war. In Chicago he boasted of sentencing 35 suspects to death without trial and enthusiastically endorsed torture and civilian massacres. He even publicly suggested that anti-war protestors be dragged out of their homes and lynched. Funston's words met far more applause than criticism. In San Francisco, he suggested that the editor of a noted anti-imperialist paper "ought to be strung up to the nearest lamppost." At a banquet in the city he called Filipinos "unruly savages" and claimed he had personally killed fifty prisoners without trial. President Theodore Roosevelt reprimanded Funston and ordered him to cease his inflammatory rhetoric. But the President privately assured a friend the water cure was "an old Filipino method of mild torture" and claimed when Americans administered it "nobody was seriously damaged."

In an article, "The 'Water Cure' from a Missionary Point of View," Reverend Homer Stunz justified the technique. It was not torture, he said, since the victim could stop it any time by revealing what his interrogators wanted to know. Besides, he insisted, it was only applied to "spies."

Mark Twain

Mark Twain, a leading anti-imperialist voice, offered this view of the water cure. "Funston's example has bred many imitators, and many ghastly additions to our history: the torturing of Filipinos by the awful 'water- cure,' for instance, to make them confess -- what? Truth? Or lies? How can one know which it is they are telling? For under unendurable pain a man confesses anything that is required of him, true or false, and his evidence is worthless."

Most U.S. military trials for what are now known as war crimes resulted in convictions. Major Littleton Waller was acquitted because he followed the orders of Smith, and later retired with two stars. "Howling Jake" Smith was convicted, but he returned to a tumultuous citizens' welcome in San Francisco. When the convicted U.S. war criminals received only slaps-on-the-wrist, U.S. prestige abroad sunk to new lows.

A San Francisco park was named after General Frederick Funston. Roosevelt appointed General Franklin Bell his chief of staff and continued to wave the banner of aggressive imperialism. In 1903, he flagrantly seized a broad swath of Columbia's Isthmus of Panama so he could link the Pacific and Atlantic oceans under U.S. control. This boosted his popularity and splintered the anti-imperialist movement. Roosevelt also worked to undermine efforts to grant the Philippines independence, which finally took place after World War II.

DBQ: United States Annexation of the Philippines

This document-based essay is based on a lesson developed by the American Social History Project (ASHP) and available on its website at http://ashp.cuny.edu/video/s-act1.html (accessed October 20, 2007). It can be supplemented by a video documentary, *Savage Acts: Wars, Fairs and Empire*, available from ASHP. I learned about this lesson and the website from an article written by John DeRose (2007), a teacher at Whitefish Bay High School in Wisconsin, for *Rethinking Schools*. He used their lesson, a series of primary source documents, and the book *History Lessons: How Textbooks from Around the World Portray U.S. History* (Lindaman and Ward, 2004), to help his students evaluate coverage of what was happening in the Philippines in their regular textbook, McDougal Littell's *The Americans: Reconstruction to the 21st Century* (Danzer, 2002). A question that his students debated was whether it should be remembered as the "Philippine-American War" or the "War of Philippine Independence"? Each of the documents has been edited. – Alan Singer

Aim question: Was the Annexation of the Philippines by the United States an act of Imperialism?
Historical Background: In 1899, the United States was sharply divided over whether to add the Philippines to an expanding overseas American empire. In the 1900 presidential campaign, William Jennings Bryan, the Democratic Party made anti-imperialism a central issue of his campaign. President William McKinley, a Republican who was running for reelection on a record that included the acquisition of new colonies in the Caribbean and the Pacific, won the election by a large margin of popular and electoral votes. Walter LaFeber (1998), a prominent historian, argues that McKinley's reelection shows that the American public had reached a fundamental consensus in favor of American expansion abroad.
Task: Examine the maps and ten primary source documents from the debate over American annexation of the Philippines and answer the questions that follow each document. As a summary activity, write a newspaper editorial expressing your views on whether or not the United States should annex the Philippines. In the editorial, be sure to refer to the maps and at least five of the documents.

Political map of East Asia

Physical map of the Philippines

Questions

1. Why were the Philippines an attractive base of military and economic operations for the United States?
2. How did geography make the Philippines difficult to pacify and control?

A. British Newspaper Views Annexation

[The United States government] should break an injudicious pledge to Congress [rather] than allow Cuba and the Philippines to be independent or to return to the cruel Spanish dominion. Since it is equally inadmissible to grant independence or to transfer the Philippines to any other power, it is best that the United States should assume the heavy responsibility involved, which will serve to bring out the best qualities of the American Nation. Source: *London Spectator*, July 29, 1898 (reprinted in *The New York Times*, July 30, 1898)

Questions

1. What did President McKinley pledge to Congress when the country went to war with Spain?
2. Why does the *Spectator* believe the U.S. should break this pledge?

B. Permanent Dependencies - New York Times Editorial

If the Democratic leaders will take a firm position against making our new possessions a part of the territory of the United States they will have the support of a very great majority of the people of the country. We do not want the Filipinos as citizens of the United States. We have a very firm belief that if we ever try to make citizens of their people we shall raise up for ourselves untold trouble and embarrassment. Source: *The New York Times*, December 21, 1898.

Questions

1. What did *The New York Times* want the Democratic Party to do?
2. Why did the *Times* make this recommendation?

C. President William McKinley (Republican)

When I next realized that the Philippines had dropped into our laps I confess I did not know what to do with them. And one night late it came to me this way. 1) That we could not give them back to Spain -- that would be cowardly and dishonorable; 2) that we could not turn them over to France and Germany -- our commercial rivals in the Orient -- that would be bad business and discreditable; 3) that we not leave them to themselves -- they are unfit for self-government -- and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain's wars; and 4) that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow-men for whom Christ also died. Source: *The Christian Advocate*, January 22, 1903.

Questions

1. What did President McKinley decide to do?
2. Why did he believe this was necessary?

D. William Jennings Bryan, Democratic presidential candidate in 1896 and 1900

Imperialism is the policy of an empire. A republic cannot be an empire, for a republic rests upon the theory that the government derive their powers from the consent of the government and colonialism violates this theory. We do not want the Filipinos for citizens. They cannot, without danger to us, share in the government of our nation and moreover, we cannot afford to add another race question to the race questions which we already have. Neither can we hold the Filipinos as subjects even if we could benefit them by so doing. Our experiment in colonialism has been unfortunate. Instead of profit, it has brought loss. Instead of strength, it has brought weakness. Instead of glory, it has brought humiliation. Source: "Speeches of William Jennings Bryan."

Questions

1. Why did Bryan reject imperialism?
2. What does he believe will be the outcome of the conquest of the Philippines?

E. Senator Alfred Beveridge (Republican-Indiana)

We will not renounce our part in the mission of our race, trustee of God, of the civilization of the world. They [the Filipinos] are a barbarous race, modified by three centuries of contact with a decadent race [the Spanish]. It is barely possible that 1,000 men in all the archipelago are capable of self-government in the Anglo-Saxon sense. The

Declaration [of Independence] applies only to people capable of self-government. How dare any man prostitute this expression of the very elect of self-government peoples to a race of Malay children of barbarism, schooled in Spanish methods and ideas? Source: Congressional Record, 1900.

Questions

1. What was Senator Beveridge's position on the annexation of the Philippines?
2. Why did he believe the U.S. Declaration of Independence did not apply?

F. Samuel Gompers (President of the American Federation of Labor)

If the Philippines are annexed what is to prevent the Chinese, the Negritos and the Malays coming to our country? Can we hope to close the floodgates of immigration from the hordes of Chinese and the semi-savage races coming from what will then be part of our own country? If we are to retain the principles of law enunciated from the foundation of our Government, no legislation of such a character can be expected. If we attempt to force upon the natives of the Philippines our rule, and compel them to conform to our more or less rigid mold of government, how many lives shall we take? Of course, they will seem cheap, because they are poor laborers. They will be members of the majority in the Philippines, but they will be ruled and killed at the convenience of the very small minority there, backed up by our armed land and sea forces. Source: "Imperialism -- Its Dangers and Wrongs," 1898.

Questions

1. Why did Gompers oppose Philippine migration to the United States?
2. According to Gompers, which group from the Philippines would support annexation?

G. Petition from the "Colored Citizens of Boston"

The colored people of Boston in meeting assembled desire to enter their solemn protest against the present unjustified invasion by American soldiers in the Philippines Islands. While the rights of colored citizens in the South, sacredly guaranteed them by the amendment of the Constitution, are shamefully disregarded; and, while frequent lynchings of Negroes who are denied a civilized trial are a reproach to Republican government, the duty of the President and country is to reform these crying domestic wrongs and not attempt the civilization of alien peoples by powder and shot. Source: *The Boston Post*, July 18, 1899.

Questions

1. What position on the Philippines was taken by the "Colored Citizens of Boston"?
2. Why did the people who signed the petition take this position?

H. Emilio Aguinaldo, President of the Independent Philippine Republic

The constant outrages and taunts, which have caused misery of the people of Manila, and, finally, the useless conferences and the contempt shown the Philippine government prove the premeditated transgression of justice and liberty. I have tried to avoid, as far as it has been possible for me to do so, armed conflict, in my endeavors to assure our independence by pacific means and to avoid more costly sacrifices. But all my efforts have been useless against the measureless pride of the American government. Source: Report of Military Operations and Civil Affairs in the Philippine Islands, 1899

Questions

1. Why is Aguinaldo upset with the United States?
2. What is the implied threat in this statement?

I. Clemencia Lopez, Activist in the Philippine Struggle for Independence

In the name of the Philippine women, I pray the Massachusetts Woman Suffrage Association do what it can to remedy all this misery and misfortune in my unhappy country. You can do much to bring about the cessation of these horrors and cruelties which are today taking place in the Philippines, and to insist upon a more human course. You ought to understand that we are only contending for the liberty of our country, just as you once fought for the same liberty for yours. Source: *The Woman's Journal*, June 7, 1902.

Questions

1. Where was Lopez speaking?
2. Why did she expect a positive response from this group?

J. Philippine Newspaper Editorial

It seems that the magnanimous spirit which in the American Congress cried out so indignantly against the proceedings in Cuba is unconcerned about conditions in the Philippines. We say frankly and with deep sorrow that this measure which causes so much suffering is not justified by the good at which it claims to aim. There are created by it feelings of animosity and rancor that will not be forgotten for many years, -- perhaps never. Does America desire to establish herself in the hearts of the Filipinos? Does she not at least desire to refrain from creating resentment in their minds? Then let her rectify these deeds! "Whoever sows hatred will reap wrath and hatred twofold." We are not ignorant of the object of this rigorous campaign to suppress the outlaws, but the people, especially the lower classes, do not reason, they can only feel, and what affects them are ruin, hunger and nakedness. We can only trust that the authority put into the hands of the governor-general may lie dormant. Source: *El Renacimiento*. June 30, 1905

Questions

1. Why does the newspaper editorial compare Cuba and the Philippines?
2. What did the newspaper fear would be the outcome of the campaign against the "outlaws"?

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Teaching about the History of Religion

This issue of *Social Science Docket* includes a series of articles that examine the history of religion and the impact of religion on history. Alan Singer opens with a discussion of the way religion is generally taught in global history classes and he suggests alternative approaches. It is followed by responses to the article by teachers from New York and New Jersey. Michael Pezone presents an overview of the role religion has played in human history, Richard Yanowitz looks at the role Christianity has played in the development of European society, and Talal Asad, a professor of Anthropology at the City University of New York Graduate Center, explores the relationship between religion and secularism in the modern world. Scott Raulsome and Suzy Mellen discuss the implications of the work of Karen Armstrong, Christopher Hitchens, and Marvin Harris for understanding the history of religion and the origin of belief in a Supreme Being. Eric Sorenson and Jack Zevin examine ancient river valley civilizations where institutionalized religions first appeared. Krystle Rogala focuses on the development of Hindu beliefs and practices. A series of short articles by Katharine Murawski (Crusades), April McCarthy (French Catharists), and Michael Mullervy and Susan Guarrieri (Protestant Reformation), present main ideas for teaching about religious conflicts in Europe from the 11th to the 17th centuries. There is also lesson material on the trial of Galileo for heresy and the conflict between English Protestants and Irish Catholics. Sandra Moss looks at the role played by religion during the American Revolution and David Lonborg examines the origins of religious freedom in colonial New York. There is a feature on Israeli-Palestinian controversy with teacher comments, and pieces by Jonie Kipling and Judith Y. Singer about approaches for teaching about religion and religious holidays in elementary school classrooms. Michael Pezone, a social studies teacher at Law, Government, and Community Service Magnet High School in Cambria Heights, Queens helped to edit this special section.

Are We Teaching Religious Myth or the History of Religion?

by Alan Singer

My children describe me as an "evangelical atheist" because I actively recruit converts to my disbelief. Despite this, I am a strong advocate of greater attention to the role of religion in history. What I want to see included in the global history curriculum, however, is significantly different from what is currently there, and I suspect it is very different from what religious advocates would like to have taught.

I am a strong believer in what Thomas Jefferson described as a "wall of separation between Church and State," a wall that was later incorporated into law by Supreme Court rulings on the scope of the first and fourteenth amendments to the United States Constitution. Many social studies teachers have interpreted the "wall of separation" to mean they should not talk about religion in the classroom. But their decision minimizes, or even leaves out, one of the major forces shaping human history.

Other teachers -- and this is a serious problem in the sciences as well as social studies -- shy away from the topic of religion because they fear repercussions from supervisors, parents, and even students, who may be unhappy when the historical record does not buttress religious dogma. For example, there is no independent historical verification of the existence of Jesus of Nazareth to support accounts later incorporated into the New Testament by Christian believers. There are documents and contemporary historical accounts, but no mention of Jesus. None. The officially accepted Christian gospels offer an edited version of the story codified by church leaders 300 years after Jesus' supposed virgin birth, crucifixion, and resurrection, when they discarded other, conflicting, accounts. Paul, the great proselytizer of church expansion, never met Jesus. There is also no archeological evidence, despite intensive searching by Israel's academics and military personnel, to support the Old Testament Exodus story of a forty-year sojourn in the Sinai Desert by the "children of Israel."

NCSS Thematic Strands

National Council for the Social Studies Thematic Strands include discussion of religion in an anthropological examination of culture and in efforts to promote respect for cultural diversity, but not in their historical strands. For the NCSS, the "study of culture prepares students to ask and answer questions such as: What are the common characteristics of different cultures? How do belief systems, such as religion or political ideals of the culture, influence the other parts of the culture? How does the culture change to accommodate different ideas and beliefs?" Unfortunately, it also anticipates an answer, "we all pray to the same god but in different ways," that is neither interrogated or substantiated.

Disagreements with the Curriculum

I have a number of disagreements with this way of presenting religion in a social studies classroom. It is ahistorical. It assumes that religion has meant the same thing and religions have functioned the same way throughout time. It is not analytical. Students are directed to look for cultural similarities, common characteristics, but not substantive differences in either time or place. It is uncritical. It assumes the universality of religion rather than examining why it develops. It is misleading. Because the focus is on culture, including theology (ideas) and ritual (practices), students never question the actual role organized religion as an institution has played within different societies during the past and present. And finally, it is proselytizing. The result of this approach is that the existence of God is assumed. In effect, we teach religion when we do not question it.

There are similar problems with the National History Standards for Global History (NHS) developed by National Center for History in the Schools (http://nchs.ucla.edu/standards/worldera6.html) and in most high school global history textbooks. In both the NHS standards and textbooks, religious beliefs and practices are a major focus in discussion of traditional societies and the ancient world (1000 BCE-300 CE). According to the NHS, "[t]he classical civilizations of this age established institutions and defined values and styles that endured for many centuries and that continue to influence our lives today. Six of the world's major faiths and ethical systems emerged in this period and set forth their fundamental teachings." Other faiths, such as Islam, are introduced to students in a similar way at the chronologically appropriate moment. Yet given the lack of later coverage of religion in the NHS standards, it is as if once the world's "major faiths" were founded, they ceased to be of importance.

Textbook Coverage

MacDougal Littell's *World History, Patterns of Interaction* (2005) is one of the major textbooks used in global history classes (grade nine in New Jersey and nine and ten in New York). Its index clearly shows the ongoing importance of religion in global history. There are 50 citations listed under religion, religious beliefs, religious persecution and tolerance as well as separate categories for Christianity (34 citations), Islam (31), Muslims (20) and Muslim world (19), Buddhism (17), Confucianism (14), Hebrews, Jews and Judaism (a combined total of 42 citations), and Hinduism (14). In addition to these, the papacy and individual popes are discussed 26 times, the Crusades have 12 citations, burial rites 7, monotheism 5, the Roman Catholic Church in the Middle Ages 4, and the Taliban and masks have 3 each. Contemporary ethnic and religious conflict in Central Asia, Jainism, Krishna, Animism, and Zen Buddhism all merit individual listings.

Yet despite the breath of coverage, depth is concentrated in few areas, and while religion is continually mentioned, its role in history, or in individual societies, is rarely analyzed. The major discussion of religion is in a sixteen-page supplement (pp. 282-297) called "World Religions and Ethical Systems" that focuses on similarities and differences in six major religious traditions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Confucianism). It includes excellent maps and charts, more than two-dozen pictures of gods, rituals, and celebrations, but almost no text. A quote from historian Karen Armstrong's *History of God* in cluded in the supplement betrays the bias of the text. Armstrong asserts, "Human beings are spiritual animals. Indeed, there is a case for arguing that Homo Sapiens is also Homo religious. Men and women started to worship gods as soon as they became recognizably human . . ." (297). Students are then asked, "With which of the following opinions would Armstrong probably agree?" The only possible choice, selection A, is that "People are naturally religious."

Similar quotes appear in other sections of the MacDougal Littell text. In a discussion of the

"Neanderthals' Way of Life" (9), Richard Leakey says that "A concern for the fate of the human soul is universal in human societies today, and it was evidently a theme of Neanderthal society too."

But the bigger problem is the lack of analysis. We are told that in Ur, "Rulers, as well as priests and priestesses, wielded great power" (22), but not how or why. In Sumer, the earliest government was supposedly controlled by temple priests because of the superstitions of the farmers who believed the priests were go-betweens with the gods. How this might have come to be is never discussed. States in many parts of the world and at different times claimed the "mandate of heaven," yet comparisons are not made or used to discover explanations. Flood stories from Mesopotamia, and Hebraic and Hindu beliefs are juxtaposed, but the questions and activities ignore the role of river flooding in early agricultural societies. Mostly we read engaging stories about exotic rituals such as mummification in Egypt (38) and colorful individuals like Siddhartha Gautama (68).

The role of Confucian ideas in cementing state authority in China and of the Roman Catholic Church in the Roman Empire provide ideal opportunities for exploring the material basis for religious belief and the institutional role of religion in empire, but the textbook largely ignores them. Confucianism is cited as the "foundation for Chinese government and social order," but the assertion goes unexplained (105). A chapter on "The Rise of Christianity" (168-172) argues that this religion grew in the Roman world because it emphasized a "more personal relationship between God and people" that Romans found attractive and because its followers were strengthened by their "conviction" that its founder had "triumphed over death." The existence of Jesus of Nazareth and his life story are cited as historical fact recognized by historians, but no references are provided. Curiously, chapters on "The Fall of the Roman Empire" and "Rome and the Roots of Western Civilization" have almost no mention of Christianity. Meanwhile, the savagery and brutishness of the Christian Crusades are described as part of an "Age of Faith" (379).

The "Rise of Islam" merits its own chapter (263-268), as do "Islam Expands" (269-272), and "Muslim Culture" (273-281), with detailed discussions of the life of Muhammad, the "beliefs and practices" of the faithful, and cultural contributions. But the role of Islam, in promoting literacy and integrating an empire based on trade, shared language (Arabic), and a relatively simple, demystified, belief system, is missing.

The one instance where the integral relationship between state and religion is directly presented is in discussion of New World Aztec and Inca societies (462). But these are brief discussions about societies that develop in isolation from the main sweep of human history. Chapters on the European Reformation (488-503) focus on corruption, beliefs, and reformers, and mention the printing press, but make no connection to the Columbian Exchange, the growth of commercial capitalism, and state formation in Europe. It is also unclear why during the French Revolution, the National Assembly would target church property, an action that supposedly "alarmed millions of French peasants, who were devout Catholics" (656). In the era following the French Revolution, religion receives much less coverage in the text, although it played a major role as a now junior partner in European imperialist penetration of Africa and Asia. The emergence of religion as a political force, particularly in the Islamic World during the second half of the 20th century, is noted but goes unexplained. We learn that "ethnic and religious conflicts have often led to terrible violence" (1083), but not why.

My conclusion is that the history of religion is so problematic, so distressing, that those with the power to decide what gets included in the curriculum would rather distort the historical record than come to terms with the roles religion did play in the past and continues to play in the present.

An Unconventional Historian

In preparation to writing this article, I examined a number of historical works that purported to examine the role of religion in history. I found that most of these books shared problems similar to the social studies textbooks. They focused on theology, ritual, and institutional history, rather than an analysis of the role religion and religious institutions have played in history. I finally found the kind of book I was seeking when I came across an obituary for Norman Cohn, who died July 31, 2007 at the age of 92 (www.nytimes.com/2007/08/27/world/europe/27cohn.html, accessed September 7, 2007).

Norman Cohn was an unconventional historian who was originally trained as a linguist. The Times Literary Supplement included his book, *The Pursuit of*

the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages (1957) in a 1995 list of the 100 nonfiction works with the greatest influence on how postwar Europeans perceive themselves. The edition I found in the library was revised and republished by Oxford University Press in 1970

The Pursuit of the Millennium examines Christian society in Europe from the Middle Ages through the Protestant Reformation including the Crusades. Cohn's primary thesis was that during periods of "mass disorientation and anxiety," the poor and displaced expressed dissatisfaction with their conditions and even formulated revolutionary goals through millenarian and messianic beliefs and religious-inspired mass movements that challenged temporal authority. Starting with the Crusades, the desire of the poor and displaced to improve their lives led them to embrace prophecies about a final struggle between Christ and Antichrist and the end of the world as they knew it. Cohn argued that these beliefs, which often included anti-Semitism (Jews, as non-Christians living in the midst of Christian Europe, were identified as supporters of the Antichrist), formed a strong undercurrent in Christian belief, but required specific historical factors to emerge as a historical force. The material conditions that contributed to the transformation of religious belief into political action included demographic pressures caused by increasing population density, rapid economic growth, social changes that undermined traditional support systems, and crises such as prolonged famine and epidemic disease (Cohn, 1970: 53-54). Significantly, once these forces were unleashed, they took on a life of their own and assumed power that traditional religious authorities could not control.

One of the things that made Cohn an unconventional historian is that he did not hesitate to draw connections between his historical scholarship and his analysis of the contemporary world. He believed that part of the appeal of twentieth century autocratic leaders like Hitler and Stalin was their "messianic" ability to connect their vision with the aspirations of the disoriented and anxious poor of the modern epoch. According to Cohn, "The old religious idiom has been replaced by a secular one, and this tends to obscure what otherwise would be obvious . . . [S]tripped of their original supernatural sanction, revolutionary millenarianism and mystical anarchism are with us still" (286).

In the 1970 edition of his book, Norman Cohn referred to a series of essays by Eric Hobsbawn, published in 1959, that examined millenarianism in southern Europe, particularly Italy, after the French Revolution. In *Primitive Rebels* (NY: Norton), Hobsbawn supported Cohn's position that historians need to look at the material, as opposed to the spiritual, causes of millenarian uprisings. Looking at the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Hobsbawn described millenarian movements emerging in traditional societies that were ripped apart by either internal or external economic and political forces beyond their control.

Hobsbawn argued a weakness in Cohn's analysis was his failure to distinguish between reformist and revolutionary movements, and between movements with defuse aims as opposed to those with clear political goals. Hobsbawn believed that lumping together such a vast array of social movements makes it difficult for historians to explain the power of modern leftwing and socialist movements that challenged the hegemonic dominance of industrial capitalism in the twentieth century (57).

As far as I know, neither Cohn nor Hobsbawn analyzed the impact of "mass disorientation and anxiety" on the poor and displaced in the Islamic world today, although in *The Age of Extremes* (NY: Pantheon, 1994), Hobsbawn described Islamic "fundamentalism," as "the most flourishing brand of theocracy, advanced not by the will of Allah, but by the mass mobilization of the common people against unpopular governments" (582). I think the theses advanced by Cohn and Hobsbawn effectively explain the power of Islamic fundamentalism as a political movement and the difficulty local governments and Western powers have had bringing it under control; especially after having previously encouraged it as a weapon against leftwing protest movements. The studies by Cohn and Hobsbawn suggest that instead of dealing with it as a religious phenomenon, the world needs to address the causes of the dissatisfaction, causes that are transforming ideas into violent action.

Social Studies Approach

The Winter-Spring (v.6 n.1), Summer-Fall (v.6 n. 2) and Winter-Spring (v.7 n.1) issues of *Social Science Docket* presented a "social studies approach to global

history" designed to engage students as historians, exploring events from the past in an effort to answer their questions about the world we live in today. Rather than giving students information, this approach stresses involving them in examining "essential questions." In this issue, *Social Science Docket* continues that effort and offers a social studies approach to the study of the role of religion in history and today.

My own area of expertise as an historian is United States history with some "teaching focus" on the history of Europe. There are big gaps in my knowledge of the rest of global history, and that is reflected in the questions about the history of religion that I present here. They are organized into two groups. The first is a short list of "essential questions" about religion in general. They are questions people, including our students, think about as they go about their lives. The second list is more historical. These questions are intended as a starting point for writing religion into history, rather than as a comprehensive list.

Social studies teachers are faced with a difficult challenge. Everything about religion has not been bad. Sometimes religious leaders have expressed the noblest aspects of humanity. But far too often in history, religious institutions have participated in morally unacceptable actions. Should we teach fairy tale versions of the past in response to religious pressure and our own fears? Or do we engage students in conversations and questioning and let the chips fall where they may?

Essential Questions about Religion

Why do many people believe in God? Is widespread belief in a Supreme Being evidence that one exists? Can these questions be answered definitively?

Why are so many people followers of organized religious movements, most of which are thousands of years old? Do these movements, their texts, and their leaders "speak" for God? What roles do they play in people's lives that make membership attractive?

Do differences in theology (religious ideas) and ritual (religious practices) by themselves shape history? Are religious differences superficial like differences in style? Are all religions basically the same?

How are religious conflicts similar to or different from racial, ethnic, and cultural conflicts?

Why are contemporary political conflicts, as well as conflicts in the past, often presented in religious terms? Why are "religious" conflicts in today's world frequently violent (tension between India and Pakistan and within both countries, conflict in Northern Ireland, between Israel and Palestine, throughout the Sahel region of Africa and in Indonesia, and the civil war in Iraq)?

Questions about Religion in History

Human cultures evolved in a world without scientific knowledge, a world where the inexplicable continually happened to individuals and groups. What are the origins of religious belief in this world? Why does human belief in religion appear to be nearly universal? What is the relationship between religion, belief in a spirit world and supreme beings, and magic and myth?

How does organized religion as an institution develop as part of the River Valley Civilization package? As described by Jared Diamond in *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, the "package" includes agriculture and animal husbandry, urban concentrations, state or government formation with law, bureaucracy, and military, specialization of work, technological improvement, literacy and numeracy, and religious hierarchy as either part of the state bureaucracy or as an independent institution, and as an agency for enforcing common belief, promoting cohesion, and organizing mass cooperation in projects.

How similar and how different are the histories of different religions in different parts of the world as opposed to similarities and differences in theology and ritual?

How did the Catholic Church become the official state religion of the western Roman Empire? Was it accidental, preordained, or the result of complex historical forces? What was the Church's role in the Empire before and after its selection as a partner in imperial rule?

Would the history of Western Civilization have been significantly different if worship of Yahweh, Mithra, Ra, or Allah had triumphed over Jesus and the Christian Trinity as the dominant belief? Would Europe have been different, or even better off, if the Islamic world

had defeated Christian forces at Tours in 732?
Why do theological disputes seem to constantly divide religious authorities, both within Churches and between Churches? Why are there constant charges of heresy in the history of the Christian and Islamic worlds? What are the relationships between theological disputes and contemporaneous political and economic conflicts?

What role does the Roman Catholic Church play in feudal society? Does it "save" European civilization from barbarians, or is it better understood as a partner in oppression and exploitation? Was anything noble about the feudal nobility and a Church hierarchy that was related to secular authority through filial, political, and economic bonds?

How do we explain the survival of the Jews and other minority religions in hostile climates dominated by powerful religious institutions that brand them as illegitimate? Is it because of the power of their beliefs or because they fulfill special economic and political roles within these societies?

What is the role of the Papacy in the Roman Catholic world and why does it change? Does the emergence of dual papacies in the 14th century, one based in Avignon and the other in Rome, reflect theological issues or commercial and political competition? Why does the Papacy appear to become more authoritarian and "infallible" on religious matters as its secular power is eclipsed?

Was the Roman Catholic Church corrupted by an absence of piety and concerns for the physical world in the years preceding the Protestant Reformation, or was it fundamentally, structurally, "corrupt" because of its interconnections with, and support of, temporal authority? Are the Crusades, the burning of dissenters like Joan of Arc, the inquisition, the rape of Languedoc, the attack on Cathars during the efforts to root out the Albigensian heresy, and the repeated victimization and later abandonment of European Jews accidents and missteps, or do they reflect the fundamental nature of the Roman Catholic Church? Are "saints" the exception that has been used to justify an institution complicit with gross inequalities and barbaric behavior?

Why did organized religions tolerate and support injustices such as enslavement (Protestantism, Catholicism and Islamic beliefs) and class and caste inequality (Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism)?

New Testament on Slavery

Luke 12:47. "And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes."
John 15:20. "A slave is not greater than his master."
Colossians 3:22. "Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord."
Source: *New American Standard Bible* (1995)

Has Reformed (Protestant) Christianity acted substantially different from the Roman Catholic Church in its relationship with the secular world? In the 17th century, Puritan forces commanded by Oliver Cromwell exterminated Roman Catholic communities in Ireland. The Anglican and Dutch Reformed Churches were full partners with national leaders in promoting the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and European imperialism in Africa and Asia. Lutherans officials supported Nazi policies in Germany. In the modern world, Protestant and Roman Catholic clerics have been allied with fascist dictatorships in South America and apartheid regimes in Southern Africa.

Why are some religious movements identified with struggles for social change and more equitable societies (African American Baptists and the Civil Rights Movement, Liberation Theology among Roman Catholic clerics in South America, Anglican support for anti-apartheid campaigns in South Africa, periodic millenniumist peasant revolts)?

Do theology and ritual play any significant role in history or are they simply contingent (accidental) developments in response to specific historical, geographic, and cultural circumstances?

Teachers Respond: Teaching About the History of Religion

Judy van Tijn, Moorestown (NJ) Friends School: Because I am at a school with a religious affiliation teachers can and must talk about religion. The social studies teachers in our school have agreed with the religion department to include religion in our history classes. My area of specialization is European Renaissance and Reformation and Ottoman history. I try to help students understand not only the official doctrine, but the lived reality of religion, the role that it plays in people's lives, and the ways it informs a whole series of discussions within a society. The First Amendment to the Constitution institutionalizes both freedom of religion and freedom from religion in the United States. Although the U.S. is purportedly a secular society, religious beliefs continue to shape character and morality and the way we view the character and morality of other groups of people. In modern history, I focus on connections between religious fundamentalism and politics. I would argue this connection has had a poisonous impact on recent world developments. One of the ways we address this is by talking about the comparative aspects of religion and show that they all, with the possible exception of Buddhism, have had, and continue to have, fundamentalist elements. Reactions by students to the Islamic world are often shaped by the fact that they do not view Christianity and Judaism as having fundamentalist components. One of the things we explore is how religious fundamentalism has been identified with anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, and the creation of new national identities in some third world countries. It mobilizes resistance and helps people to define their identities separate from the identity of the imperial power. One mistake that the U.S. has made in the Middle East is the failure to support alternative paths. For example, electoral democracy and unregulated economic markets that work in the United States may not be the answer in Iraq. In order for their society to develop strong institutions and to survive as a nation, they may need to decentralize authority into semi-autonomous or even independent regions, or perhaps have a much stronger administrative center that has undemocratic features. My students, echoing the current administration, tend to think that the American way is the only way and must be adopted by all people.

John Blair, Department Chair, East Brunswick (NJ) High School: Religion is too important a subject in history to be avoided just because it can be a controversial topic. Our schools have increasingly diverse populations with large numbers of people from different racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds. This increases the importance of addressing religion in the curriculum. It also influences how teachers present information. In a World History class, I focus on the historical context in which the religion emerged and the events that shaped it over time. I try not to go too deeply into the beliefs, practices, or experiences of any one religious group. When studying about the Holocaust, students should realize that Gypsies and Poles were also victimized, not just Jews. Religion is a topic that interests students and teachers should not avoid questions that will engage them in discussion. However, many Americans are prejudiced against Islam because of recent events and students can take offensive positions. To counter this I provide information about Islamic beliefs and history. The best way to deal with tensions and prejudices is to stick to historical context.

John Boland, Point Pleasant Beach (NJ) High School: The only subject area teachers who should be dealing with religion are social studies teacher. You need to assure students that you are not proselytizing or telling them what to believe. Your job is to present matters of history about how religions started, how they developed, and the roles they continue to play in different societies. Part of our challenge is that students have no conception of the size of the earth's population and its diversity. There are six and a half billion plus people in the world and they do not all believe the same things. As the world becomes more integrated, we have to teach about religion and its role in history more than ever. I often deal with student ethnocentrism. They have to realize there are other ways of doing things. The conflicts in the Middle East are a perfect example of why an understanding of religion is so crucial. A lot of what we do involves judgment. There is a fine line that we must tread between respecting student beliefs and challenging them to think critically. Our approach has to vary depending on the grade level of our students and their maturity. In a high school

class, where students are preparing for college, teachers have to show both the positive and negative role played by different religious groups in the past and present. I feel it is important that teachers do their own research so they are knowledgeable, thoughtful, and in a good position to defend the decisions that make about what to teach. Currently we are studying Islam in my global history class. One of the things I try to help students understand is that the conflicts between the Islamic and Christian worlds and within Islam itself have deep historic roots. If students understand the past they will have a better ability to understand why people around the world are at times unhappy with U.S. policies.

Shirley Dorsey, School of the Arts, Rochester, NY: Rather than referring to religions, I prefer to use the term belief system or philosophy, which are more inclusive and more accurately describe many of the beliefs held by people around the world. I start with animism and provide students with background information on each on the different belief systems. We examine the major beliefs, symbols, people involved, and any additional information available for each approach. We usually spend somewhere between two days to a week on each belief system. While I stress similarities between the belief systems, we also try to analyze why different beliefs and practices emerged in different societies. People have a tendency to focus on the differences and this has caused many of the problems in history. When you study about a religion there are the ideals that it stands for and also the way it has been practiced in the real world. I cannot think of an organized religion or belief system that has not had some negative impact during the course of history. As an African American and a Christian, I found the role of Christianity in support of slavery and the trans-Atlantic slave trade to be very troubling. In the Judeo-Christian Bible, you can find passages that seem to justify, depending on your interpretation, almost any kind of behavior. It is important that students who identify with the Bible understand what has been done in its name. I have some very staunch, traditional, Christian students, who spend a number of days a week in church or Bible study and do not want to hear anything negative about Christianity. I keep a few Bibles in the classroom and pull them out to show students passages that were used by the slaveholders to defend human enslavement such as Luke 12:47, John 15:20, and Colossians 3:22. Once students realize that every belief system, including their own, has had both negative and positive followers, it becomes easier for them to understand the role some Islamic fundamentalists are playing in the world today. Hopefully, from a study of different belief systems students will begin to question what they are told and not to follow something just because someone they respected said it was true. Once after, an examination of different belief systems, one of my students told me he was not sure what he believed anymore. He found believable things in Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. I see this as a hopeful sign. Personally, I believe people with more rational views need to speak out much more. Nobody can justify everything that has been done in the name of religion.

Geoff Brunger, Kenmore East HS, Tonawanda NY: Religion has played an uneven role in world history. I think you have to point out pluses and minuses. It is a controversial topic and that is a nice place to frame a lesson. Controversy and religion both peek student interest. Teachers should present as many sides of an issue as they can and provide students with the materials they need to draw their own conclusions. Global 9 and global 10 require slightly different approaches because in global 9 students are first learning about religions other than their own. Study of the Crusades, however, does introduce them to religious conflict, Not only did Roman Catholic crusaders attack Moslems, but they also attacked Jews, Eastern Orthodox believers, and Christians who were accused of heresy. By the time students are in global 10 they should have enough background to explore religious conflicts in some depth. In the global 10 curriculum religious conflicts emerge when we study Ireland, the Middle East, and India-Pakistan. One thing I like to focus on when exploring religious conflicts is the underlying motivations of different groups. We may discover that the fought in the name of religion, but they were really interested in land, wealth, or power. Many students are surprised when they learn about the role religion has played in history and that is understandable. It is why it is so important to teach about religion in the global history curriculum.

Austin Weakfall, Spencerport (NY) High School: In my classroom, the biggest problem I have when teaching about religion are student preconceptions

about Islam. Students seem to understand that Judaism is a foundation of Christianity, so they accept it, but with Islam there are myths and stereotypes you have to dispel. Many students start from the assumption that all Muslims are terrorists, that they hate Americans, and hate Christianity. I try to flip things around and have them look at the history of Christianity from a Muslim perspective. I try to get them to get into other people's shoes as much as I can. When we get more into European history, we talk about how the different sects of Catholics and later of Protestants started to kill other people who were also Christians, but who were not doing things the way they believed they needed to be done. In my classes I try to make two key points. First, the 1995 bombing in Oklahoma City by a man who identified as a Christian shows that there are extremists in all religions. Second, Jews, Christians, and Muslims all believe in the same God. They just have different ideas about the ways to connect with God.

Rick Mueller, Spencerport (NY) High School: Studying about religion as part of the global history curriculum helps students think about both the forces that shape history on a grand scale and the choices people make on a smaller scale about their own lives. I want students to understand that who we are is shaped by lots of different things and one of the main forces that shape us is religious belief. Religion defines our values and gives people purpose in life. Traditionally, it helps them decide between right and wrong. It is at the core of our cultures. Part of the reason students do the things they do is because of what they have learned from religions that developed thousands of years ago.
In class, I focus on the core beliefs of religions instead of misdirection and side issues. I want students to realize that that not every Christian wanted to kill Jews, not every Jew reacts in the same way, and not every Muslim is a terrorist. Every religion has fanatics who take beliefs to the extremes. There are discussions and disagreements within religions. They continually split and new sects emerge. Sometimes extremists or fanatics seem to dominate. At other times people are more willing to follow moderate leaders who are more open to conciliation with other groups.

Paula Gitlin, Minerva Deland School, Fairport, NY: In general, I see religion as a unifying force throughout most of human history. I introduce belief systems as a reoccurring theme in the beginning of the school year. I then spend approximately eight lessons explaining the primary beliefs of the seven major world religions. Later I revisit each of the major world religions when we study the region where they originated. We explore how these religions helped unify people, spread beyond their initial boundaries, and became both constructive and destructive historical forces. One of the things that I stress is the way Islam united people by promoting a common language, Arabic, which is the language of the Koran, and literacy, so people could study the Koran on their own. Another important point is that the role of a religion can change from historical period to historical period. Christianity, which was a force for unity in Rome after Constantine's conversion, became a weapon that divided people during the Crusades. I also think it is a mistake to put too much emphasis on the idea of the Judeo-Christian tradition. From their inception, they have been separate, distinct, and different. In class, I use examples from James Carroll's, Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews (Houghton Mifflin, 2001). Carroll argues that the Roman Catholic's two-thousand-year battle against Judaism is the central tragedy of Western civilization and reaches deep into our culture. When we discuss belief systems in class, I focus on the ways they address ultimate essential questions. Why do the people suffer? Why is there devastation? Why do natural disaster happen? In each area of the world, people had to come to terms with these unanswerable questions. The way they did, shaped the development of the different major religions, which is why different belief systems develop in different parts of the world. I am a big advocate of looking at "why" questions. I am a cancer survivor. People get cancer, and that stuns them because they do not understand why. Our belief systems help us address the unanswerable questions.

Mark Herman, Attica (NY) High School: In my district, religious beliefs are studied in ninth grade. In my tenth grade global history classes, religion becomes a topic for discussion when we look at imperialism and the way the west argued that Christianity was a force for uplifting native cultures. We also examine religious conflict between different countries such as between English Protestants and Irish Catholics, and in the Middle East. Religious differences are root causes of some of the most high profile conflicts in modern history. My school has a very homogenous population.

Our students are all Christians and we have no ethnic or racial minorities in the high school. That places pressure on me to expose them to diverse views and provide some kind of balance, although I try to be very neutral in the way I present issues. When we study the Iranian Revolution or U.S. conflicts with Islamic groups, I provide students with material that shows the way other people see the conflicts. When I teach about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict I try to find ways to help students see things from a Palestinian perspective. We might discuss how it feels to come from a broken home and use that to understand how it feels to have the things you value taken away from you.

Lauren Borruso, Howitt Middle School, Farmingdale, NY: My thirteen-year-old students do not know how their religious practices differ from other religions. They do not question why their parents send them for religious instruction. They study how to practice their faith rather than the role their faith played in history, the impact of that faith, or of other faiths. There is a huge lack of awareness of the rest of the people of the world. Roman Catholic students do not even realize how their beliefs differ from the beliefs of other Christian faiths.

Meryl Landau, JHS 194, Queens, NY: In a world where children have a blurred vision of religion, we need to create a Global classroom that questions the following: 1) Why did religious movements form? 2) What factors allowed for the flourishing of certain religions and the withering of others? 3) What role does religion play in world politics today? 4) Why did violent wars develop from religious controversies in the past and why do they continue in the present?

Linda Trimigliozzi, Hebrew Academy of Long Beach (NY): The most important lesson to learn from religion is to have teachers teach students humility, tolerance, and acceptance behind every historical context, so that perhaps one day, students could dream of a glorious world of peace and harmony without the brutality and ugliness of war. Since the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, over two thousand years ago, Christianity has become one of the most prominent, influential, and widely spread religion in the world. Through the countless blood of martyrs, who have sacrificed their lives in the name of Christianity, the seed of faith (the gospel) soon began to spread on every continent. The legacy of Christianity has a fascinating, complex, and controversial history that endured, evolved, and managed to survive even in the face of adversity and death. Despite all its flaws, the church managed to triumph and flourish in modern society by returning to its earliest roots, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

Thomas O'Connor: We need to use history to challenge unquestioned beliefs and myths. For example, most biblical scholars and preachers admit that Christ was not born on December 25th. Originally it was a pagan celebration called Saturnalia that commemorated the birth of the sun god. The celebration of the birth of Jesus on December gave Christians an alternative to the popular pagan festival. The doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus, so central to the traditional Christmas story, was not part of the teaching of the first Christians, whom it should be remembered, also remained within the Jewish faith. The apostle Paul makes no reference to the virginal conception by the mother of Jesus when speaking of Jesus' origins and divinity. Paul states that Jesus was "born of a woman" (Galatians 4:4) and was "descended from David, according to the flesh" (Romans 1:3), thereby implying a normal birth.

Kristin Joseph, Merrick Avenue (NY) Middle School: Religion is an unavoidable topic of conversation in the classroom. As a 7th grade teacher, most of my curriculum from October through January revolves around religion including the reasons for European exploration and settlement in the New World and the Pilgrim and Puritan colonies in Massachusetts. While I'd like to say that I dive head first into the topics, as a relatively new teacher, I can't. Beginning teachers feel a lot of pressure to do things just the right way and this inhibits our freedom. In our recent study of the Pilgrims and Puritans we were faced with several documents that referenced God in some detail. On three different occasions, students approached me wondering if it was okay that I had written about God in our handouts. When we discussed the reasons many Europeans were motivated to leave Europe during the Age of Exploration, we inevitably discussed the role of the Catholic Church in that period. Some students wondered why the church would do "such mean things," while others asked why anyone would disobey the church and leave Europe. Sometimes I feel

unprepared to answer those questions for fear of indoctrinating students with my opinions about religion, or at least appearing to do so. Hopefully with more experience I will become more confident in addressing religion in the classroom.

William Hendrick, JHS 157, Queens, NY: I am a seventh grade social studies teacher. The neighborhood around the school has a large Jewish population, most of whom are Bukharian, Iranian, and Russian. Some of the students are very religious. During a lesson on the Asian migration to the Americas across the Bering land bridge, a student stated that "my rabbi told me that God had created just two humans at first. They had children, and those children spread out to cover the whole world." I explained that in social studies, we are analyzing scientific, and historical evidence. What we study is based on history, theory, and research, not just faith. I explained that I do not discourage religious beliefs and I would like to learn about their beliefs, however, I also expect them to consider what I was presenting in class. When we have discussions, I often get a wide variety of answers based on both religious and scientific approaches. I believe this makes the learning experience all the richer for students because there are different sets of ideas, explanations, and morals. Religion should not be ignored, left out, or over looked in the study of history or in efforts to explain the past. It is an important aspect of human culture, however, we must look at it through the lens of a historian and be willing to question religious truths. Otherwise we do our students an intellectual disserve.

Kimberly Cahill, EBC High School for Public Service-Bushwick, Brooklyn, NY: The world was built on religion, even thought we do not necessarily like to think about it. Teaching about the traditions and practices of other religions helps students better understand the cultures that develop around them. As a "thinking and exploring" project in ninth grade global history, I assign students a "religion" project. Students take the information that they learned about the different religions in the world and create their own religion. In the last two years, I have only encountered two students who were not willing to complete the project because of their beliefs.

Kellyann Dooley, West Hempstead (NY) High School: Many teachers find teaching about world religions uncomfortable. Discussion can lead to heated debates between the students who consider themselves to be religious and those who do not. Debates can become aggressive and unattractive. Personally, I find it difficult to discuss the "big three" religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). I feel I have to be overly sensitive and politically correct so as not to upset any student or group. I try to establish that I am not attacking any religion or stating that they are untrue. I do, however, state my belief that all religions are man-made and are therefore imperfect and mankind has an innate need to essentially believe that there is a higher power that is omnipotent, compassionate, and has a plan or design for us all. When I teach about religion, I divide them into two categories: ancient religions and modern religions. I begin with the cave paintings at Lasceaux, France and Altamira, Spain and early non-European sources. While these artifacts come different peoples, continents, and time periods, they all have similar meaning and value. Eventually, most students realize that these images, however archaic they may seem, have a religious value or undertone. During the unit, students examine a package of documents, including mythology and photographs, and we use them to define religion and its purposes and to discover similarities and differences in practices around the world. I believe it is important that the students understand where and how each of the world's major contemporary religions developed, and why these religions flourished. I discuss the major religious texts, the impact of these texts on the lives of followers, how religion shapes morality and ethics, how they set foundations for appropriate behaviors, define unacceptable or criminal behaviors, and teach followers their beliefs and ceremonies. By scrutinizing and questioning world religions, students gain a better understanding of past and present world problems. Students discover that religions, though created to give guidance and rules on how to live, can also be violent and destructive. Many wars have been fought and millions have died in the name of religion. It is important that students come to this realization so they can avoid the problems of the past and present in their future.

Teaching about Religion in Human History

by Michael Pezone

All too often in secondary school social studies classes, teaching about religion in human history amounts to little more than a catalogue of basic facts about the world's major religions (names of founders, other holy figures, sacred texts, basic beliefs, etc.) While I support the goals of multicultural education, especially respect for human diversity, and the need to introduce students to a broader range of ideas and experiences, this approach to teaching about religion is insufficient. It is my contention that Social Studies teachers ought to approach the topic of religion as scientists, investigating and analyzing it as they would any other natural phenomenon or social institution.

To undertake such an inquiry, teachers must set aside all forms of supernatural explanation and examine religion through a highly critical lens. In this regard, I agree with Daniel Dennett, professor of philosophy at Tufts University. In his book, *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon* (2006), Dennett questions the view of evolutionary biologist Stephen Jay Gould, who believed that science and religion represent two "non-overlapping magisteria" (domains of inquiry) that can peacefully coexist as long as neither encroaches on the territory of the other. I agree with Dennett's argument that science should subject religion to critical scrutiny, and I believe that the most important reason for so doing is to determine if religion has had, on balance, a positive or negative effect on humankind.

Before embarking upon a study of religion, it is helpful to settle upon a working definition of the term. This is easier said than done, as almost every definition suffers from one deficiency or another. The derivation of the word itself is open to debate. While the English word derives from the Old French religion, that word may have derived from the Latin term *religo*, which means "good faith", "ritual", etc., or from the Latin term *religare*, which means "to tie fast." (http://www.religioustolerance.org) While some definitions are too broad, others are too specific. For example, a specific definition might equate religion with a belief in a God, Goddess, or gods, and thereby exclude non-theistic religions such as Buddhism and Confucianism. On the other hand, a definition such as "that which gives meaning to our life" is so broad that it can include aesthetic or pleasurable activities (like eating pasta!) never normally considered religious.

I believe we should teach about religion as an understandable impulse (realized in nonscientific ways) to find order and security in a hostile, seemingly chaotic universe; as folk rituals and traditions that were formalized and institution-alized with the development of civilization as a means to bolster class rule; and as complex phenomena. Religions and religious institutions sometimes play regressive, sometimes progressive social roles.

The definition one accepts reflects one's interpretation of what lays at the core of religion. There are two definitions that I find compelling. One is from 19th century philosopher and psychologist William James, who wrote that religion involves "the belief that there is an unseen order, and that our supreme good lies in harmoniously adjusting ourselves thereto." The other is from social satirist H. L. Mencken, who said that religion's "single function is to give man access to the powers which seem to control his destiny, and its single purpose is to induce those powers to be friendly to him."

I also like the approach taken by the authors at the Agnostic/Atheist section on About.com, who list characteristics typically found in religion. Their list includes the belief in something sacred; distinguishing between sacred and profane objects; moral codes that are believed to originate with the sacred or supernatural; feelings of awe and adoration, a sense of mystery and of guilt, which tend to be aroused in the presence of sacred objects or during the practice of ritual; and, prayer and other forms of communication with the supernatural.

Origins of Religious Beliefs

A critical examination of the role of religion in history requires that a fundamental distinction be drawn between "folk religion" and institutionalized or "state religion." The nature and function of religion underwent drastic changes when religion was institutionalized within class societies. This happened

after the transition to agriculture and permanent settlements as human societies developed formal government and economic structures.

Religious beliefs, in some form or other, appear to be a universal attribute of human societies. While philosophers, anthropologists, historians, and theologians have long debated the reasons for this, it may not be a meaningful question for exploration. A belief in deities, supernatural forces, and a special relationship between humans and their gods, may represent nothing more than efforts by early human bands and tribes to explain the natural world without the benefit of scientific understanding, literacy, or a reservoir of accumulated knowledge. In this view, religion is just another form of magic and the varieties of religious belief are little more than the product of regional variation and individual idiosyncrasy.

Some social scientists suggest that the earliest religious practices go all the way back to the Neanderthals and their practice of burying their dead and possibly providing the dead with food. Burial of the dead is a uniquely human practice, and when food and other equipment are provided to the dead we can assume that some conception of post-mortem existence is involved. Burial customs became more elaborate among Cro-Magnon communities when biologically modern human beings emerged during the Upper Paleolithic era (30,000 to 10,000 BCE). Archeologists have also discovered carved representations of women with exaggerated maternal features at Paleolithic sites, suggesting the early presence of the deification of women as the source of life. Most of us are familiar with Paleolithic cave art, which has generally been interpreted as magical in purpose, designed to promote hunting and the fertility of animals on which ancient hunters depended for food. It seems clear that prehistoric peoples were deeply concerned with issues of life, death, and food, and that this concern may well have involved religious beliefs and practices.

The Golden Bough

The most influential name in early anthropological attempts to understand the origins of religion is James George Frazer. In his most famous work, *The Golden Bough* (1890), Frazer defined religion as "a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life" (*The Magic Art*, I, 222). He described the development of religion as follows: "It becomes probable that magic arose before religion in the evolution of our race, and that man essayed to bend nature to his wishes by the sheer force of spells and enchantments before he strove to coax and mollify a coy, capricious, or irascible deity by the soft insinuation of prayer and sacrifice." (*Op. cit*, I, 224)

Frazer also showed how humans were deeply concerned with the annual life-cycle of vegetation. According to Frazer, it was in the personification of the cycles of vegetation (burying of seed, germination, pushing upwards of new life in spring, etc.) that the idea of a god who dies and is reborn originated. This idea found expression in such deities as Mithras, Adonis, Attis, Osiris, and Jesus Christ.

Animism

For many sociologists of religion, the term "animism" is used to describe the earliest forms of religion. Animism is the belief that spirits inhabit ordinary objects. In some animistic hunter-gatherer societies, humans were regarded as on a roughly equal footing with animals, plants, and natural forces. In such societies, ritual was vitally important as a way for humans to maintain the favor of spirits and to ward off evil spirits. Given the condition of primitive peoples, surrounded by a host of strange, frightening natural phenomena and with no scientific understanding of their causes, there is little wonder that animistic conceptions took shape. Imagine, for example, how the appearance in a dream of a deceased relative contributed to the worship of ancestor spirits and a conception of an afterlife. Other phenomena that led to animistic explanations include: trance, sickness, hallucinations, echoes, shadows, reflections, as well as other disturbing natural occurrences such as dangerous animals, thunder, lightning, floods, etc. The existence of multiple spirits, in personified form, later led to the formation of polytheistic systems of belief.

Another compelling theory about the origin of religious beliefs focuses on humankind's fascination with celestial phenomenon. Astronomical observations contributed to the religious practices and beliefs held by ancient peoples. According to Angela Britto in "Ancient Religion and Astronomy", this can be seen "in the gods they worshipped, the structure of their places of worship, how they buried their dead, when they celebrated religious festivals, in telling what the future held, and how the reigns of their rulers were justified." In Egypt, the Sun was the god Re, Orion was

attributed to Osiris, and the constellation Sirius was attributed to Isis. The pharaohs were believed to become stars when they reached the afterlife. In Babylon, the pantheon of gods was made up of the planets, the Sun, and the Moon. The cycles of the Sun, Moon, and stars were of paramount importance throughout the ancient world in keeping track of time and thus regulating agricultural and other activity.

An interesting theory that has received relatively little attention points to a direct connection between human sexuality and the origins of religion. This theory begins with the recognition that the human reproductive process and the creation of new life were vitally important to primitive tribes, and thus the act of giving birth took on mystical significance. As it was not immediately obvious that males contributed to procreation, it is likely that it was viewed as an exclusively female function for perhaps thousands of years. In addition, after women reached the child-bearing age, they bled at regular intervals from the same part of the body from which they gave birth. To add to the mystery, the bleeding stopped with pregnancy and resumed after birth, and the menstrual cycle seemed to parallel the lunar cycle. In most ancient languages, the word for menstruation also meant supernatural, sacred, and even deity. According to Louis W. Cable in his "Human Sexuality and the Origin of Religion," many primitive societies believed "that human souls were made of menstrual blood which assumed human form when the female became pregnant. The great philosopher Aristotle subscribed to this view, as did Pliny. I was amazed to learn that such primitive beliefs regarding the supernatural power of the menses were taught as fact in European medical schools as recently as 200 years ago (http://www.inu.net/skeptic/origin.htm).

It is curious to note that a critical attitude about religion is not an exclusively modern phenomenon, but was present, for instance, among the ancient Greeks. The sixth century BCE philosopher Xenophanes questioned the ethnic and anthropomorphic prejudices expressed in typical conceptions of deities. Around 450 BCE, Anaxagoras shocked Athens by declaring that the sun and moon were not deities, but were red-hot stones. About 300 BCE, Euheremes explained the origin of gods by suggesting that the gods were originally kings of remote times who were later deified. The first century BCE Latin poet, Lucretius, while not denying the existence of gods, argued that humans attributed all that they could not understand to the gods, whom they consequently feared and tried to propitiate.

Lucretius anticipated the great 18th century philosopher, David Hume, who argued in *The Natural History of Religion* that religion arises out of hope and fear. According to Hume, the origin of religion was located in the passions; specifically, "the anxious concern for happiness, the dread of future misery, the terror of death, the thirst for revenge, the appetite for food and other necessaries." (28) Unable to explain the unknown causes at work in nature, the "human mind anthropomorphizes." (29)

Agriculture and the Emergence of Civilization

At the end of the most recent Ice Age, about 10,000 years ago, the domestication of crops and animals transformed human societies. This transformation, known as the Neolithic Revolution, led to densely-populated permanent settlements of people, a sedentary lifestyle, and development of food surpluses that allowed economic specialization and social stratification. With this came the development of non-egalitarian, centralized states with class divisions and permanent institutions.

Jared Diamond, in *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (1997), refers to such ranked societies as "kleptocracies" because of the way in which wealth is extracted from the populace by ruling elites. Diamond lists four means used by ruling classes throughout history to gain popular support despite their practice of expropriating social wealth.

1. Disarm the populace, and arm the elite.
2. Make the masses happy by redistributing much of the tribute received.
3. Use the monopoly of force to promote happiness, by maintaining public order and curbing violence.
4. Construct an ideology or religion justifying the appropriation of wealth by the few.

The fourth means described by Diamond relates directly to our consideration of religion, and will be quoted at length here:

"The remaining way for kleptocrats to gain public support is to construct an ideology or religion justifying kleptocracy. Bands and tribes already had supernatural beliefs, just as do modern established religions. But the supernatural beliefs of bands and tribes did not serve to justify central authority, justify transfer of wealth, or maintain peace between unrelated

individuals. When supernatural beliefs gained those functions and became institutionalized, they were thereby transformed into what we term a religion . . . Besides justifying the transfer of wealth to kleptocrats, institutionalized religion brings two other important benefits to centralized societies. First, shared ideology or religion helps solve the problem of how unrelated individuals are to live together without killing one another—by providing them a bond not based on kinship. Second, it gives people a motive, other than generic self-interest, for sacrificing their lives on behalf of others" (278-79).

Religion as an Institution

This explanatory model, long familiar to Marxists and other social scientists, demonstrates how institutionalized religion is the means by which social domination is made to seem objective, sanctified, and unchanging. Instead of using ideas to explain religion, this type of materialist model uses social and economic factors to explain ideological phenomena. The development of monotheism is understood not solely in terms of the development of religious consciousness, but in terms of how religious consciousness developed in relation to particular social formations in the ancient world (e.g. images of monotheistic gods arising in a world of patriarchal kingdoms). When analyzing the Protestant rebellion against Catholicism or the attack against religion during the Enlightenment, a materialist model views these conflicts as the ideological expressions of struggles among the major classes of society, in this case between various layers of feudal and bourgeois elites.

Materialist models such as the one deployed by Diamond are open to misuse, particularly by those who would reduce everything to the operation of one or two simple causes. While *Guns, Germs, and Steel* presents a convincing explanation for many aspects of history, its analysis of particular features of cultural and social development is quite limited (as Diamond himself recognizes). I believe this is nowhere more evident than in his consideration—or lack of consideration—of the transition to patriarchy in general and, specifically, in how the historical subordination of women affected religious practices and institutions.

Another misuse of the materialist model is one that dismisses all organized religion as the conservative handmaiden of ruling classes. Social reality is more complex than this, as is evident through a consideration of the many religious, and even church-led, progressive struggles in history (for recent examples, consider the Liberation Theology movement in Latin America and aspects of the US Civil Rights movement).

Christianity and the Development of European Society

by Richard Yanowitz

Richard Yanowitz touches on several aspects of the interrelation between Christianity and secular authority in western Europe to the 17th century. He discusses papal-government interaction, "just war," treatment of non-Christians, the Church's approach to expanding trade and exploration, and the Protestant Reformation. He defines religion as organized dedication to a metaphysical realm that affects daily and long-term human well-being, and government as any authority that enforces a moral or legal code to promote social stability among disparate humans.

Religion, whether "official" (an "established" spiritual authority) or independent (a tolerated or rebellious sect), and government have always been interdependent, sometimes reinforcing each other but more often contending for power. At times the two have been fused into a single authority, as with the ruling priesthood of early ancient Sumeria or the Anglican Church in England. Anthropological and archaeological studies suggest that no grouping of human beings has ever been without some kind of religious belief, which probably starts as a response to the seeming hostility and randomness of natural forces and produces fundamental cultural and moral expectations.

Secular and sacred powers have typically insisted that a divine hand guides human affairs, sometimes for better, sometimes for worse. Divinity rewards a virtuous society with military victory or prosperity, punishes a morally lax society with military defeat, disease or natural catastrophe. Monarchic rule has traditionally invoked divine legitimacy. Rebels, defining tyrants as instruments of God's wrath, have no less insisted that God requires a tyrant's overthrow. Invasion and colonizing of rival nations have been in the name of the attacker's divinity, even when the victims claim the same divinity.

Political content is always implicit in religious practice. Until relatively recently, the Catholic Church invoked both sacred and secular authority to crush heresy, often with violence. The history of the papacy is filled with internal power struggles and schisms resulting from private agendas as readily as theological nuances. The Reformation saw protracted struggles between ruling elites and established or insurgent religious forces along with mutual massacres among people all of whom called themselves Christian. Spanish colonization of the New World and exploitation of its natives prompted debates over how native people should be treated. Oppressed Protestant groups fled England only to create religious governments that oppressed those with whom the new theocracies disagreed.

In our own day religious-political agendas are driving controversy and death around the world. Examples include evangelical Christian forays into American politics, Catholic-Protestant conflict in Northern Ireland, orthodox-secular Jewish divisions within Israel, Hindu-Muslim violence in Pakistan and India, varieties of clashing Muslim belief within Islamic nations. For many Muslims the clash between the West and what it calls Islamic "fundamentalism" is a continuation of the Christian crusades.

Christianity under the Roman Empire

The supreme religious position of Pontifex Maximus before Augustus was usually a separate, specifically religious, office. Under the Empire it became part of an emperor's role, fusing religious and political leadership. This tradition persisted until Emperor Gratian in the West (367-383), a Christian, ceded the role to the papacy.

The Catholic (= "universal") Church was a minority, often subversive, force within the Empire during its first three centuries. Numerous Christians, faced with official demands to affirm allegiance to Rome, refused, and their resulting martyrdom only increased credibility and respect for the new sect. With the Edict of Milan in 313 Emperor Constantine, freshly victorious in wars among claimants to the emperorship, declared toleration for Christianity. According to R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (1970), from Constantine on religious and political unity were inseparable, in part "because religious unity depended on some ultimate power of coercion. Hence all future medieval plans for the reunification of Christendom are fundamentally plans for political reintegration" (61). In 380, seeking to undo the split of the Empire into East (the foundation of today's Orthodox Church, then seated in Constantinople) and West (what became the Roman Catholic Church, seated with some exceptions in Rome), Emperor Theodosius made the Christian Church a legal governmental institution although not yet the official state religion. Theodosius's

reunification lasted until his death fifteen years later, some 80 years before the Empire would fall to Germanic tribes.

Walter Ullmann, *A History of Political Thought in the Middle Ages* (1970), argues that before the 11th century, political behavior was primarily a response to current events with little theory behind it. No one yet spoke in terms of "church" and "state," nor did people have the modern concept of "state." Clergy and laity equally assumed that "religion was not separated from politics, politics not separated from morals" (16). Both relied on scripture for governance, with government using the Bible as support for secular policies, religion viewing government as enforcer of scriptural dictates. Regardless of the unity of Empire and Christianity, the emperor saw Christianity as a happenstance of the empire, while the papacy insisted that clergy and laity together made up a Church "which happened to be the Roman empire" (38).

The Middle Ages

R. W. Southern writes that in the Middle Ages the Church was a kind of state, with administrative, legal, and taxation systems to support management and judgment of Christians and their enemies at home and abroad. But it was *THE* state, not one state among others. Regardless of who ruled, a government's role was to guide its people to be virtuous Christians. Southern identifies three time periods for the medieval church: the "primitive age" (c. 700-c. 1050), the "age of growth" (c. 1050-c. 1300) and the "age of unrest" (c. 1300-c. 1550).

The first stage is typified by ignorance, violence, and administrative impotence. People had little confidence in local, regional and "national" leaders, whom they viewed as exploitative and ineffective. As a result, government was dependent on the Church for legitimacy.

This dependency began to shift in the second stage, which includes the rift between Eastern and Western churches in the years surrounding 1054, the investiture controversy (1075-1122), and the Christian crusades (mainly 1095-1291). The Church now reached its height of power and began to decline. Because of its near monopoly on literacy, it continued to have intimate involvement with law and government administration. But changes during this period also advanced secular power. The Western European economy began for the first time to have surplus population and productivity. Needing more complex ways of developing their economies, European nations began to stress the importance of trade, scorned by canon law as late as the early twelfth century, and Church lawyers had to re-think old attitudes. Europe became assertive and aggressive, pushing its boundaries into new spheres toward the south and east, displaying bellicosity towards a world to which it had previously felt inferior. Killing in battle, condemned as a sin as late as the Battle of Hastings in 1066, now demanded justification.

On the Church's side, as the 13th century progressed popes insisted that their power was as supreme in governing matters as spiritual. The Church was to exercise spiritual authority directly, while rulers were to exercise secular power on the Church's behalf. Church courts tried accused heretics, with the option to gain confessions via torture, while secular authority was responsible for carrying out punishment, often burning, of the guilty.

Southern's third-stage includes a devastating famine from 1315 to 1322 and, in the mid-14th century, the worst visitation by the Black Death in its centuries-long presence in Europe. During this period the balance of secular-religious interdependence shifted further towards the state, with rulers troubling to seek Church sanction only when convenient. Often they openly resisted papal pronouncements and battled for control over church appointments. As the power of secular governments waxed, Europeans had waning faith in papal importance to their lives.

Just War and Relations with Non-Christians

An expanding Europe in the later Middle Ages created growing need to re-define acceptable violence against "enemies" within a nation, elsewhere in Europe, or outside Europe. Inevitably, such theorizing relied on Christians having (a) the one true faith and (b) a religious duty to convert those who did not. During the schism of 1054 or thereabouts (historians vary), a papal representative wrote to the eastern patriarch that "'[a]ny nation which dissented from Rome was nothing but a confabulation of heretics, . . . a synagogue of Satan'" (71). Citing these words, R.W. Southern observes, "I do not think that language quite like this had ever been used before." The caustic tone is indicative of evolving attitudes.

The case for the papal crusades against Islam was easy: Muslims had usurped the territory of Christ, and

the Church had a right to muster all Europe's military might to take it back. But the crusades were just one manifestation of sacred and secular expansion. Starting in the mid-13th century, the Church began developing the idea of the just war, a discussion boiling down to when – and – how – can – Christians – justify - butting – into – someone - else's - business. Although always assuming the primacy of Church authority, answers varied, with a general polarization among Church theorizers over whether rulers, including infidels, received authority directly from God or only via the papacy.

Discussing religious and secular treatment of minorities (lepers, Jews and Muslims), primarily in 14th century Spain, David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (1996), contends that "violence against minorities, however motivated by irrational hatred, . . . only gained meaning and usefulness for contemporaries in the context of much broader social conflicts, ideologies, and discourses" (43). As much as rulers might prey upon minorities, they also protected them. For Jews, often dependent on the ruler for their safety, royal protection could be simultaneously redeeming and marginalizing. Physical attacks on Jews were challenges to the secular legal system. During rituals of Holy Week, between Palm Sunday and the day before Easter, secular violence targeted not only Jews but also Christian officials who protected them. Nirenberg devotes considerable discussion to regulation of sexuality as part of regulating minorities. A natural crisis like famine, drought or plague was readily seen as reflecting collective and individual sinfulness. In response to a famine in Valencia in 1335, for example, the municipal council blamed sinful activity among Muslims, Jews, and Christians, "namely, sexual liaisons between Christians and Muslims, as well as sodomy between Muslims" (142).

Conquest, Colonization and Trade

Starting in 1415, often bankrolled by Italian banking interests, the Portuguese and, later in the century, the Spanish, began testing the seagoing limits of the world they knew. Subjugation or colonization of "new" territories was initially based on previous European colonizing experiences. Tribal societies in West Africa, in Atlantic island groups like the Canaries, and in the Americas (even the large Aztec and Inca civilizations) could not withstand Portuguese or Spanish gunpowder, horses, steel weapons, and most of all, diseases. If conquests in such contexts were inexorable, they were not always easy. At the same time, in West Africa the Portuguese learned quickly to avoid the interior because of its diseases, and although Europeans viewed as inferiors all non-Christians they encountered, they were cautious about exercising military might against the more sophisticated societies of East Africa and the Asian coast that might rival their own military capability.

By the early 15th century, regulation of Christian and non-Christian relationships, previously dominated by the papacy, had shifted to expanding European states. Trade was becoming increasingly important to European economies, and spreading Christianity became only one of multiple concerns. Although it managed to retain governments' agreement to protect missionaries, the papacy was being reduced to mediating between expansionary Christian nations.

Portuguese motives to explore the African coast appear initially to have been economic. Though a longer distance, a sea route around Africa to cherished Asian commodities would be far cheaper, safer and faster than the arduous overland journey Europeans had been using. Pushing further and further southward, then navigating the Cape of Good Hope and the Indian Ocean coastlines, Portugal expanded Asian markets, sought natural resources, especially gold, and, by 1441, began to traffic in West African slaves.

As Portuguese and Spanish explorers probed westward to Atlantic island groups and the Americas, both also pursued "glory"—renown, respect, titles—and land, preferably with the right to an unpaid indigenous labor force. As their exploration intensified, the Iberian nations no longer bothered to reassure popes that their goal was to spread Christianity or to petition for papal approval before pursuing their own agendas. But pious motives always retained at least lip service.

Treatment of Native Americans

For Columbus, conversion is a frequent theme, as are natural resources, manpower and the gold to finance a new crusade to recapture Jerusalem. When reading the journal of his first voyage, we should be cautious about assuming the words are his own, since the earliest version we have is at best a copy of the original, composed decades after his death. Nonetheless, the text is revealing. On the day he first sights Caribbean land, we read of the local people:

"They ought to be good servants and of good skill, for I see that they repeat very quickly whatever was said to them. I believe that they would easily be made Christians, because it seemed to me that they belonged to no religion." Two days later we learn that the natives pose no military threat, that Columbus has kidnapped several of them, and that the natives should be enslaved. Three weeks after that, applauding expulsion of the Jews from Spain earlier that year, the writer appeals to the Spanish monarchs to apply similar draconian methods to the Indians.

Most resident Spaniards had similar disdain for "Indians." In Jamaica during Columbus's second voyage, the Genoese "gentleman" Michele de Cuneo casually recounts how the Spanish, in response to local inhabitants' throwing stones at the conquistadors, kill a couple of dozen natives in a one-sided fight. Soon afterwards, Cuneo captures a local woman, is magnanimously granted title to her by Columbus, and then rapes her, whipping her when she resists and dismissing her as a whore when she finally yields.

Dissident Voices

There were dissident voices among the Spanish, in the colonies primarily from clerics, in the homeland among a minority of relatively idealistic secular and religious figures. So far as I know, Spain was the only European colonial power in the Americas before the 18th century with official discussion of such matters. In 1550 the king of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor Charles V convened a conference in Valladolid, Spain, to address the rectitude of forced conversion. The gathering is famous for a debate between the aging Bartolomé de las Casas, a decades-long supporter of peaceful treatment of the Indians, and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, who counseled violent evangelization. It probably didn't matter. As in all far-flung empires, Spanish colonists, self-righteously certain that decrees from thousands of miles away could not appreciate local realities, readily ignored or sabotaged directives from the home government.

J. H. Elliott, *Spain and Its World, 1500-1700: Selected Essays* (1989), summarizes the half-century after Columbus's four voyages as the culmination of 250 years of evolving Church and legal doctrines "about the responsibility of the pope for the souls of all men and about the right of non-Christians to govern themselves free of outside interference" (9) Wealth, glory, and the spread of Christianity, with the order of importance varying among historians, were the motives for conquistadors and those who followed them into the New World. But the divine and the civil, Christianity and empire, were always interdependent. Viewing themselves as an elect, superior people doing God's work in the furtherance of empire, the Spanish and later European colonizers always claimed that they were civilizing and Christianizing—the two amounted to the same thing—those they conquered.

The Reformation

Politics and faith intermingled in the split between Catholicism and the variety of Protestant sects that spread across sixteenth-century Europe. Most of the criticisms of Catholicism that produced the divisions were centuries old but reached a flash point in 1517 when the monk Martin Luther posted his 95 theses at Wittenberg. "Obedience" being a key virtue, Protestant reformers insisted they were not disobedient revolutionaries but traditional Christians returning the church to some pristine era before Catholic corruption—a moment, depending on the critic, any time from the death of Christ to the High Middle Ages. Social reform was inseparable from religious reform. From 1541 until his death in 1564, Calvin established a theocracy or something close to it (historians differ on the exact nature of this government). In Germany in the early 1520s, peasants, taking Luther's views about Christian "freedom" as repudiation of secular oppression, rebelled only to feel betrayed when Luther, himself born a peasant but with no interest in civil rebellion, opposed their taking up of arms. Widespread slaughter among Christians in the name of Christ was rampant across Europe for the next century and a half—in some cases it has continued to the present day—initially between Catholics and Protestants but soon between contending Protestant sects as well.

While the Reformation was a general time of turmoil, polemics, violence, and national upheavals, the English reformation was the only movement driven from above and with the goal of fusing state and church. A common belief is that Henry VIII (1509-1547), desperate for a male heir, turned England to Anglicanism so he could end his marriage to his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, Henry's struggle with Rome was part of a long history of tension between papal authority and English aspirations for national independence from Church authority.

Four years after Luther posted his 95 theses, Henry attached his name to a Catholic tract condemning Luther, earning from the Pope the title "Defender of the Faith," a title retained by all succeeding English monarchs despite its origin. But in part because of desire for a male heir, by the late 1520s pressure for change was mounting. Without sanction from the papacy, Henry divorced Catherine and in early 1533 married Anne Boleyn. The English Church officially separated from Rome in 1534. Other motives reinforced the course of events: many in the English establishment itched to join the continental reformers, and Henry used the outlawing of Catholicism as an excuse to seize the large and lucrative network of English monasteries.

Portrait of Henry VIII

Anglican doctrine continued to develop under the regency of Henry's son, Edward VI (1547-1553), but Edward's sister, Mary (1553-1558), re-instituted Catholicism as the official faith. Prelates who had abandoned the Church of Rome came under pressure to return to it. Some did, later to have to reckon with their "double-mindedness" when Elizabeth I (1558-1603) returned the nation to her father's Anglicanism. But the opposition to Mary's Catholicism was not just about religion. Although there was indeed considerable desire in the country to remain Protestant, basic political fears also prevailed, as of foreign domination when Mary married Philip II, Catholic monarch of Spain, who 35 years later sent his ill-fated Spanish Armada against the England of Elizabeth (whose sins included rejecting the suit of the "mourning" widower Philip).

England's bouncing in 25 years from Catholicism to Anglicanism to Catholicism and finally Anglicanism again produced moral crises for both secular and clerical Protestants and Catholics. What would happen to your soul if you repudiated the anointed clergy who interceded with God on your behalf? What was your spiritual duty when you swore a holy oath to the Pope and then decided that Catholicism was the Antichrist? Where did your true loyalty and obedience lie when your religious conscience conflicted with loyalty to the reigning monarch? Over such dilemmas the Catholic Thomas More went to the block under Henry and hundreds of Protestants burned at the stake under Mary. The political heritage of the Anglican Reformation included the outlawing of priests, marginalization of secular Catholics, multiplication of Protestant sects, a civil war, regicide, an interregnum of theocratically based rule, and an extended history of rival claimants to the throne. In modern times, even with the English monarch long since merely a figurehead leader of Anglicanism, spiritual and political matters continue to intertwine. As I write in February, 2007, for example, an international Anglican-Episcopalian conference in Tanzania is torn over how to treat homosexuals within the fold.

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Religion and Secularism in the Modern World

by Talal Asad

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Religion as a category is constantly being defined within social and historical contexts. It is associated with various kinds of experience, institutions, movements, and arguments. People who use abstract definitions of religion are missing a very important point: Religion is a social and historical *fact*, which has legal, domestic and political, and economic dimensions. One has to look for the ways in which, as circumstances change, people constantly try to gather together elements that they think belong, or *should* belong, to the notion of religion.

It has frequently been argued that processes of modernization should culminate in the retreat of religion to the private sphere, so that wherever religion manifests itself in public life, this can be attributed to an incomplete or failed project of modernization, or as the vestiges of tradition forestalling the inevitable triumph of the modern. For a long time it has been recognized that this is not the way history has gone. Indeed, it is not even clear that the so-called "retreat of religion" has been quite a simple thing even since the beginning of the 19th century. The way in which people have thought about secularism - that is, the separation between state and religion - has in fact been adapted to very different kinds of state.

A Variety of Models

There are very different ways in which the negotiation between religion and politics works itself out. States in the West are supposed to be liberal, democratic and secular. France is a state that is secular and a society that is secular. In England, you have an established religion and you have a very secular society. In the United States, you have a very religious society and a secular state. There are different kinds of sensibilities, even in these three *modern* states and societies. There are different kinds of reactions that people have towards what is considered a transgression against "secular" principles.

Such sensibilities are found in the debate in France about whether Muslim girls should be permitted to wear the veil in public schools. It is interesting to note that this has led to a negative reaction by secularists whereas wearing a yarmulke to school has not. What is it that makes the wearing of the veil a violation of secular rules of politics and not the yarmulke? My point is not that there is unfair discrimination here, but that even in a secular society there are differences in the way secular people evaluate the political significance of "religious symbols" in public space.

State and Religion

There are clear rules in the United States about the separation of state and religion, but that does not prevent "non-secular" interventions in the politics of the present regime. As we all know, the Christian Right is at the heart of the Bush government. It is an anti-Semitic ally of the Zionist organizations in America, and its political imagination embraces the war against Iraq as a step towards Armageddon. A "secular" war is supported by them for "religious" reasons. I say this not in order to express my disapproval of the Religious Right but to point to the fact that a secular state can without difficulty accommodate such politics.

I think one has to recognize that the transformation of societies in what is called a modern direction included all sorts of accommodations as well as concessions. The "secular" politics that is emerging is partly the result of these changes. In that sense modernization/secularization is not really a simple story.

I am very skeptical of the notion that modernity is some kind of straightforward destiny for everybody. I am not at all sure that the "modern" necessarily presupposes everything that people in one or other of the so-called liberal, secular states want or think it should be. I look at the political doctrine of secularism itself, and at the secularization of law and morality in modernizing states. These are complicated questions.

We do not understand fully what all the implications of the secular modes of everyday existence are for secular politics. We need to think about such matters far more deeply in the human sciences than we have done so far.

Secularism as a political doctrine is very closely connected to the formation of religion itself. It is precisely in a secular state that it is essential for *state* law to define what *genuine religion* is and where its boundaries should properly be. In other words, the state is *not* that separate. Paradoxically, modern politics cannot really be separated from religion as the vulgar version of secularism argues it should be. The state has the function of defining the acceptable public face of "religion".

Militant movements as well as the liberal forms of Islam that have emerged since the 19th century are adjustments to the fact that the secular state has ambitions regarding the regulation of entire populations, of their life and death. These things were the concern of various other agencies previously, including what one might call the religious, or there was no such function at all. But now a single political structure, the modern nation-state, seeks to deal with them.

The radical forms of religious movements as well as the liberal forms are accommodations to the modern state. The liberal ones obviously because they represent attempts to adjust to that overarching political power and the spaces it authorizes - to the forms of privacy and autonomy that it enables and legitimizes. The radical ones too belong to the same modern world because what is at stake for them primarily is the state since that is the seat of power determining all sorts of things in ways that previously were left unregulated.

Rethinking Western Conceptions

Neither radical Islamist movements nor liberal Islam appear able to make people rethink Western conceptions of secular modernity. In part this is because many of their projects have taken over modern assumptions of politics. In part also it is because there is an enduring antipathy in the West towards Islam and ideas coming from the Islamic tradition. The mere fact of the enormous disparity in power between apparently successful Western societies and evidently weak Muslim societies also plays a part.

I think the phenomenon of Islamism, as well as comparable religious movements elsewhere in the world, *ought* to make us rethink the accepted narratives of triumphant secularism and liberal assumptions about what is politically and morally essential to modern life. The very existence of these phenomena should make us rethink our assumptions about what is necessary to modernity.

If you think of Islam and the Islamic tradition as fixed, as having a certain kind of unchangeable essence, then it might well be argued that Islam is antithetical to liberal democracy: what is modern is not really Islamic and what is Islamic cannot really be modern. Of course there are people who are trying to rethink the Islamic tradition in ways that would make it compatible with liberal democracy. But I am much more interested in the fact that the Islamic tradition ought to lead us to question many of the liberal categories *themselves*. Rather than saying, "Well yes we can also be like you," why not ask what the liberal categories themselves mean, and what they have represented historically? The question of individualism is fraught with all sorts of problems, as people who have looked carefully at the tradition of individualism in the West know very well. The same is true of the question of equality. We know that the equality that is offered in liberal democracies is a purely legal equality, not economic equality. And the two forms of equality cannot be kept in watertight compartments. Even political equality does not necessarily give equal opportunity to all citizens to engage in or contribute to the formulation of policy.

I think it is important to ask, "What exactly does the liberal mean by tolerance?" It is easy enough to be tolerant about things that do not matter very much. That tends to be the rule in liberal societies. Increasingly what you believe, what you do in your own home, is up to you as an individual in liberal democracies. The liberal tolerates these things because the liberal does not care about them. Yet tolerance is really only meaningful when it is about things that really matter. The kind of tolerance that really matters is something we ought to be exploring, thinking more about - and the ways in which the Islamic tradition conceives of tolerance (however limited that might be) helps to open up such questions. Does an exploration of Islamic traditions give us a deeper, more critical understanding of individualism, tolerance, or pluralism? I would like to see more of this kind of questioning, rather than people trying to prove their liberal credentials.

Karen Armstrong and Christopher Hitchens Debate God & Religion

by Scott Raulsome

According to Karen Armstrong, author of *A History of God: The 4,000-Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (NY: Ballantine, 1994), ancient civilizations used religion for a variety of purposes. Religion helped maintain law and order, gave meaning to life, and explained the unexplainable. These civilizations were polytheistic and believed each God served a different role in society. However, when Yahweh spoke first to Abraham and then to Moses, he revealed himself as the one true God. The Israelites would be his chosen people, Judaism would be their religion, and they would worship only him and live according to his laws. This marked the start of a monotheistic belief system, which would later lead to the creation of both Christianity and Islam.

During recent centuries, modernization and scientific discovery have led many to question whether this God truly exists. Fundamentalist religious sects and outdated religious restrictions are viewed as an impediment to progress. While numerous philosophers have made attempts, the existence or non-existence of God or Gods cannot be proven.

Karen Armstrong is a former nun who still believes in God. Rather than try to prove God's existence, she wrote a book chronicling the history of monotheism. She looks at how Judaism, Christianity and Islam originated, their relationship to each other, how they have developed over the time, and what the future may hold for each religion. Armstrong devotes a great deal of space to the relationship between religion and philosophy and shows how philosophic thought on God has often mirrored the times.

Christopher Hitchens, author of *God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* (Lebanon, IN: Hachette Book Group, 2007) is an atheist and advocate for the Enlightenment values of secularism, humanism, and reason. However, the main focus of this book is on what Hitchens sees as the negative impact of organized religion on human societies. Taken together, the books by Armstrong and Hitchens offer readers an interesting debate on both the existence of God and the historic role of religion.

Armstrong argues that the earliest ideas about God originated in the Middle East about 14,000 years ago. These ideas allowed humans to personalize the unforeseen forces of the world and gave purpose to life. By attributing the unexplainable to the actions of the gods, both suffering and joy were justifiable. People also felt that if they mimicked the actions of the gods and dwelled in places that resembled the imagined homes of divine beings, they would share their powers.

Through their gods, humans sought immortality. A frequent claim was that God or gods created people using some of their own substance. In the Enuma Elish creation story of ancient Babylon, which was celebrated with a festival every year, the God Marduk created the Earth from the body of the slain goddess Tiamat, and created humans by mixing the blood of a lesser god with some mud. It is important to note that Babylonians did not take the story of these events literally. Since no one witnessed the events, they were seen as symbolic and used to celebrate the power of the gods and their closeness to humankind.

According to her extensive research, it appears that the Judeo-Christian-Islamic God originated as one of the high gods of Canaan named El. A major attraction of this god, at least in the Israelite variant, was his direct communication with humans and the clear rules that were provided for religious adherents.

Christianity and Islam Arrive on the Scene

Christianity originated as a sect of Judaism that was committed to the belief that Jesus of Nazareth was the actual son of God who had been resurrected when he died at the hands of the Roman governors of Judea. These beliefs spread from Jewish community to community across the Mediterranean world. Belief in Jesus as the "Savior" ultimately led to a split between Judaism and Christianity. While early Christians were suppressed in the Roman Empire, the religion continued to grow as its adherents converted non-Jews. When Emperor Constantine legalized Christianity in 313 A.D., the freedoms and rights that resulted ensured its survival.

In the seventh century, Muhammad, a prosperous Arab merchant living in the Arabian Peninsula city of Mecca, was contacted by a "divine presence" and commanded to recite aloud the first words of what would come to be known as the Koran. The words of the Koran were gradually revealed to Muhammad over a 23-year period. The Koran is intended to be read slowly, and in its original Arabic, in order for its true

meaning to be revealed to the reader. Islam spread like wildfire throughout the Arab world.

Among each of the monotheistic religions, there were adherents who felt compelled to prove the existence of God. The work of Aristotle, who felt that the natural beauty of the world was proof of a higher power, often was cited as evidence. During the European Middle Ages (circa 1000 A.D.), Islamic scholars developed a scientific approach to understanding the world that was also thought to demonstrate God's existence. Judaism, which always viewed the Five Books of Moses as a compilation of God's laws, had a strong legalist tradition. However, Judaism and Islam also developed mystical off-shoots, the Kabbalah among Jews and the Islamic Sufist movement. Christianity was plagued by schisms. The eastern and western branches of the church disputed the nature of the Trinity and whether it implied three Gods or one. The West became more concerned with ceremony and a strict interpretation of the Bible. The East focused more on spirituality and the wonderment of God. During the European Age of Reform, Western Christianity suffered further splits when Luther, Calvin, and their followers sought a simpler, more personal approach to religion and salvation. Armstrong believes that all of these developments show how the three major monotheistic religions were an essential part of human life throughout the centuries, able to adapt to different circumstances and meet the needs believers.

Scientific Advance

Up until the 18th century, the existence of God was not openly questioned. However, with scientific advances that seemed to better explain the world and with new philosophical speculations, doubts about God's existence began to appear. Secular governments challenged church authority and philosophers wondered why God would bother with the trivialities of humankind. Armstrong argues that the contemporary rise in religious fundamentalism, whose advocates promote the strict interpretation of religious texts, can be viewed as a search for spiritual meaning and a backlash against the loss of faith that has been a by-product of material progress. One result has been that science and religion, which in some eras were seen as complementary, are now seen by many as antagonistic. A world without God or religion would be perfectly acceptable to Christopher Hitchens. He insists that religion is completely man-made and there are no reasons to believe that God exists. Ockham's Razor is the intellectual principle, proposed in the fourteenth century, that "entities should not be multiplied unnecessarily." Another way of looking at it is explanations should be kept as simple as possible. Hitchens argues that postulating the existence of God only complicates explanations of natural phenomenon. He contends that fossil discoveries such as the Pre-Cambrian finds in the Burgess Shale of British Columbia demonstrate that the evolution of life on Earth and the emergence of human beings were purely by luck, and would probably not happen again the same way if history were done over. He also cannot believe that God would have conflicting revelations or be limited to specific languages.

Hitchen's four main objections to religion are that it misrepresents the origins of man and the cosmos; combines the maximum of servility with the maximum of self-centeredness; is both the result and cause of sexual repression; and is ultimately grounded on wishful thinking. He argues that religion has been responsible for violence against innocent people in the past and today. Limiting himself to places that begin with the letter "B", he cites contemporary Belfast, Beirut, Bombay, Belgrade, Bethlehem, and Baghdad. Hitches wonders why the Ten Commandments do not prohibit rape, child abuse, slavery, and genocide. He is also infuriated by what he sees as religious obstacles to public health. Muslim clerics in Nigeria tell their congregation not to immunize against the poliovirus because it is a scheme by the West to poison them. Roman Catholic priests urge church members to abstain from using condoms, which results in unwanted pregnancies, uncared for children, and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.

In 2007, an article in the British newspaper *The Guardian* by a westernized Muslim called on his co-religionists to embrace modernization. He wanted Muslims to challenge the backwardness of many Islamic countries and antiquated religious practices. I believe this is useful advice for all religious believers. As Karen Armstrong points out, in the past, when religions have been unable to evolve or have become impractical for their believers to follow, they have simply disappeared and been replaced by new belief systems.

Marvin Harris and the Mysteries of Religious Beliefs

Books Reviewed by Suzy Mellen

Cows, Pigs, Wars, and Witches: *The Riddles of Culture*. NY: Vintage, 1974.

Our Kind: Who We Are, Where We Came From and Where We Are Going. NY: HarperPerennial, 1989.

Culture, People, Nature: An Introduction to General Anthropology. NY: Addison Wesley Longman, 1997.

The goal of anthropologists and sociologists is to explain why people in both traditional and contemporary societies behave the ways they do. One area of human experience that has been very difficult to understand is religious belief, which appears to be universal, yet very diverse. Some researchers credit unknowable spiritual factors and claim that human religious beliefs and practices are so unique and varied that they cannot be explained. Marvin Harris, a prominent proponent of cultural materialism, an approach to anthropology that emphasizes examination of the social, economic, and political organization of societies, argues that even the most irrational appearing belief systems and practices are rooted in people's ordinary experiences as they struggle to survive in often hostile environments. For Harris, even the most enigmatic cultural riddles can be explained by studying how people live. The key is to focus on what they do, not why they think they are doing it.

Origin of Religious Beliefs and Practices

In *Our Kind*: *Who We Are, Where We Came From and Where We Are Going* (1989), Harris examines the origin of religious beliefs and practices in human societies. He starts with migrating hunter-gatherer bands, the evolution of religious beliefs and practices in sedentary, agrarian, tribal "shamanstic" communities, and their institutionalization with formal theologies and rituals with the emergence of river valley empires. Religious beliefs and practices develop as people collectively try to understand a world of mystery and to solve problems that emerge as they interact with the natural world and with their neighbors. Beliefs and practices are similar because conditions of life are similar. They are different because of local anomalies and historical accidents.

In hunting and gathering bands, where everyone is engaged in food production, religious beliefs tend to be personal and individualized. Group members call on natural or animistic forces and ancestors as spiritual helpers to protect them from danger, and ensure an adequate food supply. Among the Inuit today, each hunter chants their own "hunting song" and wears an amulet bag filled with tiny animal carvings, bits of claws and fur, pebbles, insects, and other items, that connect them with their personal spirit helper.

Emergence of Agriculture

As agricultural communities produced food surpluses, spiritual specialists, or shamans, with special powers to communicate with the spirit world, emerged. Because of their power, they could supposedly cure the sick, predict the future, find lost persons, and ward off malevolent forces. Many developed knowledge of hallucinogenic substances that helped them convince tribal members of their special powers. As tribal societies developed into larger and more elaborate states with centralized political systems, religious beliefs and practices, similar to those we associate with contemporary religions, developed. These religions developed class-based hierarchies that paralleled economic and political stratification in the general society. They were characterized by a "full-time professional clergy" and passive congregations controlled and mobilized by religious leaders. Many of these early formal religions practiced animal sacrifice to show devotion to their gods. Harris believes that these sacrifices were often forms of food redistribution to the masses in exchange for their loyalty and labor.

Human sacrifice, especially when important leaders died, was another important expression of love and gratitude towards the gods. Children and prisoners of war were the preferred victims; sometimes, however, relatives and servants of deceased rulers were buried with them. Harris suggests that mass burials upon the death of a ruler helped to ensure that their retainers protected them while they were alive. While most early state societies practiced some form of human sacrifice, they generally did not support cannibalism. According to Harris, cannibalism was an inefficient use of captives who could be put to work constructing mass public works projects such as irrigation ditches and temples. The Aztecs, in the Valley of Mexico, were an exception to this rule. The execution of prisoners helped to control population size

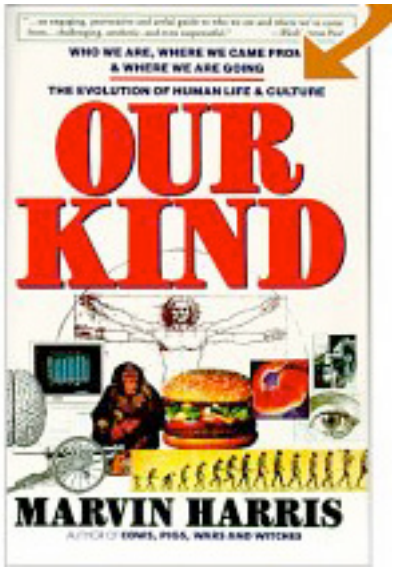
and provided a source of protein in an area without large domesticated animals. Hence, the Aztec gods craved human flesh.

Gradually, religions based on animal and human sacrifice transformed into what Harris calls the "non-killing" religions: Zoroastrianism, Jainism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Christianity. Harris believes this trend was in response to the failure of early states to deliver the benefits the kings and priests had promised. An example he explores in some detail in *Our Kind* and *Cows, Pigs, Wars, and Witches*: *The Riddles of Culture* (1974) is the development of cow worship among Hindus, one of the great religious enigmas. During the early Neolithic era (approximately 10,000 B.C.), the Ganges Valley of India was heavily forested and cattle were used for meat and in redistribution ceremonies. However, by about 6,000 B.C. the population had skyrocketed, the area had become deforested, there was a shortage of pastureland, and cows and oxen were dying off. This led to incessant warfare between hard-pressed neighboring states. Gradually, Hindu beliefs deified cattle and placed taboos on the eating of cow meat. This protected oxen (males) that were needed as plough animals and cows (females) that provided milk and new oxen.

Dietary Taboos

In *Cows, Pigs, Wars, and Witches*, Harris uses a similar approach to explain why Jews and Muslims abhor pork as a food source and believe that God classified the pig as "unclean." The pig is no dirtier than chickens and cattle, goats, sheep, horses, and mules all are capable of spreading diseases amongst humans. Harris believes pigs were declared taboo because in the arid climate of the Middle East they competed with humans beings for food and they could never be a major source of protein. At most, they would be a luxury food for the wealthy and a source of social conflict. It made sense in this region that Jews and Muslims "interdict the consumption of pork entirely to concentrate on raising goats, sheep and cattle" (44).

One of the strengths of Harris' approach is that it can explain the development of modern Christianity as well as earlier traditional belief systems. Harris believes that the historic Jesus was actually part of a long tradition of Jewish messianic figures that fought for national independence and cultural survival against the Persian, Greek, and Roman empires. It was only after the Romans defeated Jewish rebels and began to disperse the Jews out of their traditional homeland in Palestine that the "Jesus" cult converted their spiritual leader from a warlike revolutionary to a prince of peace. According to Harris, "it quickly became a practical necessity for Christians to deny that their cult had arisen out of the Jewish belief in a messiah who was going to topple the Roman Empire" (195). Christianity is an important religion to understand because its history illustrates the transformation of a religion from a narrow tribal base (Judaism), to an anti-state universal church that welcomes all converts while being persecuted by secular society, to a major institution and official church that provided the dispossessed with hope for a more just after-life while supporting the Roman state and helped it maintain power for hundreds of years.



Harris' main point is that people, cultures, and societies need to adapt to new conditions in order to survive. Those that fail to adapt are eliminated from the pages of history. Religion is one of the major forces promoting group cohesion and supporting institutions that promote group survival, whether the group is a band of hunter/gatherers or a widespread empire. Religious beliefs and practices may seem puzzling or irrational, but their development can be understood if anthropologists, sociologists, historians, and social studies students focus on factors that have promoted group survival, rather than on the idiosyncrasies of belief and ritual.

Religion and the Development of Ancient Civilizations: An Overview

by Eric Sorenson

Institutionalized, or organized, religions originated in early river valley civilizations. They developed from traditional tribal religious practices that attempted to explain the mysteries of life in a pre-scientific world. In river valley civilizations, these early practices transformed into institutionalized state religions that legitimized civil authority and state structures and helped maintain authority and order. They often had direct state functions in these early civilizations, such as regulation of law and irrigation. While particular theologies and rituals were contingent on local historical, political, social, and economic developments, the function of these institutionalized religions was very similar.

From Nomads to Civilization

Human history begins during the Paleolithic Age, which lasted for over a hundred thousand years, and ended with the Neolithic or Agricultural Revolution about twelve thousand years ago. During the Paleolithic, or Old Stone Age, humans were nomads living in small, interrelated bands, following food sources in order to survive. Nomadic people worked together with others in their tribe for the common goal of survival. Evidence from the Paleolithic period, such as burial practices, shows that these early human groups had spiritual beliefs. The end of the last ice age and worldwide change in climate around 10,000 B.C.E. led to farming and the domestication of animals and made possible large settled communities in river valley locales that were favorable for agricultural production. This breakthrough marked the start of what we call "civilization," which included the development of social institutions, governments, trade, literacy, new technologies, and organized religion.

In the early river valley civilizations, accumulation of wealth and division of labor made possible by surplus agricultural production led to social stratification and the formation of social castes. During this period, religion played a crucial role in maintaining and justifying the wealth and power of ruling groups. Leaders were servants of the gods or considered to be deities themselves, and the forms of social organizations were considered reflections of a divine order. Priestly castes wielded tremendous power given their position closer to the gods.

Religion in the River Valley Civilizations

The uncertainty of existence in early agricultural societies, control over access to the "afterlife," and the ability to promote divine intervention in this life, including influencing water supplies, were major tools used by institutionalized religion to maintain its position in the social hierarchy. People centered their lives around the demands of a god or other higher power and lived a ritualistic existence. Religion answered people's questions about existence, provided some hope of control over a hostile world, and served as a unifying cultural force.

Historians know about institutionalized religion in the ancient river valley civilizations thanks to translations of Cuneiform, Hieroglyphics, Sanskrit, and other early languages. Geography and natural forces played a significant role in the development of specific religious beliefs. The existence of river gods and rituals involving rivers reflect the central importance of rivers to early civilizations. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers in Mesopotamia were unpredictable and prone to flooding. People living along their banks believed some sort of God caused the rivers to flood violently and they developed rituals to propitiate this deity. All early civilizations worshipped some form of a Sun God, as the sun brought warmth, light and life to Earth. Rulers were frequently considered relatives of the Sun God, who gained the right to rule from this relationship.

Religious ritual and belief permeated every aspect of life. For example, in Mesopotamia, beer was considered a gift from the Sun God. It was used to supplement the diets of men, women, and children, and its intoxicating effects were considered a reward for good deeds. The best beer was reserved for those with higher standing in society. Cuneiform records indicate that the lowest-ranking members of the Sumerian temple workforce were issued roughly a quart of beer a day as a part of their rations. Beer was used as a form of currency, to pay workers, and as part of the bride price. In Egypt, beer was buried in tombs of high-ranking officials and in the graves of common people for use in the afterlife.

The earliest civilizations arose in Mesopotamia and Egypt in the Middle East; in the Indus Valley region of modern India and Pakistan; in the Huang He

Valley of China, on the island of Crete in the Aegean Sea; and in Central America. These civilizations had certain features in common. They had access to water, built cities, invented forms of writing, learned to make pottery and use metals, domesticated animals, and created fairly complex social structures with class systems and diverse types of work.

Mesopotamia – The Fertile Crescent

Mesopotamia, from the Greek phrase meaning "between the two rivers," was located along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in the area that is modern Iraq. By 5000 B.C.E., small tribes of farmers had settled in the river valleys, where they raised wheat, barley, and peas. They watered their crops by cutting through riverbanks so water could flow to lower lying soil. The Sumerians in Mesopotamia are often considered the earliest ancient civilization. They built a very complex irrigation system, drained marshes, and dug canals, dikes, and ditches. The need for cooperation on these large projects contributed to the growth of government, law, and institutionalized religious bodies.

In Mesopotamia, farmland was organized into large tracts of land that were thought to belong to a local God. Priests organized work teams of farmers to tend the land and provide barley, beans, wheat, olives, grapes, and flax for the community. These early cities, which existed by 3500 B.C.E, were known as "temple towns" because they were built around the temple of the local God or Goddess. Temples were eventually built on elevated platforms known as "ziggurats," which had ramps or staircases winding up around the exterior. Public buildings and marketplaces were built around these shrines. The temple towns grew into city-states, which are considered foundations of the first true civilizations.

At a time when only the most rudimentary forms of transportation and communication were available, city-states were the most governable type of human settlement. City-states were usually ruled by leaders that controlled the local irrigation system. Food surpluses generated by the farmers supported these leaders, as well as priests, artists, and craftsmen.

The Sumerians developed a complex mythology describing the relationships between the various local gods of the temple towns. In Sumerian religion, the most important Gods were seen as human forms of natural forces --sky, sun, earth, water, and storm. These gods, each originally associated with a particular city, were worshipped not only in the great temples, but also in small shrines in family homes. A later Mesopotamian civilization, Babylon, is best remembered for Hammurabi's Code (circa 1750 B.C.E.), one of the first written codes of law in human history.

Egypt - Gift of the Nile

Farmers settled in the long and narrow valley of the Nile River by 5,000 B.C.E. During the next 2,000 years, Egyptians invented writing, built massive irrigation works, and established a culture that bequeathed to the world the pyramids and other magnificent monuments. The early farming settlements along the Nile raised vegetables, grains, and animals. As settlements grew, the need to control the Nile's floodwaters through dams and canals led to the rise of government and institutionalized religion.

An advanced civilization in Egypt began with the unification of lands along the upper (southern) and lower (northern) Nile about 3,100 B.C.E. by King Menes, who established his capital at Memphis (twenty miles south of present day Cairo). Egypt was ruled by Pharaohs who claimed direct descent from the God Horus. Grain surpluses made possible by annual floods of the Nile River created tremendous wealth and allowed Pharaoh and his priestly retainers to live in splendor and to prepare for a lavish afterlife. The tombs built for them were designed as storehouses to hold all the things, including servants, they would need in the afterlife.

In Egypt, religion and politics went hand-in-hand. Each new dynasty brought new personal gods to prominence. Religious centers and different priesthoods competed for influence. There were periodic attempts to bring some order to the religion, including the cult of the Sun God Ra, which evolved into monotheism during the reign of Pharaoh Akhenaten and his wife Queen Nefertiti between 1352 and 1336 B.C.E.

Indus Valley Civilization

The valley of the Indus River, located on the Indian subcontinent in modern Pakistan, is considered the birthplace of Indian civilization. There is evidence that in ancient times Mesopotamian traders sailed from Sumeria to the Indus Valley. While the Indus Valley probably shared some developments with Mesopotamia, such as complex irrigation, drainage

systems, and the art of writing, they developed a unique cultural style of their own.

Investigation of the Indus civilization suggests that it had large cities that were well laid-out and fortified. The most important were probably Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro. Ruins of the city of Mohenjo-Daro indicate that the presence of public buildings, palaces, baths, large granaries to hold agricultural products, and the earliest known urban sanitation systems. The artifacts and artwork found by archaeologists also indicate that residents of the Indus region reached a fairly high level of civilization.

Ruins of Mohenjo-Daro in southern Pakistan
Source: http://encarta.msn.com/

Harappans, whose civilization lasted until about 2,000 B.C.E., worshipped gods in male and female forms. No monumental sculpture survives, but a large number of human figurines have been discovered. While scholars are uncertain, they believe Harrappan civilization collapsed because of climate warming and a decline in water available for agriculture. By 1,500 B.C.E., the Indus River valley had been invaded by tribes of Indo-European people from the Eurasian steppes. They imposed a caste system on Indian society that persists to the present day as part of Hindu beliefs. The Hindu religion has thousands of gods, although there is some disagreement over whether they are actually different deities or only different representations of the same God.

Origins of Imperial China

The Chinese settled in the Huang He, or Yellow River, valley of northern China by 3,000 B.C.E. Like other ancient peoples, the Chinese developed unique cultural attributes. Their form of writing, developed by 2,000 B.C.E,, was a complex system of picture writing using forms called ideograms, pictograms, and phonograms. Early forms of Chinese writing were found on oracle bones used for fortune-telling and record- keeping in ancient China. The Chou Dynasty (1122-221 BC) saw the full flowering of ancient civilization in China. During this period the empire was unified, a middle class arose, and iron was introduced. Master Kung, known in the west as Confucius (551-479 B.C.E.) developed a code of ethics that dominated Chinese thought and culture for the next twenty-five centuries. The belief system and philosophy of life based on the teachings of Master Kung represents a religion without a Supreme Being.

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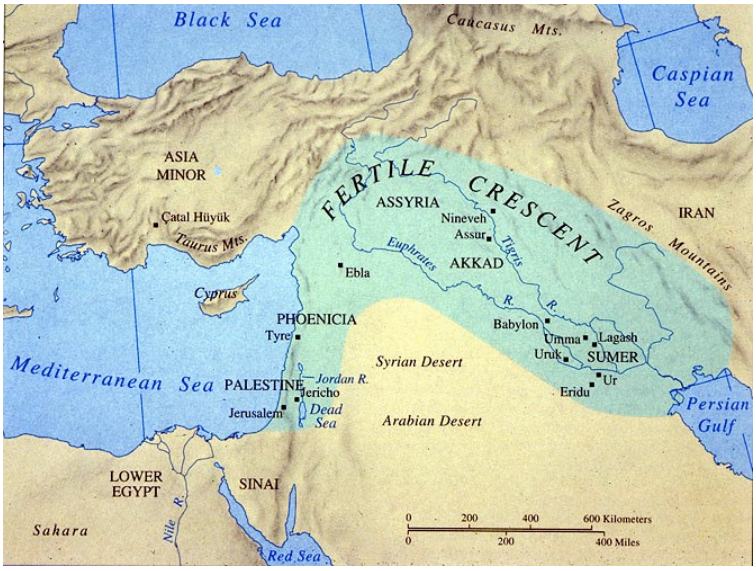
River Valleys Revisited: Learning About the Role of River Valleys in Human Civilizations

by Jack Zevin

Teaching about river valleys occurs in one of the first units in a World or Global history course. Usually, the river valleys are discussed as part of the ancient world, particularly Egypt and Sumer. Sumer and Egypt are among the first settled, literate, organized societies on the planet. These are excellent examples of the effects of fresh water on human civilization.

Much of human settlement still resides along rivers to this day and some of the same factors and problems persist. The war in Iraq is being waged in one of the places we count as a "cradle of civilization." According to Biblical accounts, Abraham came from Ur, one of the earliest cities built between two great rivers in Mesopotamia. The Tigris and Euphrates river valley was settled by the Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians, Assyrians, and many others, including the Arab-speaking peoples who inhabit Iraq today.

There are actually relatively few river systems of any great length on earth, and people have a special relationship with most of these bodies of water. Just how people use rivers and how rivers influence their behavior varies with populations, climate zone, weather, and resources.



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We can look at rivers in many ways, ecologically, historically, economically, politically, and demographically, but ancient river valleys are almost always discussed in demographic terms (e.g., how human beings settled along their banks and built cities, towns, ports, temples, and fortresses). However, rivers do not necessarily determine settlement, populations, travel, or trade. Much depends on the human culture that exploits the resources, particularly their ability to adapt to and interact with the rivers. Great civilizations tend to grow up on very special, and rather rare systems, those that combine climate, landscape, resources, and topography into a dense and productive society.

Location Theory

River valleys and human settlement can be viewed through the lens of a geographic theory sometimes called "location theory." This theory seeks to understand how and why people choose to build their settlements at certain points rather than others, why some places prosper and grow, some fade away, and others never develop at all. As real estate agents say, "what really counts is location, location, location." Building on a river has a lot of advantages: trade is easy, commerce convenient, fresh water plentiful, industry possible, and farming accessible. But beware of other factors, like climate and vegetation, topography and culture.

Depending on local conditions, there may be obvious disadvantages to building your city on a river: potential flooding, heat and humidity, intense cold and freezing, pestilence and insects, openness to invasion. There are always advantages and disadvantages to any location, so location theory likes to weigh all the factors involved in the balance to see if one place is better than another, one point superior to many others. Then a decision is made, and settlement, or a business, or an industry, proceeds to develop at the chosen location. Technology, human skills, and connections

with other places, can add to the balance of factors, shifting the outcome, the choice, from one location to another.

Location theory predicts that the place or point on a river or river system that has the most advantages (ancient or modern) in terms of settlement, trade, safety, defense, and the movement of peoples, will usually be where towns and cities develop and the greatest numbers live. For example, New York is in a much more favorable location than Lost Angeles, right on a fresh water river of considerable size and length, even if the climate is seasonal, while Los Angeles has far better weather, but is almost totally lacking in water. Both share advantageous coastal, port situations and both have a hinterland with important resources. But which is larger, safer, and which will probably last longer? Will the river valley trump the mild climate? Will water resources win out over sun and surf?

Teaching About River Valleys

There is a natural flow to teaching about river valleys, beginning with the sources of the river and ending with the delta. In between there are many twists and turns to the story of a river and its surroundings, and we as teachers can take advantage of each twist and each turn, examining locations as potential places for settlement and economic exchange, or perhaps as a spot for a capital city or a lovely temple. The same examination of a river and river system applies from ancient times to the present and undoubtedly the future as well, if you believe in the principles of location.

However, choices may differ with the times. Much depends on human technology, connections with other places and peoples, and the quantity and quality of local production, and nearby natural resources. A place that produces valuable products will clearly have an advantage over a place that just sustains itself and is needs. What surrounds the river may be very important, as high cliffs may impede settlement, while a gentle shoreline may improve settlement. Frequent floods may force changes, or people might learn to live with these problems and adapt their lifestyles to seasonal shifts in weather and water levels.

Teachers need to ask "essential" inquiry questions about rivers and river valleys, and their civilizations. Examples include the following:

1. Why do some great rivers and river systems result in the growth of settled civilizations and not others?
2. Why are some places along a river favored over others?
3. Are there locations equally or more advantageous to settlement than rivers?
4. Do all river valleys produce the same, or different, patterns of settlement?
5. Are river valleys easy to defend, invade, manage, and control?
6. How does technology change the use (or abuse) of rivers and river systems?

Students should also consider where they would choose to settle if they could make a personal choice and if they had to make a decision for a very large community.

Teachers can take a traditional "cradles of civilization" approach when teaching ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, or the Indus valley, but this approach gives the story away in a rather pedantic fashion. A better way is to present two river valleys from different parts of the world without benefit of identification or geographic location. Each river valley would be part of a mystery, an activity involving detective work and decision-making by students. Clues, such as length, climate, resources, topography, and other factors would be provided for student detection and analysis, providing a base for deciding where human settlement would, should, or could take place, and whether this will result in large populations, or not. This activity can be done individually or in groups, assigning students to gather, converse, and choose say, the three best locations for big settlements, cities, at different points along the river system. Teachers might also ask students to solve problems like identifying trade connections, travel routes, or setting up businesses at certain points.

The essential question for examination is "Which locations are best for settlement, and for what reasons"? Form groups of three to five, and have students take a look at two different river valleys, which we will call the Big Muddy and the Date Palm Waterway. Help students read information on maps so they can discover landforms (elevation), note types of vegetation near the river, locate places where the river bends, and find any other resources that are marked. Students should figure out the probable direction in which the river is flowing, discuss whether this makes a difference, and decide where the optimal locations for three important cities might be. Conclude with a discussion examining what students think are the most

important factors influencing human development, and the formation of cities (Technology, Topography, Natural Resources, Human Culture, Climate/Weather, Vegetation/Plant life, Length and Navigability, Political Power, Trade and Transport).

Teachers should not reveal the actual river valley's location until later in the discussion as this may spoil or sidetrack student commentary and ideas. Have a student from each group present their findings, perhaps writing their reasons on the board, and then open the argument to the whole class. What rules might they invent to explain human settlement; the importance of river valleys and their relationship to human development: the advantages of some locations over others? Do they agree that the same principles of location theory explain both the Big Muddy settlements and the Date Palm Waterway? Why or why not?

Ambitious students and teachers can examine several more river valleys and their patterns of settlement in both ancient and modern times and compare ancient and modern cities. Why are present day cities in Iraq such as Baghdad, Basra, Kirkuk, and Mosul, all in pretty much the same locations as the ancient cities of Ur, Uruk, Babylon, and Nineveh? Do the modern locations have the same advantages as the ancient ones? How has technology influenced locations? Students should also locate modern cities around the world not on major rivers or waterways and try to figure out why these cities have developed in their locations. They can also develop new essential questions about the relationship between people and water and human settlement and river valleys. For example, "If communities and countries pollute and abuse rivers and damage water supplies, how will that affect the future development around the globe"?

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Hinduism and the Origin of Caste in India

by Krystle Rogala

According to *The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism* (Flood, 2003), Hinduism is at the core of the culture and history of the Indian sub-continent. However, because it lacks many of the characteristics Westerners usually associate with religion, it can be puzzling to students in global history classes. Unlike Islam, Buddhism, Judaism, and Christianity, it has no founder, date of origin, established religious authority, or "revealed" scripture. It is also consider polytheistic (although this is disputed) with thousands of recognized divine "manifestations." The Vedas, the text considered at the heart of Hindu belief and practice, were supposedly discovered rather than revealed to mankind by a supreme deity. More than the other major contemporary religions, Hinduism rests on practice instead of belief. According to *The Blackwell Companion*, "It is thus extremely tolerant as to belief and generally intolerant in regard to wrong behavior" (110). This idea is fundamental to understanding the development and continued acceptance of caste in Indian society.

Hinduism's roots date back as far as 2000 B.C. Civilization in India began along the fertile valleys of the Indus and Ganges Rivers. Much of Indian culture was shaped during a formative period, lasting several centuries, between the destruction of the Indus River civilization and the revival of full civilization elsewhere on the subcontinent. This formative period is known as the Vedic and Epic ages. During this time, a group of Indo-European migrants - hunting and herding peoples originally from Central Asia - known as "Aryan" had a significant impact on the culture and structure of India.

Most of what is known about the pre-classical period of Indian history comes from literary epics written by the Aryans. Initially, these epics were passed on orally, but they were later written down in Sanskrit. The first epic, the "Rig-Veda," consists of 1028 hymns dedicated to various Aryan gods. Other texts include the "Ramayana" and the "Upanishads."

There are different theories about the establishment of the Indian caste system. They can be categorized as religious-mystical, biological, and socio-historical (http://adaniel.tripod.com/origin.htm). The religious-mystical theory can be seen in an excerpt from the Rig-Veda, which rationalizes the caste system by attributing its rise to the gods:

> "When they divided the original Man into parts, how many parts did they divide him? What was his mouth, what were his arms, what were his thighs and his feet called? The Brahmin was his mouth, of his arms was made the warrior. His thighs became the vaisya, of his feet the sudra was born" (Stearns, 2001: 54).

This section from the Rig-Veda illustrates the Hindu belief that the body parts of Purusha, the "original man," represent the basic castes. The higher castes begin from the top – the most intelligent, vital portion - of the body and the *sudra* is symbolized by the feet.

The biological theory of the origins of the caste system is that all living and non-living things inherit specific qualities in certain apportionment when they are born. Living things are divided into castes in accordance to the qualities in which they inherit. A higher caste individual would attain wisdom, honesty, intelligence, and goodness. These qualities decrease in appeal as the status of a caste decreases.

The socio-historical theory of the development of the caste system began with the Aryan invasions of India as Aryan ideas and social and family forms dominated. This process was similar to the development of feudalism in European society. A hierarchical caste system took shape as a means of regulating relationships between the Aryan conquerors and the native Indian people, who the Aryans regarded as inferior. Aryan warriors, leaders, and priests stood at the top of the social and religious pyramid. Under them were traders, farmers, and laborers. At the lowest social level, the "untouchables," were assigned undesirable jobs such as transporting the bodies of the dead or disposing of garbage. It was widely believed that literally touching these people would tarnish anyone from a superior caste. Gradually, the five social groups, or castes, became hereditary, with marriage between castes forbidden and punishable by death (Klostermaier, 119).

Three of the fundamental ideas of Hinduism support the maintenance of social stratification and inequality. Hindus believe in reincarnation and the concepts of dharma and karma. The ultimate goal for a Hindu is to achieve "moksha" (unity with the universal force). This happens through a succession of lives that are lived according to the laws of the universe. People of the highest Brahmin caste are closest to this ideal state.

Dharma is the underlying order of nature that includes specific rules the Gods gave to each caste. Dharma determines everything from the type of job you have to the types of recreational activities you can participate in. For Hindus, it is essential to follow the rules of dharma to progress towards "moksha" because of the law of karma. "Good" or "bad" karma, or spirit, determines the caste a person will be reincarnated into in their next life. Hindus are taught to accept their social status because it is seen as a response to their prior lives and violation of caste rules would condemn them to bad karma and worse conditions in future existences.

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Web-based Lesson: What are the causes and consequences of Muslim-Hindu conflicts in India?

by Thandi Center (Source: http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/teachers/lp_conflict.html)

These websites provides students with an opportunity to learn about the deep-rooted, historical conflict between Muslims and Hindus in India. As students explore the animosity between the two groups, they should also consider larger issues: whether religious beliefs can ever legitimize violence; whether religious conflict is an inevitable human experience; and possible resolutions to situations of religious conflict.

- Hindu-Muslim Conflict in India, May 24, 2002. (http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/week538/cover.html), *PBS Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly*. Provides a variety of perspectives on the outbreak of Muslim-Hindu violence in the province of Gujarat in February 2002, as well as some historical background on the tensions.
- India's Muslims, October 26, 2001 (http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/week508/cover.html), *PBS Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly*. Explores the impact of September 11th and the War on Terrorism on India's Muslim and Hindu communities. Provides interesting background information on the Muslims of India.
- Hindu-Muslim Violence Imperils India (http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,213670,00.html), *TIME.com*. A good description of the historical significance of the holy site in Ayodhya, and how extreme violence has been justified by both Hindus and Muslims in the name of preserving holy sites for their people.
- Protecting Religious Freedom and Holy Sites (http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/research/cjl/articles/holysites.htm). Holy places are often targets of violence or vengeance. The site offers recommendations about how to reduce violence and promote greater inter-group understanding.
- United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, November 1981 (http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/d_intole.htm). From the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, this resolution will provide students an international framework for understanding the necessary rights and freedoms associated with freedom of religion.
- India's Secularism Under Threat? (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/south_asia/1874473.stm), *BBC News*. March 15, 2002. Raises important questions about whether the secular state of India is threatened with collapse in the face of some of the worst Muslim-Hindu violence in history.
- Global Classroom Lesson Plan on Religion and Culture (http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/classroom/lp5.html). Using the Hindu-Muslim conflict in India as a case study, students investigate violent acts carried out in the name of religious conviction.

Explaining the Crusades

by Katharine Murawski

In 1970, Geoffrey Barraclough, the Research Professor of International History at the University of London, wrote in *The New York Review of Books*, "We [historians] no longer regard the crusades as a great movement in defense of Western Christendom, but rather as the manifestation of a new, driving, aggressive spirit which now became the mark of Western civilization. We no longer regard Latin states of Asia Minor as outposts of civilization in a world of unbelievers, but rather as radically unstable centers of colonial exploration" (16). Four decades later, this historical consensus does not seem to have permeated into the global history curriculum, which tends to support the Roman Catholic Church's claim that the Crusades were fought to end Islamic control over its holy sites. Significantly, Islam assumed control over the area near Jerusalem during the seventh century. It was four hundred years later before the Roman Catholic world responded.

For teachers, it is important to distinguish between the motives of individuals involved in the Crusades, who could be inspired by religious zealotry, the possibility of pillage, or simple adventure, and the underlying causes of these conflicts. The Crusades can best be understood as a clash of empires for control over the Mediterranean world. They were precipitated by the weakening of the Byzantine Empire, which threatened to leave Western Europe without a buffer zone separating it from a powerful Islamic world.

The decision by the Roman Catholic Church at the end of the eleventh century to initiate the Crusades, and of different sectors of Western European society to support the campaigns, was also in response to a series of social, economic, political factors. In Western Europe, an increase in population, without an accompanying increase in productivity and food supplies, was creating demographic pressure on the feudal social system. Banditry by displaced peasants and marauding knights threatened social stability and could be alleviated by shipping them off to the Holy Land to fight against "infidels." Nobles without land and titles, especially the younger sons of the aristocracy, hoped to conquer new territory and be rewarded with their own estates. Merchants saw war as a source of potential profit. They could provide Crusaders with loans, supplies, and ships. Soldiers hoped to acquire wealth as the Crusader armies indiscriminately attacked Muslim, Jewish, and Orthodox communities. The Roman Catholic Church could strength its authority over monarch, the nobility, and the general population by offering "indulgences," forgiveness in advance for any actions take during their mission or for misdeeds done in the past.

There were a total of nine crusades between 1095 and 1272, although only the first four were of major historical significance. During the First Crusade (1095-1099), Western European armies defeated disorganized Islamic forces and established four short-lived "Crusader States" in the Middle East. The Christian victory at Jerusalem was marked by the slaughter of thousands of its inhabitants, including women and children. The last Crusader state, the Kingdom of Jerusalem, fell to Islamic forces under Salah al-Din Yusuf ibn Ayyub, better known in the west as Saladin, in 1187. The second (1144-1155), third (1187-1192), and fourth (1194-1201) crusades were all efforts to recapture lost territory, although the Fourth Crusade pretty much abandoned this goal and looted Constantinople, the seat of the Byzantine Empire.

The history of the Crusades illustrates how once forces are unleashed, especially religious forces, they can take on a dynamic of their own. During the Children's Crusade of 1212, tens of thousands of children were inspired by religious conviction and the hardship of their lives to march toward Jerusalem in the hope of retaking the city for the Christian world. While the Roman Catholic Church did not endorse this Crusade, it made no effort to stop it. Many of the children died while crossing the Alps. Survivors were later captured and sold into slavery.

Christian Crusaders also targeted religious dissenters within the Roman Catholic Church. The Cathars or Albigensians movement in southern France distained material wealth and believed in a simpler religious life than that practiced by church officials. Some sects advocated women in the clergy, vegetarianism, and non-violence. In 1208, Pope Innocent III declared the Cathars and their leader, Count Raymond VI of Toulouse, heretics and ordered a Crusade against them. The French monarch and nobles from other regions took up the call, not because of religious persuasion, but to gain land and position.

French Catharists and the Albigensian Crusade: A Case Study of Medieval Heresy

by April McCarthy

According to the American Heritage Dictionary, heresy is "an opinion or a doctrine [developed or adhered to] at variance with established religious beliefs, especially dissension from or denial of Roman Catholic dogma by a professed believer or baptized church member." During the two millennium of Christian history, heresies have repeatedly emerged and been condemned. The Roman Catholic Church often dealt with them vigorously and at times brutally. Despite this, some heresies thrived, while others barely survived or were annihilated. While heresy, by its nature, involves theological debate, it also has been a factor in protest movements generated by social, political, and economic shifts.

An in-depth examination of local events, such as the Roman Catholic Church's response to French Catharists, known as the Albigensian Crusade (1209-1255), illustrates broad historical themes. Such themes include the process of nation-building in Europe, the nature of religious controversy, the relationship between religion and social movements, and why some heresies are defeated and others are successful.

Social Studies teachers generally associate the term "crusade" with the medieval wars waged against Muslims by the Roman Catholic Church and European monarchs between 1095 and roughly 1300 in an effort to capture Jerusalem and the Holy Land. However, the Albigensian Crusade was an internal European and Christian affair. It was a forty-six year campaign, initiated by the Roman Catholic Church, for the purposes of eliminating the Cathar heresy in Languedoc (the southern part of modern-day France) and to seize land held by its followers and protectors. Like the other crusades of this era, the Albigensian Crusade was marred by extreme brutality and carnage. Thousands perished by the sword and were burned to death, either individually or collectively when towns and villages were destroyed. Its victims were not Muslim and Jewish "infidels," but people who proclaimed their adherence to Christian principles.

In the middle of the eleventh century, modern states with official central authority did not exist in most of Europe. From approximately 500 A.D. to 1500 A.D., feudal arrangements predominated. Sandwiched between kings and the peasants were layers of feudal earls, counts, barons, and knights who ruled and protected small areas and relatively few people. By the 13th century, national unification was a priority as medieval rulers tried to increase public order, the efficiency of bureaucracies, control over local governors, the reliability of the military, and especially tax revenues.

At the time, France consisted of a number of independent provinces governed by local rulers. Not only was governmental administration divided, but there were barriers created by regional variations in language, customs, and laws. The inhabitants and rulers of each region distrusted the others and primarily identified with their locality. The nominal King of France actually had limited control over a very small region near Paris. Languedoc, in the south, had some of the richest lands and wealthiest cities in France. However, its relative isolation and mountainous terrain, combined with other barriers, made it difficult to incorporate into a unified kingdom.

By the eleventh century, towns, new businesses, and a commercial class had begun to emerge in Languedoc. Many of these towns became centers for trade by the middle of the twelfth century. As they grew in size and wealth, the towns attempted to reduce the power of the regional feudal lords and the influence of the clergy. As the towns started to dominate rural society, many landed aristocrats became identified with the towns and assumed the responsibilities of citizenship. As the urban centers of the south began to expand and flourish, they developed a certain degree of cosmopolitanism, including a willingness to tolerate and absorb foreigners and unbelievers into their communities. Independence, success, and cosmopolitanism all contributed to Languedoc becoming a hotbed for heresy, especially Catharism.

The Cathars of Languedoc adopted religious beliefs very similar to those promoted in the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation. They rejected the Roman Catholic Church, denied the validity and need for clerical hierarchies, and emphasized personal

religious experience. They amassed a large following in a social and religious movement centered around the town of Albi, from which they derived the name Albigensians.

Deeply troubled by the growth of Catharism, Pope Innocent III sent representatives to investigate the heresy and reconvert the heretics. They were unsuccessful, partly because the Cathars were protected by powerful nobles and even some local church officials who resented papal authority. In 1206, the Roman Catholic Church decided to use force to convert or destroy the Cathars. When the papal legate to the region was assassinated, Innocent III proclaimed a crusade against the "sinister race" of Languedoc and issued a Papal Bull offering indulgences to those who rallied behind the cause. Heretic-held land was offered as a reward for service to the church.

The military campaign, which in effect was a civil war fought between northern and southern France, lasted from 1209 to 1255. Between 10,000 and 20,000 crusaders gathered in Lyon and proceeded south. One of the most brutal encounters occurred at Beziers, a town known to tolerate both Cathars and Roman Catholics. The city was burned to the ground and as many as 20,000 men, women, and children were murdered. According to legend, when the papal representative was questioned by a crusader about the possibility that Catholics would die in the massacre, he responded, "Kill them all! God will recognize His own!"

In 1229, the political part of the crusade ended with the Treaty of Paris (also known as the Treaty of Meaux). According to the terms of the treaty, Queen Regent Blanche of Castile agreed to recognize Raymond VII as the legitimate ruler of Toulouse if he betrothed his daughter to Blanche's son. In return, Raymond the VII agreed to fight against the Cathar heresy, return all Church property, dismantle the defenses surrounding Toulouse, surrender his castles, and pay for damages. In violation of the agreement, Raymond VII was captured, flagellated in front of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris, and imprisoned. While Languedoc was now technically under the authority of the French crown, the social struggle was far from resolved.

In 1233, Pope Gregory IX supported a Dominican-led Inquisition at Toulouse for the purposes of uprooting Catharism. It was granted unlimited power to torture and burn Cathars at the stake. The sick, elderly, and even exhumed bodies were burned. Although the Inquisition met with resistance, the Cathar strongholds of Albi, Cordes, and Narbonne fell, one after the other. A final dramatic military action was the siege of a small Cathar fortress in Queribus. When it was conquered in 1255, the last Cathars were burned at the stake and the brutal crusade was over.

Teaching Implications

In order to go beyond the theological issues involved in heresy, social studies teachers should focus on the question of why certain heresies flourished. Clearly, the political, social, and economic atmosphere of the times and regions played a significant role in determining the success of religious movements. In turn, religious movements played a crucial role in the secularization of the world and supported new social and economic arrangements. The Cathar heresy merits particular attention because of its relationship with the development of urban and commercial life in Langedoc and its challenges to feudal arrangements. Former peasants who moved to towns and embraced Catharism were not only economically empowered, but had newfound political influence.

Heresy flourished more in southern France than in the north because the south lacked central political organization and strong clerical influence. It represented a significant threat to the authority of both the Roman Catholic Church and the French monarchy, neither of which could afford to sacrifice revenues from this wealthy region. The Albigensian Crusade was an alliance between the two, initiated for financial gain and political control.

Heresy should be viewed as an aspect of the contention between competing classes rather than solely a religious phenomenon. For those who challenged oppression, heresy provided an ideological basis for rebellion. For those who sought control, heresy justified their actions. The Roman Catholic campaign against the Cathars is also historically significant because the methods, including trials, torture, and execution, developed in this inquisition were later employed against Jews and Muslims when they were driven out of Spain.

Source: O'Shea, S. (2001). *The Perfect Heresy: The Revolutionary Life and Death of the Medieval Cathars,* NY: Walker.

Why Did The "Protestant Heresy" Succeed?

by Susan Guarrieri and Michael Mullervy

The World History Standards developed by the National Center for History in the Schools (http://nchs.ucla.edu/standards.html) describes the period from 1450-1770 as the "First Global Age." Standard 1 calls on students to examine "how the transoceanic interlinking of all major regions of the world from 1450 to 1600 led to global transformations." Standard 2 introduces students to the ways "European society experienced political, economic, and cultural ztransformations." A key transformation during this period, one with broad ramifications, was Martin Luther's challenge to the authority of the Roman Catholic Church and what came to be known as the Protestant Reformation. Building on the World History Standards, the question teachers need to address is "how did changing conditions in Europe make it possible for this 'heresy' to succeed after so many others had failed?"

Martin Luther

In October 1517, Martin Luther, a Roman Catholic monk and theology professor in Wittenberg, Germany, nailed "Ninety Five Theses" to the door of Castle Church. Theologically, Luther drew on the ideas of John Wycliffe and John Hus, who had challenged church authority in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. At its core, Luther's argument was that Christians achieve salvation by faith in Christ alone, rather than through good works, which included donations to the church. This was a direct challenge to the power and financial solvency of the Roman Catholic Church, which sold indulgences, or pardons that supposedly allowed people easier access to heaven. Later, in defense of his beliefs and life, Luther denied the supremacy of the Pope as an interpreter of God's will.

Ninety-Five Theses

26. They preach mad, who say that the soul flies out of purgatory as soon as the money thrown into the chest rattles.

27. It is certain that, when the money rattles in the chest, avarice and gain may be increased, but the suffrage of the Church depends on the will of God alone.

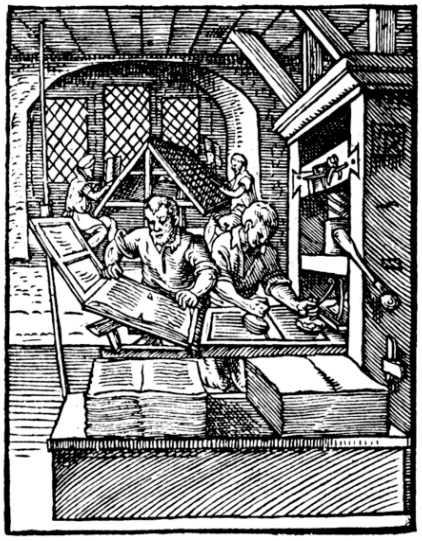
32. Those who believe that, through letters of pardon, they are made sure of their own salvation, will be eternally damned along with their teachers.

Luther's actions, and the willingness of secular authority to protect him from persecution, opened the way for a wave of religious innovation and political protest within the Christian world. More radical revisionists identified with Ulrich Zwingli of Switzerland. In 1536, John Calvin published *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* that provided a more logical structure for Protestant religious doctrine. In England, Henry VIII broke with the Roman Catholic Church when the Pope denied his request for a divorce. The 1534 Act of Supremacy made the King head of the national Anglican Church and led to the confiscation of church property by the crown. In Germany, in the mid-1520s, the religious reformation temporarily spurred open rebellion against established secular authority by peasants, urban dwellers, and even parts of the nobility. Approximately three hundred thousand peasants participated in the uprising against feudal arrangements that were pauperizing them. Under the leadership of Thomas Müntzer, they demanded that "Godly Law" replace the laws of man. The "Peasants' War" was the largest popular insurrection in Europe before the French Revolution. It ultimately failed when militant peasant soldiers were forced to return to farm their lands, and more affluent supporters in the cities and among the nobility reached accommodations with governing kings and princes.

Religious controversies generated by the Protestant Reformation in Europe contributed to a cycle of intermittent warfare that lasted until the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. Under terms of the Treaties of Osnabrück and Münster, rulers of the German states again were able to determine the religion of their land; Protestants and Catholics were legally equal; and Christians living in principalities where their denomination was not the established church were guaranteed the right to practice their faith.

Understanding the success of the "Protestant heresy" in the sixteenth century requires an examination of a number of major historical themes.

1. What appears to be sudden historical change can have deep roots. Protestant religious ideas had been promulgated by heretics and suppressed by the Roman Catholic Church for centuries.
2. Once powerful forces are unleashed, accepted modes of thought and action are rejected, and institutional weaknesses are exposed, social, political, economic, and religious change has its own dynamic. Once the stopper is removed, it is difficult to put the "genie" back into the bottle. Luther's religious pronouncements were intended to challenge particular church practices, not to unleash a religious reformation and political revolt.
3. Institutions and ideas that develop as part of one economic and political system may not be able to adapt and maintain their prominence and power as economic and political systems change. The Roman Catholic Church in Western Europe was very much part of the feudal system that emerged after the collapse of the Roman Empire. The weakening of the feudal system between 1000 A.D and 1500 A.D. and the growth of centralized government; the expansion of finance, trade, and formation of trade networks; the emergence of independent, prosperous markets, towns, and cities; and the rise of new social classes and economic interests, all weakened the power of the Roman Catholic Church and its hold over people. The sober, industrious lifestyle followed by many Protestants helped them flourish in the newly emerging capitalist economies of the period.
4. A changed political landscape can have broader repercussions. Nationalizing movements in England, France, and Spain, which had gained in strength and consolidated authority over the preceding centuries, made monarchs and nation-states less willing to abide by the dictates and taxation of a central trans-national religious body. Traditionally, the Roman Catholic Church had maintained its influence and power by balancing competing secular interests. In a classic example, Pope Alexander VI negotiated the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1493 and 1494, dividing newly discovered lands between Portugal and Spain. In this case, however, intervention ultimately weakened the Roman Catholic Church because it forced other European countries to renounce papal authority so they could join in the exploitation of the rest of the world. New political arrangements also meant that religious dissidents could secure safe haven from persecution.



Woodcut of a Printing Press, c. 1568

5. The development of new technology can support the rapid dissemination of ideas and political change. The printing press using moveable type that developed in Germany in the mid-fifteenth century made it possible for Luther's theses and the writings and sermons of other Protestant theologians to spread quickly and widely across Europe, and made it much more difficult for religious authorities to suppress heretical ideas.

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Teaching about the Scientific Revolution and the Trial of Galileo

by Michael Pezone

This is a sample from the plays written and performed by student teams in a tenth grade global history class in response to reading about and discussing the scientific revolution and the trial of Galileo. Many of the students in Law, Government and Community Service Magnet High School have significant academic difficulties. The assignment is designed to promote oral and written literacy, as well as academic seriousness and historical understanding. Galileo was forced by the Roman Catholic Church to recant heliocentrism and spent the last years of his life under house arrest. In a follow-up discussion, students examined the way the play differed from established historical facts and argued over whether Galileo's legacy would have been different if he had refused to recant.

Narrator: Galileo walks around talking to himself about his brand new discovery. He had used the newly invented telescope and observed that Jupiter's moon revolved Jupiter, which brought him to strongly agree with the heliocentric theory. When he discovered this he immediately dialed the number of his closest friend.
Galileo: Hello.
Friend: Hello Galileo, what have you been up to?
Galileo: Well I was looking through this hot new telescope I just bought and I noticed the coolest thing. From my observations I also have a little problem. The universe is sun-centered. It can't be earth-centered. There is just no possible way. The church and all in authority are wrong. But what am I going to do about this?
Friend: Well I am here for you. You are one of my best friends. I also promise that if the church ends up catching you and putting you to death, well I am here as your friend and lawyer.
Galileo: Well thank you, I got to go. If anything I will contact you.
Narrator: Little did Galileo know, that his best friend was not the only one listening. There was someone spying on him. The anonymous person then called up the church and reported what they heard. The church immediately called for the trial of Galileo. The trial went as follows.
Prosecutor: Are you aware Galileo that you have gone against the church, gone against the belief of your family but more importantly you have gone against authority.
Galileo: Yes I am fully aware of this but I did what I did and said what I said. This is my discovery and I am proud to say I have proved you wrong. All my life I have been taught to follow what was told to me and now I have proof that you are wrong and what has been told to me is wrong. I am the one to prove you all wrong!
Prosecutor: So you admit all of these accusations. You have made these discoveries and stated them for all to hear. Please do us a favor and state them again so there will be proof to put you to death.
Galileo: I have stated it once and I will not state it again. I will not apologize either. If you have something wrong with you ears, well then so be it but you know what I have stated. Whether or not I state it again, you will be putting me to death, will you not?
Prosecutor: Oh yes we will be putting you to death no matter what but you do not ask me any questions. I ask the questions around here. I am just a representative of the church. I am the lawyer. It is not my decision to put you to death. Your future, if you will have any lies in the hands of the judge.
Narrator: Just then the lawyer for Galileo comes into the room. All changes as she walks in.
Friend: Sorry I'm late, it's a long story. Well may I have a moment with my client?
Prosecutor: Yes go ahead.
Friend (to Galileo): So what is going on? Will they be trying to put you to death? I am so sorry that I am late but it wasn't my fault. I cannot, I mean I will not let them put you to death.
Galileo: Its okay you were late, it is only my life we are talking about right? See I have a plan, you see the windows right there? Well I am going to escape. You are my dear friend and you can come with me if you would like.
Friend: I would love to go with you but they will kill us both and I am not willing to lose my life. I will miss you though. I wish you the best of luck. I hope they will not capture you. You do know that if you get caught after this, things will be even worse. You will probably have a more painful death.
Galileo: Yes I know but the thing you don't get is that in order to kill me, they got to catch me first don't they.

England, Ireland and the Protestant Reformation

This lesson was developed for the New York State Great Irish Famine Curriculum. The curriculum was edited by Maureen Murphy of Hofstra University. It is available on-line at http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/nysssa/gif/index.html.

BACKGROUND: In 1517, Martin Luther challenged the authority of the Roman Catholic Church, precipitating the Protestant Reformation. In 1534, Henry VIII of England sided with the dissidents and declared himself the head of an independent Church of England. Irish rebels used this as an opportunity to challenge English rule in Ireland and requested support from Pope Paul III. However, by 1541, the Irish Parliament recognized Henry VIII as both the King of England and of Ireland. During the rest of the sixteenth century and the seventeenth century, religious disputes often contributed to political and military hostilities between the English crown and Irish rebels. Irish rebels were defeated despite support from Spain, England's major competitor and the leading Roman Catholic power, and from the Pope. Their defeats lead to increased English control over Ireland, through confiscation of lands previously held by Irish Catholics. In 1641, actions by Puritans who dominated the English Parliament deprived Irish of the right to own land. From 1642 to 1649, an English Civil War fought between the English crown and a Puritan dominated parliament contributed to a new round of Irish rebellion. During this period the English Parliament voted to confiscate and resell Catholic held lands in Ireland. In 1646 the parliamentary forces led by Oliver Cromwell defeated the crown's supporters and in 1649, Cromwell invaded Ireland, defeated the rebels, and slaughtered or displaced many Irish civilians. Parliament abolished the Irish parliament and confiscated Irish estates. By 1685, only twenty-two percent of the land of Ireland was owned by Irish Catholics.

AIM: How did religious wars of the Protestant Reformation shape the relationship between Ireland and England?
DO NOW: Examine the poem "The Gaels in Arms," written in the 1650s. What is the poet's message?
MOTIVATION: In the 16th and 17th century, religious conflict between Catholics and Protestants produced continuing warfare in Europe. It culminated in the Thirty Years' War that tore apart the remnants of the Holy Roman Empire. Protestant monarchs supported German Protestants and Catholic monarchs supported German Catholics. During the war, more than a third of the German population died of war, disease or famine. The war finally ended with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. The treaty recognized that in the future, the religion of the ruler would be the official religion of the area. Would you go to war to have your religion made the national religion? Explain. Would you fight to protect your right to your religious beliefs? Explain.
TRANSITION: In your opinion, why did religious differences produce such devastating wars in Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries?
ACTIVITIES: Read and discuss "The Gaels in Arms." Examine the Chronology of Religious Warfare, 1519-1685."
KEY QUESTIONS:
1. "The Gaels in Arms": What does the poet mean by "True faith shall be uncontrolled"? According to the poet, when will the people "be rightly taught"? Do you think an end to religious war could bring "everlasting peace" to Ireland and England? Explain. Do you think victory for one side could bring "everlasting peace"? Explain.
2. Chronology: What is happening in Europe during this period of Irish-English conflict? Do you think events in Ireland are related to other events in Europe? In your opinion, what other factors fed into this series of religious wars? In 1649, Oliver Cromwell, an enemy of the Irish, declared that the slaughtering of Irish troops was "a righteous judgment of God upon those barbarous wretches who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood." Do you believe the English actions were justified? Why or why not? Did these, and other actions by the English, justify Irish revolts? Explain. In your opinion, why did the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 fail to end the conflict between Ireland and England?
SUMMARY QUESTION: How did religious wars of the Protestant Reformation shape the relationship between Ireland and England?
HOMEWORK: Find a newspaper article that reports on a contemporary war. Summarize the information from the article. Discuss how this war is similar to or different from wars fought during the Protestant Reformation in Europe.

A. "The Gaels in Arms"

Source: Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffrey, ed., *A Military History of Ireland* (NY: Cambridge University, 1996)
The Gaels are the Irish, the followers of Calvin and Luther are Protestants, and Eire is another term for Ireland.

The Gaels in arms shall triumph
Over the crafty, thieving, false sect of Calvin,
Their nobles shall bear sway over unbelievers,
And scatter the brood of Luther.

True faith shall be uncontrolled;
The people shall be rightly taught
By friars, bishops, priests, and clerics,
And everlasting peace shall dwell in Eire.

B. Chronology of Religious Warfare, 1519-1685

Source: John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *A Short History of Ireland* (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1983)

1519-1521.	Henry VIII of England increases taxes in Ireland and strengthens English control.
1534-1536.	England breaks with the Roman Catholic Church. Thomas Fitzgerald, "Silken Thomas", the eldest son of the Earl of Kildare leads a rebellion against Henry VIII. Requests aid from Pope Paul III.
1537.	Rebels are defeated and leaders are executed. Henry VIII declared "Supreme Head on Earth of the whole Church of Ireland." Supresses monasteries.
1541.	Henry VIII declares that the King of England is the King of Ireland.
1549.	Efforts to impose English Book of Common Prayer on Ireland.
1550-1557.	English settlers replace Irish tenants on "plantations" in Ireland.
1561-1567.	Shane O'Neill rebellion.
1568-1573.	Earls of Desmond lead guerrilla war against England.
1579.	Pope Gregory XIII and Philip II of Spain support a second Desmond rebellion. Sir Walter Raleigh executes Spanish and Italian invaders.
1583.	Earl of Desmond killed near Tralee.
1595-1603.	Rebellion of Hugh O'Neill. O'Donnells and O'Neills lead Irish chieftains in Catholic rebellion against England. Hugh O'Neill declared unofficial Prince of Ireland.
1601.	3,500 Spanish soldier land in Cork to support the O'Neill rebellion. Combined Spanish-Irish force is defeated by Mounjoy.
1607.	Flight of the Earls. Leaders of rebellion flee Ireland and their lands are seized by the crown.
1610.	New English "plantations" are started in Ulster.
1641.	Puritans in the English parliament press for end to tolerance of Irish Catholicism. Scottish and English planters are killed in Ulster uprising. Protestants in England charge Irish Catholics with atrocities. English parliament votes to confiscate and resell Catholic held lands.
1649.	Oliver Cromwell and 12,000-man Puritan New Model Army invade Ireland. Defenders of captured towns are slaughtered. Rebellion defeated.
1652.	Increased English settlement in Ireland leads to land confiscation.
1653.	Puritan dominated English parliament abolishes Irish parliament. Irish estates are confiscated. Irish landowners east of the Shannon River face the death penalty or enslavement in the West Indies.
1688.	Only twenty-two percent of the land of Ireland is owned by Irish Catholics.

John Witherspoon: Religion and the American Revolution in New Jersey

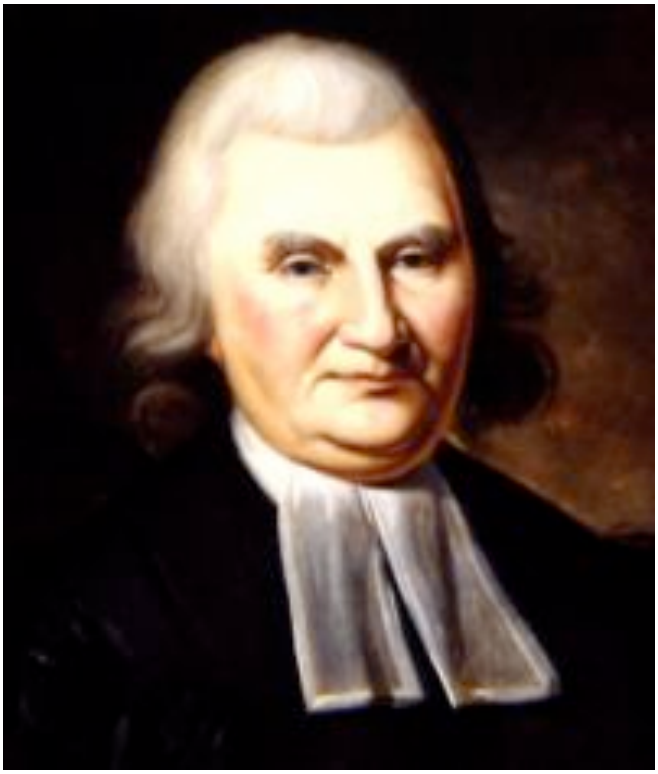
by Sandra Moss

John Witherspoon, who was born in Scotland in 1723 and died in Princeton, New Jersey in 1794, served as president of the College of New Jersey (later Princeton College) from 1768 until his death. Witherspoon was the only active clergyman and college president to sign the Declaration of Independence. Historians often refer to him as "the forgotten founder," in part because he was a Presbyterian minister and the American Revolution is seen as a secular struggle for political freedom. The new nation, in Witherspoon's view was to be built on political, educational, and religious foundations. The central theme of his sermons and lectures was the interconnectedness and mutual interdependence of these three fields of human endeavor.

When Witherspoon arrived at Princeton, he was determined to turn the sputtering little college into a new University of Edinburgh. It would become a meeting ground of American evangelical fervor and Scottish Enlightenment humanism. At Princeton, as well as serving as president, Witherspoon lectured on a variety of subjects, gave sermons at the college chapel, supervised the college-affiliated grammar school, and tutored private students in French and Hebrew. A firm believer in a liberal education, he required students to read works by a broad spectrum of scholars, including many Enlightenment thinkers. Through his own example of public service and curriculum reforms based on Scottish university models, Witherspoon turned Princeton into the nation's first true university. Among his students was James Madison, one of the principle authors of the United States Constitution.

Religion and education, in Witherspoon's view, were interdependent; the proper pursuit of one required competence in the other. He believed religious virtue was necessary for republican government and civic well-being. However, Witherspoon's views of the relations between church and state, while reflecting his Presbyterian sensibilities, were never theocratic.

Witherspoon arrived in America a year after the Townshed Act and just a few weeks before the British army occupied Boston. He publicly praised Dickinson's *Letters From a Farmer in Pennsylvania* (1768): "Public spirited writers took care that it [the spirit of liberty] should not sleep; and in particular the celebrated Pennsylvania Farmer's *Letters* were of signal service, by furnishing the lovers of their country with facts, and illustrating the rights and privileges which it was their duty to defend." Witherspoon set a pro-revolutionary (his enemies would say seditious) tone at Princeton by awarding honorary degrees to John Hancock and Dickinson in 1769. Students, including his own son, made no secret of their opposition to British tyranny and Witherspoon did nothing to curb their enthusiasm. In 1774, John Adams judged Witherspoon to be an "animated Son of Liberty." Witherspoon had the honor of being burned in effigy by British soldiers on Long Island in 1776.



John Witherspoon

Despite his recent arrival in the colonies, Witherspoon fit in easily with the colonial and national forces gathering momentum for the cause of independence. He adopted the American cause heart and soul. Witherspoon believed in the rational political choices of the common man ("persons of the middle degree of capacity") and stoutly, though pseudonymously defended Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*. In

his 1774 *Thoughts on American Liberty*, he urged the First Continental Congress to take a firm stand against British demands and was already thinking in terms of nationhood. A pastoral letter to colonial Presbyterian churches echoed these views. Witherspoon set about providing a moral basis for a union of the colonies against Britain at a time when it was unclear what form such union might take. He entitled his most famous American sermon, delivered at Princeton and widely published in Britain and the colonies, *The Dominion of Providence over the Passions of Men*. God, he assured his congregation, was on the side of the colonists. The struggle, when it came, would be God's struggle for religious freedom and political liberty. His sermons and writings helped mobilized America's revivalist passions on behalf of rebellion, winning hesitant colonists to the cause. Some British and Scottish critics went so far as to blame clerical influences, particularly that of Witherspoon, for inciting the rebellion. One Member of Parliament concluded, "Cousin America has run off with a Presbyterian parson."

Between 1774 and 1776 Witherspoon's pen and voice were at the service of his county committee of correspondence and the provincial legislature. In New Jersey, political leaders viewed the cause of independence with cautious sympathy. At a meeting of county delegates in early 1776, Witherspoon urged moderates to question continuing allegiance to an oppressive government and was the first public figure in New Jersey to issue a clear call for independence.

Witherspoon approved the arrest of colonial governor William Franklin by the provincial legislature and was named a member of the New Jersey delegation to the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia. It was said that Witherspoon wore his clerical collar to the meetings of the Continental Congress, but he was there as a delegate of the colony of New Jersey. He immediately comprehended that the Congress was a first step in national building, and not merely a body assembled to declare revolution. It has been suggested, that Witherspoon who was responsible for the phrase "with a firm reliance on the protection of a divine Providence" in the Declaration. He continued as a delegate to the Continental Congress until 1782, serving on over one hundred committees. He seems to have been a man who could work with practically anyone.

Scores of Princeton men served in the Continental army, including Witherspoon's son, James, who was killed at the Battle of Germantown. Among the casualties of the destructive British assault on Nassau Hall (the main campus building) during the Battle of Princeton was Witherspoon's treasured college library containing hundreds of volumes brought with him from Scotland.

Witherspoon believed that the independent American states would become a model for other nations seeking the "blessings of peace and public order." From the outset, he favored a strong confederation with a national government that could raise revenue through taxation and oversee commerce. In 1781, he stoutly defended the right of the Confederation as a whole (rather than individual states) to the western territories. Witherspoon shared the concerns of the small-state delegates concerning representation in national deliberations (one state, one vote) of the new Congress under the Articles of Confederation that he signed on August 26, 1778.

Although he played no direct role in drafting the Constitution and was not a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, Witherspoon headed the New Jersey delegation that ratified the Constitution in 1787. Perhaps his greatest influence on the Constitution was his earlier mentoring of James Madison. Several delegates to the Convention were Princeton graduates, including William Paterson.

Witherspoon believed that government had a duty to promote public religion as long as all citizens were accorded the "rights of conscience." He wrote in his *Lectures on Moral Philosophy* that "the magistrate ought to make public provision for the worship of God, in such manner as is agreeable to the great body of the society; though at the same time all who dissent from it are fully tolerated." Witherspoon understood America to be a Protestant nation. Catholics, with their perceived subservience to a distant and anti-Protestant papacy, were somewhat heretical in Witherspoon's view, but ought to be tolerated in America where posed little threat to the overwhelmingly Protestant majority. Witherspoon's rationale was that "such as hold absurd tenets are seldom dangerous. Perhaps they are never dangerous but when they are oppressed." There were an estimated three million Protestants, thirty thousand Catholics, and two thousand Jews in the colonies in 1776.

Religion was an important and often contentious issue in the colonies and new nation. Issues included the anxieties of minority Protestant denominations

(Reformed, Congregationalist, and Presbyterian) that the Church of England (Anglican/Episcopalian) would be established as the state religion. American churches also had to break or at least weaken the ties that bound them to denominational authorities in European countries and redefine themselves as American churches under self-governance. In the course of his American career, Witherspoon played a leading role in the shaping of the Presbyterian Church in America, a denomination that included some six hundred American congregations in the late colonial years.

Like many of the founding fathers, Witherspoon was a slave holder and, like them, was unable or unwilling to subject slavery to the same moral scrutiny as he brought to, say, freedom of religion. As was typical in New Jersey, his ownership was on a small scale, and his slaves were probably occupied with maintaining the grounds of his country home near Princeton. Despite his moral myopia, he admitted two free blacks to Princeton, privately tutoring them. In 1790, he chaired a New Jersey committee on abolition, favoring the gradual emancipation that characterized New Jersey's 1804 Act for the Gradual Abolition for Slavery.

As a teacher and college president, John Witherspoon had a profound influence on the founding generation of Americans. Graduates of Princeton during the Witherspoon years included future president James Madison and vice-president Aaron Burr, nine cabinet officers, twenty-one senators, thirty-nine congressmen, three justices of the Supreme Court, twelve state governors, and five delegates to the Constitutional Convention. Biographer Jeffrey Morrison calls John Witherspoon an "intellectual handyman" and a philosopher of the American Revolution. "Perhaps more than any other single founder," he concludes, "Witherspoon embodied all of the major intellectual and social elements behind the American founding."

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John Witherspoon on Independence

Source: *The Dominion of Providence Over the Passions of Man*. Delivered at Princeton, New Jersey on May 17, 1776, http://personal.pitnet.net/primarysources/witherspoon.html.

"If your cause is just, you may look with confidence to the Lord and entreat him to plead it as his own. You are all my witnesses that this is the first time of my introducing any political subject into the pulpit. At this season however, it is not only lawful but necessary, and I willingly embrace the opportunity of declaring my opinion without any hesitation that the cause in which America is now in arms is the cause of justice, of liberty, and of human nature . . . I am satisfied that the confederacy of the colonies has not been the effect of pride, resentment, or sedition, but of a deep and general conviction that our civil and religious liberties, and consequently in a great measure the temporal and eternal happiness of us and our posterity, depended on the issue. The knowledge of God and his truths have from the beginning of the world been chiefly, if not entirely, confined to those parts of the earth where some degree of liberty and political justice were to be seen; and great were the difficulties with which they have had to struggle from the imperfection of human society and the unjust decisions of usurped authority. There is not a single instance in history in which civil liberty was lost, and religious liberty preserved entire."

Religious Freedom: The Dutch Influence on New York History

by David Lonborg

As a Dutch colony, New Netherland quickly became home to a variety of European ethnicities, including Dutch Walloons, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Germans, Scandinavians, as well as religious groups, such as Calvinists (from the Dutch Reformed Church), Lutherans, Quakers, Catholics, and Jews. Along with the indigenous Lenape (Delaware) Indians and Africans (both free and enslaved), these various groups made New Netherland one of the most ethnically diverse colonies in the world. At this time, the people of most European nations were required to follow the religion of their ruler. Governor Peter Stuyvesant assumed extraterritoriality and made the Dutch Reformed Church the official state church of New Netherland. He enforced a Puritan-like code of conduct in the colony, involving strict observance of Sunday, and forbiddance of sale of liquor to Native Americans and other minority groups. Public worship of any religion besides the Dutch Reformed Church was forbidden..

The group that threatened Stuyvesant the most was the Society of Friends, commonly known as the Quakers. This fast-growing Christian sect was especially troublesome to Stuyvesant because they did not accept any earthly authority over religion and religious matters. Their doctrine of peace, equality, and pacifism made them an anomaly in the community, and the establishment was certainly not happy. Furthermore, their religious beliefs forbid the swearing of loyalty oaths. While they may have accepted Stuyvesant as the Governor-General of New Netherland, the Quakers would not have acknowledged his religious authority.

In the 1650s, New Netherland received an influx of Quakers, largely of English descent. A group of English Quakers settled in an area of present-day Queens, which they named Vlissingen, after the Dutch port from which they had originated. Over time the name of the community was Anglicized and became known as Flushing. Ironically, part of the reason why Quakers settled in New Netherland was that they were attracted by the religious diversity and tolerance that was non-existent in places like Massachusetts Bay.

Stuyvesant issued an edict forbidding anyone in the colony to entertain a Quaker or to allow a Quaker meeting to be held in their home. Those who violated the edict would be fined. On several occasions, members of the local community were brought up on charges of allowing Quakers to hold meetings in their home. One Englishman, Henry Townsend, was arrested and banished from the town.

Citizens, angered by Stuyvesant's intolerance and poor treatment of the Quakers, issued the Flushing Remonstrance on December 27, 1657. The letter called for an end to religious persecution, and for freedom of all faiths in the colony, much like the religious freedom that was found back in Holland. Just as Stuyvesant had wanted to bring Dutch religious law to the colony, the signers of the Remonstrance wanted to bring Dutch religious toleration to the colony. The signers of the document, many of whom were members of the city government, were brought up on charges, fined, imprisoned, or banished from the colony altogether. Stuyvesant then dissolved the entire town council and replaced it with his own appointed governing body. Despite their persecution, Quakerism continued to spread, and the religious intolerance went unabated.

A change came in 1662, when an English Quaker, and Flushing resident, named John Bowne was arrested for holding Quaker meetings in his home. Stuyvesant, upon meeting Bowne, was angered by his refusal to remove his hat, a sign of deference contrary to Quaker teachings. Bowne was imprisoned, tried, and fined. In a continued act of defiance, he refused to pay his fine or to even escape from prison despite the fact that his cell door was usually left unlocked. Stuyvesant banished Bowne from the colony, and he eventually made his way to Holland where he appeared before the Dutch West India Company. In a stunning blow to Stuyvesant's authority, the Dutch West Company ordered him to cease all religious persecution and to allow full religious freedom to all settlers in the colony. Freedom of religion in colonial America was actually a Dutch import. As Dutch citizens, the West India Company was expected to act in accordance with Dutch law. The 1579 Union of Utrecht, Holland's basic constitutional document, contained the guarantee of freedom of consciousness. Additionally, the States of Holland, the supreme Dutch authority, in 1654, had rejected calls for religious uniformity. At this point, Stuyvesant could no longer persecute religious minorities, and calls for religious uniformity in New Netherland were ended. When the English assumed control over the colony the following year, and renamed it New York, religious tolerance was a fact of life that would permanently remain in the colony.

Documenting Religious Freedom in the United States

A. Remonstrance of the Inhabitants of the Town of Flushing (1657)
Source: http://www.nyym.org/flushing/remons.html
The *Flushing Remonstrance* is a precursor to the freedom of religion clause in the Bill of Rights. It was signed on by English settlers who challenged persecution of Quakers by Peter Stuyvesant, the Governor of New Netherland.

"You have been pleased to send unto us a certain prohibition or command that we should not receive or entertain any of those people called Quakers because they are supposed to be, by some, seducers of the people. For our part we cannot condemn them in this case, neither can we stretch out our hands against them, for out of Christ God is a consuming fire, and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. We desire therefore in this case not to judge least we be judged, neither to condemn least we be condemned, but rather let every man stand or fall to his own Master . . . If any of these said persons come in love unto us, we cannot in conscience lay violent hands upon them, but give them free egress and regress unto our Town, and houses, as God shall persuade our consciences, for we are bound by the law of God and man to do good unto all men and evil to no man."

B. "George Washington's Reply to the Jewish Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island (1790)
Source: http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/trm006.html
At the time of the revolution there were approximately two thousand Jews in the American colonies. The majority supported independence and a number fought in militias or the Continental army. In 1790, the President of the Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island wrote a letter to George Washington expressing concern about religious freedom in the new country. The following is from Washington's reply.

"It is no more that toleration is spoken of as if it was the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily, the government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support."

C. Treaty of Peace and Friendship between the United States and Tripoli (Barbary Coast) (1797)
Source: http://www.stephenjaygould.org/ctrl/treaty_tripoli.html

Article 11. As the Government of the United States of America is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion; as it has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion, or tranquility, of Mussulmen [Muslim]; and, as the said States never entered into any war, or act of hostility against any Mahometan [Mohammedan] nation, it is declared by the parties, that no pretext arising from religious opinions, shall ever produce an interruption of the harmony existing between the two countries.

D. Thomas Jefferson's "Wall of Separation" letter to the Danbury Baptist Association (1802)
Source: http://www.usconstitution.net/jeffwall.html
The Danbury Baptists were a religious minority in Connecticut. They complained to President Jefferson that their religious liberties were treated as privileges granted by the state legislature rather than as immutable human rights. The following is from Jefferson's reply.

"Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between man & his god, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, thus building a wall of separation between church and state. Adhering to this expression of the supreme will of the nation in behalf of the rights of conscience, I shall see with sincere satisfaction the progress of those sentiments which tend to restore to man all his natural rights, convinced he has no natural right in opposition to his social duties.

Powder Keg: Palestine, Israel, and the United States

by Jesse Sherer

Carter, J. (2006). *Palestine Peace Not Apartheid* (NY: Simon and Schuster).
Levin, A., ed. (2007). *Bearing False Witness: Jimmy Carter's Peace Not Apartheid* (Boston, MA: Committee for Accuracy in Middle Eastern Reporting in America).
Dershowitz, A. (2006). *Debunking the Newest-and Oldest-Jewish Conspiracy.* (http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/research/working_papers/dershowitzreply.pdf, accessed December 19, 2007).
Foxman, A. (2007). *The Deadliest Lies, The Israel Lobby and The Myth of Jewish Control* (NY: Palgrave).
Mearsheimer, J. and S. Walt (2007). *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux).

For the American Jewish community, of which I consider myself a member, Israel represents strength and perseverance, a safe harbor after millennia of destruction. American Jews often see Israel as the only true ally of the United States in the Middle East, one that merits this country's support no matter the cost. However, several issues, including disputes about land and water rights between Israelis and Palestinians, the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem since 1967, continued Israeli settlement on formerly Arab lands, disagreement with some Israeli military operations, failures of the peace process, and suspicion that support for Israeli policies makes the United States a target for Islamic militants, lead some Americans to question whether United States' support for Israel is justified. In the last few years this debate has been especially heated. In this article I review four books and an extended article that address the future of the relationship between the United States and Israel.

The Israel Lobby

In *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, John Mearsheimer, a professor of political science at the University of Chicago, and Stephen Walt, a professor of international relations at Harvard University, warn that the pro-Israel lobby in the United States wields enormous influence over American foreign policy and pushes it in directions that might not benefit this country.

The pro-Israel lobby, which is a coalition of Jewish and evangelical Christian groups, strives to have Israel presented in the media and to the public only in a positive light and to intimidate opponents and politicians so they are frightened to criticize Israel. One of its major weapons is money, which it uses for advertising on television, radio, in newspapers and magazines, and for campaign donations.

Measheimer and Walt refute the lobby's claim that Israel remains of strategic importance to the U.S. They believe this was true during the Cold War when many Arab states were under the influence of the Soviet Union. However, they argue that since the first Gulf War, Israel has become a strategic burden to U.S. interests. According to Mersheimer and Walt, Islamic groups, especially Hamas and Hezbollah, have made the U.S. a target for terrorism because of its support for Israel.

Mersheimer and Walt also challenge arguments that Israel is a democracy in the same model as the United States. Israeli citizenship is based on the principle of a "Jewish blood kinship," which results in second-class treatment of Palestinians. Under this principle, when a Jew from anywhere in the world arrives in Israel they have the automatic right to immediate citizenship.

Former President Carter

In *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*, Jimmy Carter uses his experience as a former President and as a Nobel Prize-winning peace activist on the world scene, to try to explain, and propose solutions to, the long-term Arab-Israeli conflict. Carter argues that the Palestinians, as well as neighboring Arab states, are no longer committed to the destruction of Israel, and are now ready to recognize its right to exist. Carter has a number of disagreements with Israeli policies. He is upset that Palestinians must obtain "permanent resident permits" after they reach twelve years of age, making them aliens in their homes without the benefits citizenship. He is particularly troubled by the security wall Israel is constructing to fence itself off from Palestinian populations on the West Bank. He charges that it is in reality an "imprisonment wall" that will cripple the Palestinians, cut them off from the outside world, and undermine any chance for a peace settlement. While Carter demands that Israel's Arab neighbors must pledge to live in peace, he places the largest responsibility for a peace settlement on Israel.

He challenges the Israelis to comply with international laws, previous border agreements, the 1993 Oslo Accords, and the U.S. supported 2002 roadmap to peace. Carter also supports the position of Mearsheimer and Ward that the U.S. is increasing global anti-American feelings and terrorism by supporting unjust Israeli "apartheid" policies.

Sharply Worded Replies

The positions advanced by Mearsheimer, Ward, and Carter have drawn sharp rebukes. The Committee for Accuracy in Middle Eastern Reporting in America (CAMERA) rebuts many of Carter's statements. Whereas Carter paints the security wall as an impenetrable Berlin-style wall, it is mostly constructed of chain link fence. In addition, Israeli authorities have been careful not to annex any Palestinian land during its construction. They are especially unhappy with Carter's use of the term apartheid, which invokes memories of racist policies in South Africa. They reiterate that it is for security purposes, not to implement social policies.

According to CAMERA, one of the major problems with Carter's book is that he virutally ignores the anti-Semitic and violent acts commited against the Jews by Arab nations, going so far as to claim that the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) never endorsed the aniliation of Israel or the Jews. CAMERA amasses evidence about airline hijackings, suicide bombings , and the PLO's connection to the 1972 murder of members of the Israeli Olympic team in Munich. According to CAMERA, PLO leader Yasser Arafat spoke of his mission to destroy Israel in a March 20, 1970 Washington Post interview.

One of the most vocal supporters of Israel is Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz, who criticizes the theories of Mearsheimer and Walt in his paper *Debunking the Newest-and Oldest- Jewish Conspiracy.* Dershowitz actually draws parallels between positions taken by Mearsheimer and Walt and historical propaganda attacks on Jews, including *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. He reminds readers that influential Palestinians sided with Hitler and asked him for help in eliminating Jewish settlers during the British Mandate and World War II.

Dershowitz contends that the supposed influence of the pro-Israel lobby is really a fiction. He points to the fact that most American Jews did not support the current Iraq war and that many members of the lobby identified by Mearsheimer and Walt have only one thing in common, the desire to see democracy triumph over tyranny. Dershowitz argues that support for the state of Israel balances well with American ideals and interests. According to Dershowitz, it is the Palestinians, not the Israelis, who have continually blocked peace in the Middle East, and the problems faced by the Palestinians today are caused by their own leadership, not by the Israeli government. To Mearsheimer and Walt's charge that ties between the U.S. and Israel have made the U.S. a terrorist target, Dershowitz responds that terror organizations base their hatred of the U.S. on its entire stance in the Middle East, not just on the question of Israel.

Abraham Foxman, the national director of the Anti-Defamation Leauge, is one of the leading American proponents of Jewish interests, and a staunch defender of Israel. Point-by-point, Foxman vehemently disputes what he sees as Mearsheimer and Walt's distorted, anti-Semitic, and anti-Israel theories. A primary focus in his book is on the creation of the state of Israel. Mearsheimer and Walt charge that as many as 700,000 Palestines were forced from their land by Jewish troops. While Foxman admits that some Palestinians were driven into exile, he argues that many left of their own accord or under the encouragement of Arab leaders. Foxman feels that the positions taken by Mearsheimer and Walt as so biased that they end justifying the Palestinian use of terrorism.

According to Foxman, the pro-Israel lobby in the United States is a varied group representing different individuals and interests who believe a close bond between these two democratic nations is beneficial for both of them. It is no different than any other advocacy group.

Whatever your position on the pro-Israel lobby or on the final resolution of the Israel-Palestinian conflict, a stable democracy in the Middle East that shares American concerns is a vital ally for the United States. It is also important to recognize the role Israel plays as a safe harbor for Jewry in a troubled world. American support for Israel may not always be the best thing, and like most alliances and diplomatic relations it can complicate matters for the United States. However, I believe the United States would be in a far worse situation if it did not support Israel.

Teachers Respond: Is U.S. Policy in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Balanced?

Barbara Bernard, NYSCSS Human Rights Committee: U.S. policy has been to support its ally, Israel, while attempting to solve the grievances of the Palestinian people, however, many Palestinians, and other Arab leaders as well, seek the destruction of Israel. As the Palestinians have become radicalized, a peaceful solution has become more elusive, especially with the election of the Hamas terrorists. Their refusal to compromise has polarized each side and made any solution impossible. Former President Carter's proposed solutions ignore the Palestinian suicide bombers whose actions resulted in Israel constructing a self-defense wall. Some of Carter's suggestions can only be implemented when the violence ends. The United States has given billions to help the Palestinians and their leadership. It has convinced Israel to make land concessions in order to make a two state solution a reality. Professors Mearsheimer and Ward discount U.S. pressure on Israel. U.S. policy has never compromised American self-interest in the strategically important Middle East. Islamic terrorists hate America because of its military presence in the area and use Israel as a scapegoat to divide us. Islamic anti-Semitism cannot be ignored as part of their overall world-view.

Dennis Urban, John F. Kennedy High School, Bellmore, NY: In a 2003 *New York Times Magazine* interview, journalist Deborah Solomon accused acclaimed linguist and political activist Noam Chomsky of being a self-loathing Jew for his criticism of Israel. Chomsky responded, "It is a shame that critics of Israeli policies are seen as either anti-Semites or self-hating Jews . . . If an Italian criticized Italian policies, would he be seen as a self-hating Italian?" While his analogy may be problematic, Chomsky's point raises important questions for social studies teachers. Specifically, do fears of being labeled an anti-Semite dissuade teachers from broaching certain issues regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Although I am not Jewish, many of my students are, and culturally responsive pedagogy is a cornerstone of my teaching philosophy. With remarkable facility and surprisingly little controversy—especially in the context of an affluent district with a relatively homogeneous student body — I have held discussions on slave reparations and affirmative action, but I have been loath to engage in any substantive discussions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, lest students sling charges of anti-Semitism around the classroom. The review of recent literature about U.S. policy in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict demonstrates the volatility of the issue and helps to explain why teachers have difficulty engaging students in critical conversations about the topic. Carter's book and Mearsheimer and Walt's arguments have elicited much criticism, some warranted and some exaggerated. But these works and their rebuttals can provide teachers with fresh material to inject into classroom discussions on the topic. Holding an organized, democratic dialogue on a controversial issue can be intimidating, but the United States' role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict certainly deserves closer examination in our social studies classes. One need not look past the front page of the *New York Times* to understand why.

DeAnna Whitley, Arts High School, Newark, NJ: I think the United States needs to have a balanced response to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. Currently U.S. policy is far from balanced. It sends large amounts of money to Israel and essentially funds their government. It should either give money to both sides or to neither of them. Both the Palestinians and the Jews have been denied their rights in the past. Just as there is now an Israeli state, sooner or later there needs to be an independent Palestinian state. I teach grades 9 to 11, U.S History and World History on Cultures. As teachers, we need to expose our students to both sides of the issue, encourage them to do independent research, and allow them to draw their own conclusions.

Juanda Gikandi, Princeton (NJ) High School: There was a teacher workshop at Princeton last year on Israel and one of the most interesting presentations was about the education of Palestinian children in Israel. All children attending public schools in Israel are required to take Hebrew, but Palestinian history and languages

are not represented in the curriculum. The presentation was not well received by the audience, where a number of people were upset because the speaker criticized Israel. Israel's treatment of Palestinians inside of Israel, on the West Bank, and in Gaza continues to be a sensitive topic and disagreement with Israel policy tends to be silenced. I saw a documentary about Israeli and Palestinian children and the children were talking about solutions to the problems there. I think there is going to have to be a lot of give and take if the conflicts in that region are to be resolved. I am a perpetual optimist, so I think resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is possible, but it will not happen unless people feel free to discuss the issues.

Mark Stetina, Moorestown (NJ) Friends School: The United States position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is absolutely biased. There have been some effort to support calls for a free Palestine state, but these have always been circumvented by support for Israeli actions. When I was living in Argentina I was exposed to a much broader international conversation about events in the Middle East. The rest of the world sees these biases very clearly. The problem for me is that while an independent Palestinian state looks great on paper and is the absolute right thing to do, it probably would be a threat to the existence of Israel. It would have to agree to be law-abiding and accept the right of Israel to exist. The Bush Administration has urged support for Israel as America's primary ally in the region in the war on terror and as a democratic country. I do not think it is useful to picture everything in black and white terms. There are a lot of grey areas. There are people who support Hamas and a Palestinian state who are definitely not terrorists. In a more balanced foreign policy they would be supported.

Mark Willner, former chair, Social Studies, Midwood High School at Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, NY: The U.S. support for and friendship toward Israel pointedly and rightly outweighs its dealings with the Palestinian Territories. There is not and never has been any nation-state called Palestine, although the title question would have you think otherwise. Why should there be any balance in U.S. international policy? How should balance be measured? Should United States policy have been balanced during the Cold War in the conflicts between North and South Korea and East and West Germany? Shouldn't the United States value support, friendship, shared ideals, values, and interests, as well as reciprocal trust and respect? To date, Israel has proven itself worthy of support by the U.S. With changes in its stance on terrorism, human rights, education, political unity and stability, and regional cooperation, the Palestinian Territories would see an uptick in the U.S. foreign policy ledger.

Maram Mabrouk, North Shore High School, Glen Head, NY: In recent years, the principle United States' foreign policy goals have been to combat terrorism and forge democratic governments around the world, but especially in the Middle East. These goals have made the United States the subject of attack by various groups. However, it is the United States' failure to promote these goals among its allies that has caused even more anger and resentment. Israel, for a number of reasons, cannot be considered a democracy in a meaningful sense and it is not worthy of United States support. According to Human Rights Watch.org, Israel bans Palestinian students from obtaining a higher education abroad, constructs fences to separate people based on ethnicity, requires that a portion of its population have residency visas in order to move around their territory, has a history of attacking sovereign neighbors, cuts off fuel and power from residential areas, and arbitrarily blocks, delays, and harasses people trying to obtain urgent medical treatment, resulting in permanent disabilities and in some cases death. The government of Israel commits many of these acts using funds and weapons secured from the United States. Such a country should not be considered an ally, let alone the closest ally of the United States in the region. When Israel commits these acts, it increases the likelihood of attacks against the U.S. The real issue is not whether the United States should maintain a balanced policy. It is whether the United States can afford to support allies whose actions put this country and American citizens in jeopardy.

Teaching Middle-Level Students About Religion

by Jonie Kipling

When teaching about religion to students in upper elementary and middle school classes, I have found it beneficial to first clarify two concepts. They need to understand the meaning of religious beliefs and practices and how as citizens of a pluralistic society like the United States we can appreciate the different religions in our communities. These two concepts are knowledge and belief. While they seem so basic, it is actually very interesting to listen to students think about and respond to the question, "What does it mean to know something?"

Students often respond to this question with answers like:

- To know something is to understand it or to remember it.
- When you know something you can prove it.
- Things you know are things you've seen or experienced yourself.
- You can teach things so other people will know them.

After discussing the idea of knowledge, I ask them, "What does it mean to believe something?" Answers are often:

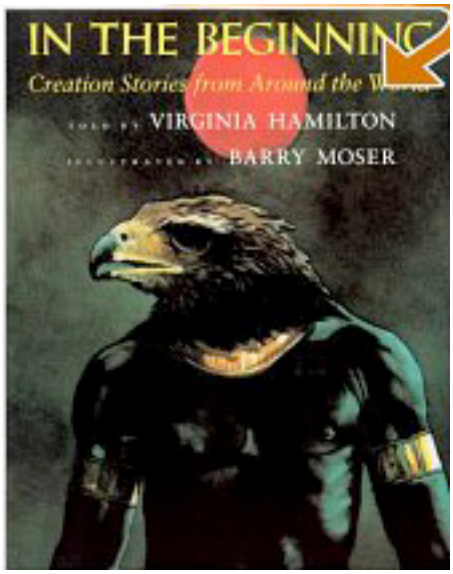
- You don't have to prove something to believe it.
- You can believe things that people tell you but it's different from knowing. Trust is involved.
- When you believe in something you have faith in something.

After writing these responses on two pieces of chart paper, we discuss the idea of systems. Systems are ways of organizing things. Economic systems help us organize how people use resources to meet needs and wants. Government systems help people organize how decisions are made in countries. The circulatory system is an organized collection of veins and arteries that help people pump blood throughout our bodies. Referring to their responses on the chart paper, I ask, "What can we call this system that organizes the things we know?" Students usually respond with "education." They usually label the column describing beliefs as "religion."

Education is our way of helping each generation understand the knowledge of our time. A quote by James T. Adams, "Scientific knowledge is constantly changing. A discovery of one year receives confirmation the next or is thrown aside," helps us understand that human knowledge is not stagnant. As technology changes, the more we can understand what we did not in the past.

Religion helps us deal with things that we cannot always explain. These things are usually not observable or not discernible to the senses, therefore, we cannot follow any scientific method to understand these things. We simply believe.

Reading creation myths is a wonderful way to help students understand how ancient people grappled with ways of trying to make meaning of things they did not understand. They did not have developed sciences or technology so their belief system became their primary way of explaining things. Students read creation myths from different cultures and we use these myths to help us understand how ancient people viewed themselves and their world. A good resource is *In the Beginning*: *Creation Stories from Around the World* by Virginia Hamilton (NY: Harcourt, 1988).



After our creation myth unit, we examine different times in human history where scientific discoveries have changed the ways humans look at the world around them and use science to try to explain things. We read about Galileo's discoveries and his trial for

heresy. We learn about Charles Darwin and how his observations and theories revolutionized the way people explained the way species adapted and changed over time. We read newspaper articles about discoveries of new fossils that change the way we understand how early humans developed, and we read articles about why Pluto no longer is considered a planet.

These two units help students to distinguish between using knowledge, developed or gathered by scientific methods, and religion, which is what humans believe in order to try to help them understand things they cannot explain.

Teaching young students about religion also requires that a teacher explain what the different religions are. All students know that Christianity is a religion, but they generally do not understand the difference between Protestants and Catholics and the different denominations within these two branches of Christianity. Most students have heard of Judaism but do not understand how Jewish beliefs and practices differ from Christian beliefs and practices. Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism are less familiar to students. It is a surprise to students to learn that there are many religions that are barely known in the United States, such as Jains, Baha'is, Shintoists, and Zoroastrians, that have millions of adherents around the world. It is a great activity to have students list and investigate as many religions as they can that exist in the world today. It helps them see that there are many ways that human beings approach religion.

Organizing studies this way enables students to look at modern practices and beliefs, as well as the history that influenced the origin of the religion. It is also important to discuss different philosophies of the world and the difference between religion and philosophy. Religion is a belief system that explains the unknown and usually involves a supreme being (or multiple supreme beings). It establishes what is right or wrong, good or bad. Philosophy also tries to establish a basic moral code, but is based on the observation of human behavior and does not always involve a supreme being.

Being citizens of the United States, we hold the first amendment close to our hearts -- we have the right to choose what we will believe. No one, including our government can tell us how or what to believe. This sense of individual choice should be supported in our classrooms. However, even while students may be able to accept the idea that people have freedom of choice when it comes to religion, they do not always have the tools needed to deal with disagreements that arise from discussions between people with different religions. This is why I have been developing a unit based on the concept, "When do people's different perceptions create conflict?"

Each religion develops a different set of perceptions for their followers about the world around us. Each religion has its own views on women and women's roles. Different religions view children's roles in families differently, and how to raise children or discipline them. There are different ideas about food, clothing, time, and community importance.

Last year there was a news story about a young Muslim woman who was working at a checkout counter at a local grocery store. When a customer wanted to purchase pork the clerk was uncomfortable handling what is forbidden by her religion. The customer was quite upset. How can our students help solve the problem in this situation? Can they understand the point of view of both the clerk and the customer? What can the clerk and the customer do to be sensitive to the other's needs? These are the types of activities our students need to engage in to learn how to live with each other's differences.

I read about school district leaders who were dealing with the issue of gangs in their schools. Gang members were wearing symbols on gold chains around their necks. In an effort to control the gangs, the school leaders banned students from wearing any items of symbolic jewelry. Of course, there were Christian students wearing crosses and Jewish students wearing Stars of David. They were told to remove their necklaces, but refused claiming it was against their first amendment rights. Were they right? Did the school have the right to ask them to remove religious items? Was this infringing on their right to observe their own religion?

Having students participate in problem-based activities such as these when dealing with religion will help them understand the concepts of freedom of religion and tolerance. They will also be able to practice dealing with situations that arise in the world around them. It is not enough for us to teach children about religion and their rights. We need to teach them how to practice those rights and the responsibilities that go along with them.

Using Children's Literature to Teach About Religion in America

by Jonie Kipling

The Bill of Rights begins with the words, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof . . ." Since these words were written, Americans have struggled to understand and apply what Thomas Jefferson termed "the wall of separation between church and state." Americans cherish the right to choose what we believe and how we will express our beliefs. However, we still debate the role religion should play in elections and whether towns should include religious symbols in holiday displays. Because freedom of religion is such a fundamental part of America's national ideology, it is important that upper elementary school students understand the history that led the founders to include this right in the First Amendment.

Most American students can recite the story of the Pilgrims, including that they left England on the Mayflower seeking religious freedom in a new world. However, there is a strong element of myth in this account. The Pilgrims initially moved to Holland where they found a level of religious acceptance. They left Holland and made the dangerous journey to America because they felt their families were growing too comfortable there and were adopting Dutch customs. The Pilgrims sailed to the Americas and established their own colony because they wished to separate themselves from the world and its influences. While the Pilgrims, and the Puritans who followed them, wanted the freedom to follow their own religious beliefs, they were not prepared to offer this freedom to others. Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams were forced to leave their homes and found new colonies because they openly disagreed with the leadership of the Massachusetts colony.

One of the first documents that expresses the desire for religious freedom in America is the "Flushing Remonstrance." It was signed in 1657 by thirty-one Englishmen living in the Dutch New Netherland colony in protest against a proclamation by Governor Stuyvesant prohibiting Quakers from living in the area. The men were arrested and some were even tortured, however, they inspired another Flushing resident, John Bowne, to open his home to worship by Quakers. Bowne was arrested and deported to Holland to stand trial before the Council of Dutch West India Company. When he returned to New Amsterdam in 1664, he had a letter from the Council to Governor Stuyvesant that permitted the Quakers to remain in the colony. The letter stated, "the consciences of men ought, at least, to be free."

In 1768, five men were put on trial in Virginia for disturbing the peace because they had preached sermons based on their faith as "Separate Baptists." The Church of England was the established church of Virginia and the only one allowed to meet openly in the colony. Whether people were members of this church or not, they had to pay taxes to support it. After the American Revolution, Virginia adopted a new law stating that "church establishment should be abolished, . . . and all religious societies should be protected in the peaceable enjoyment of their own religious principles and modes of worship."

The United States became the first nation to allow members of different faiths, Christian and non-Christian faiths to hold full citizenship rights. In 1790, George Washington wrote a letter to the members of the Touro Synagogue in Rhode Island, where he stated, "The citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind an example of an enlarged and liberal policy, a policy worthy of imitation. All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship." Washington added, "the government of the United States . . . gives to bigotry no sanction" and "to persecution no assistance."

Today, the United States remains a pluralistic society where citizens learn to live side by side with respect for each other. While there have been many sad stories about the violation of individual rights, there have also been some wonderful stories that show American values at their best. On April 3, 1993, the *Boston Globe* reported the opening of a new Islamic Center for New England. The congregation, which started in the 1930s, had grown quite large and by the 1990s a new building was needed. Plans were made to build a mosque in Milton, Massachusetts, however, local residents were not receptive and zoning laws were altered to stop construction. Shortly after, a family in neighboring Sharon, Massachusetts offered to sell their 55-acre farm to the Muslim congregation. Sharon, a town with both large Christian and Jewish populations, welcomed the Islamic center with open arms. At a town meeting, "speaker after speaker stood upon a wobbly chair to salute" the president of the Islamic Center and praise

his vision of interfaith harmony. They quoted the Koran, the Torah, and the New Testament. This story provides evidence that it is possible to live side by side respectfully with others who have different beliefs.

Reading historical fiction can help students understand struggles for religious freedom in American history and how to avoid conflict between groups with different faiths or beliefs. The general fiction books listed below explore how individuals develop their own sense of values and beliefs. As students better understand the history and progress of the American ideal of freedom of religion, it is more likely that America will live up to the idea that it gives bigotry no sanction and persecution no assistance.

History Books About Religion in America

Atkins, Jeannine. *Anne Hutchinson's Way*. NY: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2007. This picture book is a fictionalized account of the story of Anne Hutchinson, who moved to Massachusetts from England with her family in 1634. Unhappy with the minister in the community, Anne began to speak about scriptures in her home. When more and more people came to hear her speak, community leaders threaten to imprison Anne. She and her family were forced to leave New England home and move to Southeastern New York in search of religious freedom.

Brucac, Joseph. *The Arrow Over the Door*. NY: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1998. This book tells the story of the historical meeting of Native Americans and Quakers during the Revolutionary War. Told from the point of view of a young Abenaki boy, whose family was murdered by Americans, and a Quaker boy who came with his family to a colony seeking religious freedom, it provides a unique perspective on an important time in American history.

Lasky, Kathryn. *A Journey to the New World: The Diary of Remember Patience Whipple*. NY: Scholastic, 1996. The story of the Pilgrims told through the eyes of a young girl nicknamed Mem.

Litchman, Kristin Embry. *All is Well*. NY: Dellacorte, 1998. Miranda moves to Utah where she finds a friend who is a Mormon. The two girls deal with their religious differences as they learn that they also share similarities.

General Books About Religion in America

Asher, Sandy**.** *With All My Heart, With All My Mind*. NY: Simon and Schuster, 1999. A collection of stories that share the experience of growing up Jewish in America. Stories deal with prejudice, tolerance, identity, and culture.

Kerr, M.E. *Slap Your Sides*. NY: Harper Collins, 2001. The Shoemaker family are Quakers. They have to deal with an angry town of people when their son becomes a conscientious objector and refuses to fight during World War II.

Nixon, Joan. *The Kidnapping of Christina Lattimore*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace, 1979. Christina Lattimore is a high school girl who wants to go with her school class to France. When her father, who is a Christian fundamentalist, finds out a tour of Roman Catholic churches is a big part of the trip, he refuses to let her go. When Christina is kidnapped, her family wonders if she set up the kidnapping herself to raise money to go to France.

Ritter, John. *Choosing Up Sides*. NY: Philomel Books, 1998. Luke Bledsoe is a young boy during the Great Depression. He loves baseball, but his father, who is a preacher, disapproves of the sport. He also disapproves of Luke's use of his left hand, which he considers the hand of the devil. Luke struggles with trying to be a good son and figuring out what he believes himself.

Crutcher, Chris. *The Sledding Hill*. NY: Greenwillow Books, 2005. Eddie loses his father and best friend. In his grief, he refuses to speak to anyone. However, when a community religious group tries to censor books being read in the high school, Eddie learns the importance of speaking up to protect the rights of all.

Essential Questions about Beliefs (created by Greece, NY Central School District)

- How do people develop values and beliefs? What factors shape values and beliefs? What role do families play?
- How do values and beliefs change over time? Why do people need values and beliefs?
- What happens when belief systems of societies and individuals come into conflict?
- When should an individual take a stand in opposition to an individual, larger group, or society?

Festivals of Light: Teaching about Winter Holidays

by Judith Y. Singer

In this article, as with others I have written about teaching about controversial topics in elementary school classrooms, I start with questions. In a democratic society, what do we want to teach young children about religion in public schools? Does the mandate for the separation of church and state in public institutions preclude any discussion about religion at all? Should religion be treated like any other aspect of multiculturalism? Does an examination of religious traditions enrich the curriculum? Deeply religious people are often troubled by what they see as a ban on teaching about what their families value. Others are troubled by their perception that those of a different faith may be imposing alien beliefs on their children.

Over time, I have come to consider two perspectives when I talk with young children. These have helped me to talk with them about religious beliefs. One of these is an appreciation of how religious beliefs help build values. The other is the way religious holidays help us identify common themes. These include harvest celebrations such as Thanksgiving, holidays that commemorate springtime rebirth, and wintertime festivals of light.

The best children's literature on the winter holidays shares certain qualities. The writing and illustrations are very high level, but more importantly, authors and illustrators use the holidays to introduce children to broader themes and questions such as the ones I discussed at the beginning of this article. One of my favorite children's authors, who consistently addresses important topics, is Eve Bunting. In *December* (illustrated by David Diaz, New York: Harcourt Brace, 1997), she tells the story of a homeless boy and his mother who share the little they have with people who have even less than they do.

Many public school teachers worry that if they teach children about religious holidays and beliefs, they will be accused of proselytizing. However, if we ignore these holidays, we leave out an important part of both the cultures of our students and the histories of the United States and the world. One way to teach about winter holidays is to focus on "Festivals of Light."

Winter lights are special holiday symbols, especially as nights grow longer, that join together people and cultural experiences from all over the world. They express hope for peace, freedom, and understanding. Amongst the wintertime festivals of light are the Hindu celebrations of Diwali and Makar Sankranti, the Buddhist celebration of Loi Krathong, the Jewish holiday of Hanukah, Kwanzaa, an African American cultural celebration, the Chinese and Korean New Year, and different ways of celebrating Christmas, including Nacimiento, and the Yule log.

Floating lights are an important part of many south Asian festivals. Diwali is a five-day Hindu holiday celebrated in late October or early November that originally comes from India. It means "cluster of lights." During Diwali, people celebrate the story of the hero-king Rama and ask Lakshmi, the Goddess of Light, to shine on the pathway towards knowledge and understanding. Makar Sankranti, which is in early January, commemorates the sun god's ascendancy in the Northern hemisphere as days begin to grow longer. These holidays are celebrated in this area by immigrants from the Indian sub-continent and by Guyanese whose ancestors originally migrated from India to South America. As part of a Diwali or Makar Sankranti celebration children can make oil lamps out of clay.

Loi Krathong is a Buddhist holiday from Thailand. During Loi Krathong, people in Thailand honor the spirit of their ancestors by placing lighted candles, incense, and flowers in a krathong. The krathong is a lotus-shaped basket, the size of a small saucer, made from banana leaves. Loi means "to float." After dark, Thai people make wishes and set krathongs afloat in a stream. People hope that this ceremony will wash away sins and create new possibilities for the coming year.

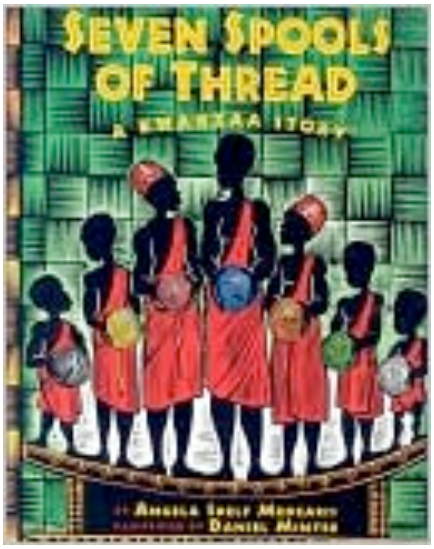
In China, people hang lanterns to welcome the New Year. In Korea, people call New Year's Eve "Sut dal kum mum." Lights are kept on in the house all night so that people can welcome the New Year in brightness. They also burn bamboo sticks and bang on drums to scare off the evil spirits left over from the previous year.

There is not yet a strong body of children's literature available in English on winter holidays of Asian origin. *Lights for Gita*, written by Rachna Gilmore and illustrated by Alice Priestley (Gardiner, Maine: Tilbury, 1994), was originally published with support from the Canadian government. It tells the story of Diwali as a young immigrant girl learns about her family's culture. *Lanterns and Firecrackers* (written by Jonny Zucker, illustrated by Jan Barger Cohen, Hauppauge, NY: Barron's, 2004)), is a story of a Chinese American family's preparations for the New Year.

Hanukah, the Jewish celebration of lights, is a holiday that honors national resistance and religious freedom. During the eight days of Hanukah, Jews light candles in a menorah to commemorate victory in an ancient battle against an invading country. This victory allowed Jews to preserve their religious beliefs. *A Great Miracle Happened There* by Karla Kushkin, illustrated by Robert Parker (NY: HarperCollins, 1993) tells the historical story of Hanukah and *Hanukkah, Oh Hanukkah* by Susan Roth (NY: Puffin, 2006) is a simple description of holiday traditions.

Hanukah also celebrates the survival of the Jewish people in the modern world, especially following the Holocaust of World War II. Two children's winter holiday books, *One Yellow Daffodil* by David Adler, illustrated by Lloyd Bloom (NY: Harcourt Brace, 1995) and *One Candle* by Eve Bunting, illustrated by K. Wendy Popp (NY: HarperCollins, 2002), use family Hanukah celebrations to teach about the Holocaust and the importance of family and caring about others.

Other Hanukah books worth reading with children include *Chanakah in Chelm* by David Adler and Kevin O'Malley (NY: Lothrop. Lee & Shepard, 1997), which introduces children to the fictional European town of Chelm, a town famous for the foolish behavior of its residents; *The Chanukah Blessing* by Peninnah Schram, illustrated by Jeffrey Allon (NY: UAHC, 2000);Pap's Latkes by Michelle Edwards, illustrated by Stacey Schuett, Cambridge, MA: Candlewick, 20004); Potato Pancakes All Around by Marilyn Hirsh (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1978); *The Ugly Menorah* by Marissa Moss (NY: Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, 1996); *Just Enough is Plenty* by Barbara Goldin, illustrated by Seymour Chwast (NY: Viking, 1988); and *The Tie Man's Miracle* by Steven Schur, illustrated by Stephen Johnson (NY: Morrow, 1995). In many Hanukah stories, a mystery guest is welcomed by a poor family and leaves behind a special gift. These books explore the importance of family, community, tradition, and sharing with those less fortunate.



Kwanzaa is a relatively new holiday, dating back to the 1960s. It is an African American celebration of African culture and roots. Kwanzaa is celebrated for seven days, and each day is dedicated to a different human value. The values are unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. On each day of Kwanzaa, a candle is lit in a kinara, or candleholder, to highlight one of these basic principles. While I enjoy discussing Kwanzaa with children, I have not been that impressed with the children's literature about the holiday created so far. *Seven Spools of Thread*, written by Angela Shelf Medearis and illustrated by Daniel Minter (Morton Grove, Illinois: Albert Whitman, 2000) uses a folk tale about life in Ghana to tell the story of Kwanzaa. Other books worth considering include Synthia Saint James, *The Gifts of Kwanzaa* (Morton Grove, Illinois: Albert Whitman, 1994); Donna L. Washington, *The Story of Kwanzaa*, illustrated by Stephen Taylor (NY: HarperCollins, 1996); and Linda and Clay Goss, *It's Kwanzaa Time* (NY: Putnam, 1995).

Christmas is a Christian holiday that celebrates the birth of the baby Jesus over 2,000 years ago. Christians believe that Jesus was the son of God, and that his appearance on earth is a signal of hope for the future. Over the centuries, the celebration of Christmas has incorporated songs and customs from many regions of the world. For

example, the Christmas tree was originally a pagan symbol from northern Europe. Whether you believe in the religious aspects of Christmas, the story of the birth of the baby Jesus can be used to teach important values such as concern for the humanity of the poor, the spirit of giving, and respect for diversity. *Christmas in the Barn* by Margaret Brown, illustrated by Diane Goode (NY: HarperCollins, 1952), tells the traditional nativity story from the perspective of the barnyard animals. *Christmas Makes Me Think* by Tony Medina, illustrated by Chandra Cox (NY: Lee & Low, 2001) and *The All - I'll – Ever - Want Christmas Doll* by Patricia McKissack, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney (NY: Random House, 2007) are about the efforts of young children to understand the true sprit of the holiday. Patricia Polacco's *The Trees of the Dancing Goats* (NY: Simon & Schuster, 1996) is about a family that celebrates both Hanukah and Christmas.

Other Christmas books worth reading with children include *The Gift of a Traveler* by Wendy Matthews, illustrated by Robert Vann Nutt (Mahwah, NJ: BridgeWater Books, 1995); *The Little Drummer Boy* by Ezra Jack Keats (NY: Viking, 1968); and *Angela and the Baby Jesus* by Frank McCourt, illustrated by Raul Colon (NY: Simon and Schuster, 2007).

In Latin American countries, Nacimiento or the birth is often celebrated with a candle-lighted parade. The procession symbolizes the search for a place for Mary to give birth to Jesus, and teaches that citizens around the world need to make room so that all people have shelter. Very good children's holiday literature that focuses on Latino culture includes *Lights on the River* by Jane Resh Thomas, illustrated by Michael Dooling (NY: Hyperion, 1994) that tells the story of Mexican migrant agricultural workers trying to preserve their culture under difficult circumstances; *Too Many Tamales* by Gary Soto, illustrated by Edward Martinez (NY: Putnam, 1993); and *The Secret Stars* by Joseph Slate, illustrated by Felipe Davalos (NY: Marshall Cavendish, 1998), about a New Mexican family anticipating and celebrating Three Kings Day.

Christmas was an important holiday for enslaved Africans during slavery days. People would have off from work and families were allowed to gather. According to legend, on plantations in the American South, men would find the greenest, toughest, and biggest tree that they could, and on the last day of the Christmas season they would cut it down and sink it into a swamp. The next Christmas, it was taken out of the swamp, placed in a fireplace and lit. The holiday season would last until the log was burned through. One of the best winter holiday books is *Christmas in the Big House, Christmas in the Quarters* by Patricia and Frederick McKissack and illustrated by John Thompson (NY: Scholastic, 1994). This book allows teachers to use the holiday season to discuss history, oppression, and struggles for freedom.

What about Santa Claus?

Many parents and teachers are very concerned about the commercialization of the winter holiday season and especially its impact on children. However, according to a lesson plan available at the website http://www.everythingesl.net/lessons/santa.php, even Santa Claus legends can have a multicultural focus. Santa Claus and Santa Claus-like characters around the world include Svaty Mikalas in the Czech Republic; Dun Che Lao Ren, or Christmas Old Man, in China; the Dutch "Sintirklass"; the good witch "La Befana" in Italy; and a Swedish gnome named "Juletomten" who brings gifts in a sleigh driven by goats. In Australia, which is in the Southern Hemisphere, Christmas occurs during the summer. Their Santa rides water skis and wears a red bathing suit. Another website worth visiting is http://www.the-north-pole.com/around/index.htm.

Teaching Ideas from Social Science Docket

This section of *Social Science Docket* contains activities for teaching about the conquest of Mexico using primary source documents, lessons on European imperialism in Africa that promote literacy, a trip to the American Museum of Natural History's new Hall of Human Origins, ways to present **c**ontrasting points of view, use of field trips, the NYSCSS mini-grant program, a simulation on human rights, and a discussion of the "digital divide."

Bernal Díaz and the Conquest of New Spain

This three-day lesson is based on *The Conquest of New Spain* by Bernal Díaz (Penguin Books). Day 1, students examine maps, discuss the Spanish conquest of the Americas, and read and discuss selections from Díaz's book. Day 2, student teams read passages and answer questions. On Day 3, teams report back to the full class. General questions for discussion include: What did the Spaniards view as positive or negative in Aztec culture? Is it valid for one culture to judge another? What were the roles of women and religion in these societies? Is it legitimate to conquer another people if you believe you are doing it in the name of God? Are the Spaniards who explore and conquer the Americas heroes or villains? As a follow-up assignment students write "fictional" newspaper accounts of one of the events or scenes described by Bernal Díaz. They should include an "interview" with Bernal Díaz. The article must be consistent with historical facts.

A. Who was Bernal Díaz?

I, Bernal Díaz Del Castillo, citizen and governor of the most loyal city of Santiago de Guatemala, one of the first discoverers and conquerors of New Spain and its provinces, and of the Cape of Honduras and Higueras, native of the most noble and famous city of Medina del Campo, and son of its former governor Francisco Díaz del Castillo, . . . tell you the story of myself and my comrades; all true conquerors, who served His Majesty in the discovery, conquest, pacification, and settlement of the provinces of New Spain; one of the finest regions of the New World yet discovered, this expedition being undertaken by our own efforts, and without His Majesty's knowledge.

Questions

1. What is Díaz's position in the colonial government when he tells his story?
2. What does Díaz believe he and his comrades achieved?
3. In your opinion, does Díaz have any reservations about what the Spanish did? What evidence do you have to support your opinion?

B. Bernal Díaz's Introduction to *The Conquest of New Spain*

I have observed that before beginning to write their histories, the most famous chroniclers compose a prologue in exalted language, in order to give luster and repute to their narrative, and to whet the curious reader's appetite. But I, being no scholar, dare not attempt any such preface. For properly to extol the adventures that befell us, and the heroic deeds we performed during the conquest of New Spain and its provinces in the company of that valiant and enterprising Captain, Don Hernando Cortes - who, as a reward for his heroism, was afterwards created Marques del Valle - would require eloquence and rhetoric far greater than mine. What I myself saw, and the fighting in which I took part, with God's help I will describe quite plainly, as an honest eyewitness, without twisting the facts in any way. I am now an old man, over 84 years of age, and have lost both sight and hearing; and unfortunately I have gained no wealth to leave to my children and descendants, except this true story, which is a most remarkable one, as my readers will presently see.

Questions

1. According to Bernal Díaz, what are his reasons for writing this story?
2. What qualifies Díaz to tell this story?
3. Based on this introduction, and what you already know about these events, what other reasons would you add to Díaz's explanation for writing the story? Why?
4. As an historian, would you accept Díaz's account as historical fact? Explain your answer.

Team 1: Hernando Cortes Prepares for Conquest

Hernando Cortes was a valiant, bold, and enterprising Captain. As soon as Hernando Cortes was appointed General, he began to collect arms of all kinds -- guns, powder, and crossbows -- and all the munitions of war he could find, also articles for barter, and other material for the expedition. Moreover, he began to adorn himself and to take much more care of his appearance than before. He wore a plume of feathers, with a medallion and a gold chain, and a velvet cloak trimmed with loops of gold. In fact he looked like a bold and gallant Captain. But he had nothing. He was very poor and in debt.

When some merchant friends heard about this expedition, they lent him four thousand pesos in coin and thousand in goods, on the security of his Indians and his estate. He then had two standards and banners made, worked in gold with the royal arms and a cross on each side and a legend that read: 'Brothers and comrades let us follow the sign of the Holy Cross in true faith, for under this sign we shall conquer.' And he ordered a proclamation to be made that anyone who wished to accompany him to the newly discovered lands, to conquer and settle would receive a share of the gold, silver, and riches to be gained, and an *encomienda* (plantation with slaves) of Indians once the country had been pacified.

Once the news had spread through Cuba, and Cortes had written to his friends in different towns asking them to get ready to accompany him on the expedition, some of them sold their farms to buy arms and horses, and others began to prepare casava bread, and to salt pork for stores, and to make quilted cotton armor. They made ready all that was necessary as well as they could.

Now more than three hundred and fifty of us soldiers were collected at Santiago de Cuba, whence the fleet was to sail. From the Governor's own household came one of his stewards, whom he had himself sent to keep a watch on the expedition and see that Cortes did not play him a trick. For he was always afraid that Cortes might turn against him, although he concealed his fears. There were also many more who were friends and followers of the Governor.

Cortes, who was very shrewd in all matters, said with a laugh to those of us who happened to be standing with him: 'Do you know, gentlemen, I believe it is the horses that the Indians are most frightened of. I've thought of a way of confirming their belief.'

It was midday and forty Indians arrived, all *Caciques* (chiefs). They asked our pardon for their past conduct, and promised to be friendly in future. Cortes answered them through our interpreter somewhat sternly. He reminded them, with a show of anger, how often he had requested them to keep the peace, and said that they had committed a crime and now deserved to be put to death, together with all the inhabitants of their towns. He then pointed out that we were vassals of a great king and lord named the Emperor Charles, who had sent us to these parts with orders to help and favor those who would enter his royal service.

At this moment he secretly gave the order for the loaded cannon to be fired, and it went off with the requisite thunderous report, the ball whistling away over the hills. The *Caciques* were thoroughly terrified. Next they brought the horse that had scented the mare, and tied him up near the place where Cortes was talking to the *Caciques*. The horse began to paw the ground and neigh and create an uproar, looking all the time towards the Indians and the place from which the scent of the mare came. But the *Caciques* thought he was roaring at them and were terrified once more. When Cortes observed their terror he rose from his seat, went over to the horse, and told two orderlies to lead him away. He then informed the Indians that he had told the beast not to be angry, since they were friendly and had come to make peace.

Questions

1. How did Hernando Cortes prepare for the expedition?
2. How did Cortes recruit soldiers for the expedition?
3. Why did Cortes meet with the *Caciques* (native chiefs)?
4. According to Cortes, why did he have the right to punish the *Caciques* and their villages?
5. If you were a member of the Spanish expedition, what do you think you would have concluded after watching the incident with the horse?
6. If you were a Spaniard living in Cuba at this time, would you have joined this expedition? Explain your decision.

Team 2: Doña Marina and Preparation for War

Many *Caciques* and important persons came from Tabasco and the neighboring towns, and paid us great respect. They brought a present of gold and some other things of small value. These gifts were nothing, however, compared to the twenty women whom they gave us, among them a most excellent person who when she became a Christian took the name of Doña Marina.

Cortes drew all the *Caciques* aside to tell them how grateful he was for what they had brought. But there was one thing he must ask of them, he said, that they should bring all their men, women, and children back to the town, which he wished to see settled again within two days. This he would recognize as a true sign of peace. The *Caciques* then sent at once to summon all the inhabitants, and they, their wives, and their children resettled the town in the stipulated time.

Here the conversation ended until the next day, when we set up the sacred image of Our Lady and the cross on the altar, and all paid reverence to them . . . One of the Indian ladies was christened Doña Marina. She was a truly great princess, the daughter of *Caciques* and the mistress of vassals, as was very evident in her appearance. They were the first women in New Spain to become Christians.

Cortes gave one of the women to each of his captains. Doña Marina, being good-looking, intelligent, and self-assured, went to Alonso Hernandez Puertocarrero, who was a very grand gentleman. When Puertocarrero returned to Spain, Doña Marina lived with Cortes, to whom she bore a son named Don Martin Cortes.

Doña Marina was a great lady and a *Cacique* over towns and vassals since her childhood. Her father and mother were lords and *Caciques* of a town called Paynala, which had other towns subject to it, and lay about twenty-four miles from the town of Coatzacoalcos. Her father died which she was still very young, and her mother married another *Cacique*, a young man, to whom she bore a son. The mother and father agreed that he should succeed to the *Caciqueship* when they were dead. To avoid any impediment, they gave Doña Marina to some Indians from Xicalango. The Indians of Xicalango gave the child to the people of Tabasco, and the Tabascans gave her to Cortes. As Doña Marina had proved such an excellent person, and a good interpreter in all the wars of New Spain, . . . Cortes always took her with him. Doña Marina was a person of great importance, and was obeyed without question by all the Indians of New Spain.

Cortes summoned all the *Caciques* of that province in order to address them on the subject of our holy religion. Doña Marina's mother and her half-brother Lazaro were among those who came. Both she and her son were very much afraid of Doña Marina; they feared that she had sent for them to put them to death, and they wept.

When Doña Marina saw her mother and half-brother in tears, she comforted them, saying that they need have no fear . . . She pardoned the old woman, and gave them many golden jewels and some clothes. Then she sent them back to their town, saying that God had been very gracious to her in freeing her from the worship of idols and making her a Christian, and giving her a son by her lord and master Cortes . . . Doña Marina knew the language of Mexico, and she knew the Tabascan language also. I have made a point of telling this story, because without Doña Marina we could not have understood the language of New Spain and Mexico.

Questions

1. What gifts did the *Caciques* give Cortes and the Spaniards?
2. Who was Doña Marina?
3. Why were her mother and brother afraid to meet her?
4. According to the author, why was Doña Marina important in the conquest of Mexico?
5. In your opinion, should Doña Marina be celebrated today as a hero? Explain.
6. If you were a native *Cacique*, would you have had your people convert to Christianity and join the Spaniards as allies? Explain.

Team 3. Preparing to Challenge Montezuma

The fat *Cacique* broke into bitter complaints against the great Montezuma and his governors, saying that the Mexican prince had recently brought him into subjection, had taken away all his golden jewelry, and so grievously oppressed him and his people that they could do nothing except obey him, since he was lord over many cities and countries, and ruler over countless vassals and armies of warriors.

Five Indians came in great haste from the town to tell the *Caciques* who were talking to Cortes that five of Montezuma's Mexican tax-gatherers had just arrived. As soon as they had dined, the tax-gatherers sent for the fat *Cacique* and the other chiefs and scolded them for having entertained us in their villages, since now they would have to meet and deal with us, which would not please their lord Montezuma. They continued to reproach the fat *Cacique* and his nobles for their actions, and ordered them to provide twenty Indians, male and female, as a peace-offering to their gods for the wrong that had been done.

At this point Cortes asked our interpreters why the arrival of these Indians had so agitated the *Caciques*. As soon as Cortes understood what the *Caciques* were saying, he reminded them that our lord the King had sent him to chastise evildoers and prevent sacrifices and robbery. He ordered them to arrest the tax-gatherers and to hold them prisoners until their lord Montezuma was informed of the reason: namely that they had come to rob the Totonacs, to enslave their wives and children, and to do other violence.

When the *Caciques* heard this they were appalled at his daring. They dared not do it. But Cortes insisted that they must arrest them at once; and they obeyed him. They secured them with long poles and collars so that they could not escape, and they beat one of them who refused to be bound. Cortes ordered all the *Caciques* to cease paying tribute and obedience to Montezuma, and to proclaim their refusal in all the towns of their friends and allies. The act they had witnessed was so astonishing and of such importance to them that they said no human beings dared to do such a thing, and it must be the work of *Teules*. Therefore from that moment they called us *Teules*, which means gods or demons.

Cortes took the *Caciques* aside and asked them very detailed questions about the state of Mexico. They said that Montezuma had a vast host of warriors, and that if he wanted to take a great city or attack a province he could put a hundred and fifty thousand men in the field, as they knew from the experience of more than a hundred years of war. The Mexicans had several times defeated them, killing many of their subjects and taking away others to be sacrificed, they had also left many dead and prisoners on the field.

Montezuma kept strong garrisons in every province, and all the provinces paid tribute of gold and silver, feathers, precious stones, cloth, and cotton, also men and women for sacrifice and for servants. Montezuma was such a great prince that he had everything he desired, and the house in which he lived was full of riches and precious stones. All the wealth of the country was in Montezuma's hands.

As a result of the victories which God granted us in battles, our fame spread through the surrounding country and reached the ears of the great Montezuma in the city of Mexico. When the news came that so few of us had conquered such a huge force of Tlascalans, Montezuma sent five chieftains of the highest rank to our camp to bid us welcome and congratulate us on our great victory. He sent a present of very richly worked gold and jewel ornaments worth quite a thousand pesos, and twenty loads of fine cotton, with the message that he wished to become the vassal of our great Emperor, and the he was glad we were near his city. Moreover, he asked Cortes to tell him how much yearly tribute our great Emperor required, and promised to give it provided that we did not come to Mexico. This, he said, was not because he would not be very pleased to receive us, but because the land was rough and sterile, and he would not like to see us suffering hardships.

Questions

1. Why were the native chiefs afraid when the representatives of Montezuma arrived in their village?
2. How did Cortes challenge the authority of Montezuma?
3. Why did the native people believe that Cortes and his followers were Gods or demons?
4. What did Cortes learn about Montezuma and Mexico from their enemies?
5. Why did Montezuma offer to pay tribute to the Spanish king?
6. In your opinion, what evidence is there of weaknesses in Montezuma's empire? Explain.

Team 4. Tenochtitlán, the Aztec Capital City

With a large escort we followed the causeway, which is eight yards wide and goes so straight to the city of Mexico. Wide though it was, it was so crowded with people that there was hardly room for them all. Some were going to Mexico and others coming away, besides those who had come out to see us, and we could hardly get through the crowds that were there. The lake was crowded with canoes. At intervals along the causeway there were many bridges, and before us was the great city of Mexico.

We were met by many more *Caciques* and dignitaries in very rich cloaks. The chieftains wore different brilliant liveries, and the causeways were full of them. Montezuma had sent these great *Caciques* in advance to receive us, and as soon as they came before Cortes they told him in their language that we were welcome, and as a sign of peace, they touched the ground with their hands and kissed it.

When we came near to Mexico, the great Montezuma descended from his litter. Great *Caciques* supported him beneath a marvelously rich canopy of green feathers, decorated with gold work, silver, and pearls. Montezuma was magnificently clad and wore sandals, the soles of which were of gold and the upper parts ornamented with precious stones. The four lords who supported him were richly clad. There were four other great *Caciques* who carried the canopy above their heads, and many more lords who walked before the great Montezuma, sweeping the ground on which he was to tread, and laying down cloaks so that his feet should not touch the earth. Not one of these chieftains dared to look him in the face. All kept their eyes lowered most reverently.

When Cortes was told that the great Montezuma was approaching, he dismounted from his horse, and when he came near to Montezuma, each bowed deeply to the other. Cortes offered Montezuma his right hand, but Montezuma refused it and extended his own. Cortes brought out a necklace which he had been holding. It was made of elaborately worked and colored glass beads and was strung on a gold cord and dipped in musk to give it a good odor. This he hung round the great Montezuma's neck, and as he did so attempted to embrace him. But the great princes grasped Cortes' arm to prevent him, for they considered this an indignity.

Cortes began to make a speech through our interpreters. We were Christians and worshipped one God alone, named Jesus Christ, who had suffered His passion and death to save us; and that what they worshipped as gods were not gods but devils, which were evil things, and if they were ugly to look at, their deeds were uglier . . . Montezuma replied, "We have given you no answer, since we have worshipped our own gods here from the beginning and know them to be good. No doubt yours are good also. Regarding the creation of the world, we have held the same belief for many ages, and for this reason are certain that you are those who our ancestors predicted would come from the direction of the sunrise. As for your great King, I am in his debt and will give him of what I possess."

He said that he had wanted to invite some of these men to visit the cities of his kingdom, where he would receive them and do them honor, and that now his gods had fulfilled his desire, for we were in his house, which we might call our own. Here we might rest and enjoy ourselves, for we should receive good treatment. If on other occasions he had sent to forbid our entrance into his city, it was not of his own free will, but because his vassals were afraid. For they told him we shot our flashes of lightning, and killed many Indians with our horses, and that we were angry *Teules*, and other such childish stories. But now that he had seen us, he knew that we were of flesh and blood and very intelligent, also very brave. Therefore he had a far greater esteem for us than these reports had given him, and would share with us what he had.

Questions

1. Why were the Spaniards impressed when they approached Tenochtitlán, the Aztec Capital city?
2. How did Montezuma dress and travel?
3. Why was there danger of misunderstanding when the Spaniards met the Mexicans?
4. What did Cortes and Montezuma think about each other's religious beliefs?
5. In your opinion, what was going through the minds of the Spaniards and the Mexicans when they met on the causeway to Mexico City?
6. Based on this meeting, do you think there can be peace between the Spaniards and the Mexicans? Explain.

Team 5. The Defeat of Mexico

Montezuma had two house stocked with every sort of weapon; many of them were richly adorned with gold and precious stones. There were shields large and small, and a sort of broadsword, and two-handed swords set with flint blades that cut much better than our swords, and lances longer than ours, with five-foot blades consisting of many knives. They had very good bows and arrows, and double and single-pointed javelins as well as their throwing sticks and many slings and round stones shaped by hand, and another sort of shield that can be rolled up when they are not fighting, so that it does not get in the way, but which an be opened when they need it in battle and covers their bodies from head to foot.

The Mexicans kept many idols whom they called their fierce gods, and with them all kinds of beasts of prey, tigers and two sorts of lion, and beasts rather like wolves and foxes and other small animals, all of them carnivores, and most of them bred there. They were fed on deer, fowls, little dogs, and other creatures which they hunt and also on the bodies of the Indians they sacrificed, as I was told.

I have already described the manner of their sacrifices. They strike open the wretched Indian's chest with flint knives and hastily tear out the palpitating heart which, with the blood, they present to the idols in whose name they have performed the sacrifice. Then they cut off the arms, thighs, and head, eating the arms and thighs at their ceremonial banquets. The head they hang up on a beam, and the body of the sacrificed man is not eaten but given to the beasts of prey. We know for certain that when they drove us out of Mexico and killed over eight hundred and fifty of our soldiers, they fed those beasts and snakes on their bodies for many days . . .

I had taken part in many battles, but up to that time, I had never felt such fear as I did in these last battles. I was many times severely wounded, and for this reason was not able to go on all the expeditions. The hardships and risks of death to which I was personally exposed were not insignificant.

Everyone was agreed that all the gold and silver and jewels in Mexico should be collected together. But this seems to have amounted to very little. There was a report that Guatemoc (who succeeded Montezuma as ruler of Mexico) had thrown all the rest into the lake four days before we captured him. The officers of the Royal Treasury publicly proclaimed that Guatemoc had hidden the treasure. These officers decided to torture Guatemoc. The truth is that Montezuma's treasure-chamber, of which Guatemoc took possession at his death, did not contain many jewels or golden ornaments, because all the best had been extracted to form the magnificent offering that we had sent to His Majesty.

We captains and soldiers were all somewhat sad when we saw how little gold there was and how poor and mean our shares would be. They told us a horseman would receive eighty pesos, and a crossbowman, musketeer, or shield-bearer fifty or sixty and when we heard this figure not a single soldier was willing to accept his share.

Many of us were in debt to one another. Some owed fifty or sixty pesos for crossbows, and others fifty for a sword. A certain surgeon who tended some bad wounds, charged excessive prices for his cures, and so did a sort of quack who was an apothecary and barber and also treated wounds. An order went out that whatever price was placed on our purchases or the surgeons' cures must be accepted, and that if we had no money, our creditors must wait two years for payment.

When the news spread through the distant provinces that Mexico was destroyed their *Caciques* and lords could not believe it. They sent chieftains to congratulate Cortes on his victories and yield themselves as vassals to His Majesty, and to see if the city of Mexico, which they had so dreaded, was really razed to the ground. They all carried great presents of gold to Cortes, and even brought their small children to show them Mexico, pointing it out to them in much the same way that we would say: "Here stood Troy."

Questions

1. What kinds of weapons did the Spanish view in Montezuma's palace?
2. Why was so little gold found when Mexico was defeated?
3. Why were the soldiers so upset when they discovered their payments?
4. Why did other chiefs travel to view the destruction of Mexico?
5. In your opinion, why are the animals, statues of Gods, and sacrifices described in such detail?
6. In your opinion, were Cortes' soldiers victors or victims? Explain.

The Scramble for Africa: An Exercise in Literacy and History

by Laura Dull

Middle and secondary social studies teachers can integrate support for student literacy with lessons that promote historical thinking. In this lesson, students examine an account of the 19th century European colonial "Scramble for Africa" from an American history textbook for middle school students and another from a Ghanaian social studies textbook for upper elementary school students. By looking at two accounts of the same event, students practice "historical thinking" by identifying biases in sources, weighing the validity of accounts, and producing their own historical narratives (Holt, 1990).

Students in the United States do not generally learn about European colonialism in Africa until middle or high school, so the texts are aimed at different grade levels. However, in analyzing the two texts, students are asked to consider the audience; this comparison can help them understand the differences in narrative styles.

This lesson can be used during units on African colonization or it could be used to introduce students to the kind of reading and analysis that they will be expected to undertake during their social studies course. In addition, the strategy can be applied to any activity in which students are asked to compare two accounts of the same event. It can be adapted for middle and high school social studies courses or used with pre-service teachers.

When I was in Ghana, I was struck by the narrative style of their (much smaller) textbooks. In the primary textbooks, Ghanaian authors presented their history as a dialogue between elders and children or children and their teachers. In texts for older children, the dialogues were gone, but the books retained an engaging story-telling style. In contrast, most American textbooks, even those for elementary students, rely on an expository style and adopt a seemingly neutral tone that deprives the text of conflict and perspective (Loewen, 1995). These texts are more focused on providing facts, dates, names, technological advances, and vocabulary.

After competing with other Europeans over African trade for many centuries, Europeans became interested in claiming exclusive rights to certain lands. They met in Berlin in 1884-1885 for a series of meetings at which no Africans were present. They agreed that Europeans who had evidence of settlements in interior regions could colonize that area. This resulted in the "scramble" by Europeans to conquer or sign treaties with Africans to assert European dominance in different regions.

The first account is from a textbook produced by the Ghanaian Ministry of Education (Tamakloe, E.K., et al. *Ghana Social Studies Series, Pupil's Book 4*. Accra: Ghana Education Service, 1988, p. 88).

> At first only the Portuguese traded with the Africans. But later, traders from other European countries joined them. The Europeans soon began to fight one another because each wanted to have the trade all to himself. In order to stop these fights, a big meeting was called in Europe…[Later] another meeting was called in Europe. It was again decided . . . that only one European country should be allowed to trade in an area. But that country must not only show that it had been trading with the Africans on the coast. It must also show that it had been trading with the Africans living inland . . . As a result of these meetings, men from European countries rushed off to Africa as quickly as they could and started making agreements with the chiefs inland. They brought tobacco, drinks, clothes, gunpowder and guns to the chiefs so that the chiefs would quickly sign the *agreements* and *treaties* they brought. In the agreements, the Europeans said that their own country was very powerful. They said that their king could help the African chiefs in times of war…The white man used the gifts and sweet words to deceive the African chiefs and get them to sign the treaties to be friendly and to allow the white man to trade.

The second account is from a World History textbook for secondary students in the United States (Farah, M. A. and Karls, A. B. *World History: The Human Experience, The Modern Era.* Columbus, OH: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, 2001).

> In the 1500s and 1600s Europeans traded along the coasts of Africa. From West African trading posts, they carried out the transatlantic slave trade . . . West African states traded salt, gold, and iron wares with the Europeans,

but some local rulers also supplied prisoners of war to the slave trade . . . To control this trade and to expand their coastal holdings, European nations began to push inland in the 1870s. Before this time, Europeans had avoided inland Africa because of the difficult terrain and deadly diseases, such as malaria. In the late 1800s, the discovery of the natural ingredient, quinine, to fight malaria and the use of steamships for river transportation made European exploration of inland Africa easier. By 1900, European powers, especially Great Britain and France, had acquired vast new territories in West Africa.

The two accounts clearly illustrate the difference between narrative and expository texts. The Ghanaian account seeks to tell a story, complete with good and bad characters, while the American text is concerned with chronology, geography, and facts. The Ghanaian text tells a story that enables the reader to envision the encounters between Europeans and Africans. In the second text, there is no direct reference to Africans as players during the scramble.

Through comparison of these two texts, students can also recognize the authors' biases. The American text uses passive constructions or verbs to mask the greedy intentions, and actions by Europeans that are sometimes violent. Europeans are portrayed as simply "exploring" these regions and then suddenly managed to "acquire vast new regions." The Ghanaian version shows Africans solely as victims of White people. They avoid mention of slavery (this is also true of the rest of the book) and imply that alliances that Africans made with Europeans were coerced or made under fraudulent pretexts. While this was true in many cases, there were also Africans who were not duped and willingly united with Europeans.

To initiate this lesson, I told students to read each of the accounts, without telling them where the sources came from or who wrote them. I simply asked them to think about which source was more accurate or convincing while they read. After they read each story, I asked them a series of questions to lead them through summary, classification, comparison, and analysis. After discussing the similarities, differences, and perspectives of the accounts, the students were asked to write the story in their own words using information from each source. They needed to explain who their audience was and demonstrate how their text addressed that audience. Teachers can also include primary source documents to help the students construct their stories (Harlow, 2003; Fetter, 1979; see also, http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00001799.shtml).

The differences in these accounts starkly illustrate the danger of giving students only one account of a historical event. In this case, without the Ghanaian story to frame information and create an image of an event, students learn only somewhat random and disconnected facts about the scramble from the textbook. On the other hand, the American textbook provides information about technological and medical inventions that provide additional reasons why Europeans were able to colonize the continent. To improve student literacy and historical thinking, good social studies teachers will therefore supplement textbooks with primary sources, literary accounts, poems, images, and other media. As in this lesson, they can also bring in textbook accounts from other nations to compare how nations describe their own its histories (Lindaman and Ward, 2006).

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Evolution and Human Origins

by James Kuncze, Alison Kelly, and Nazia Khan

The American Museum of Natural History, including the Anne and Bernard Spitzer Hall of Human Origins is open daily from 10:00 a.m.—5:45 p.m. except Thanksgiving and Christmas. For school trips, call Central Reservations at 212-769-5200 at least five weeks in advance. The museum has an on-line guide for educators that includes a map, questions, lesson plans, and activities for grades K-12 (http://www.amnh.org/education/resources/rfl/pdf/humanorigins_edguide.pdf).

Evolution is the central and unifying theme of biology and an important development in nineteenth century European intellectual history. Human evolution, origins, diversity, and fundamental genetic similarity are also important topics in the study of global history and in many twentieth century United States religious and educational controversies. It is an area where science and social studies departments need to collaborate.

The term evolution means gradual change over time. Evolutionary theory explains why what we see in today's natural world is different from what previously existed; it is a product of the past. Darwin called this process "descent with modification" and this definition is still used in evolution today.

Chimpanzee Skull

Before students visit the American Museum of Natural History Hall of Human Origins, they need a general understanding of the terminology, history, and concepts. One of the most important concepts of evolution and one of the most difficult for many students is that there is no goal in evolution. Evolution is based on random mutations within a community or species and the ability of individuals to pass along new genetic traits.

Modern Human Skull

During the 1800s there were many evolutionary thinkers that contributed to the way we understand evolution today. Some of the early ideas about evolution never gained wide acceptance because no one was able to propose a plausible mechanism for how organisms changed from one generation to another. Other ideas have become the foundations for our current beliefs. In 1809, French biologist Jean Baptiste de Lamarck presented one of the first theories of evolution. According to Lamarck, evolution involved two principles: the law of use and disuse and the inheritance of acquire characteristics. He believed the more an animal used a particular part of its body, the stronger and better developed it became and that these physiological changes were passed along to offspring. Lamarck claimed that the ancestors of the modern giraffe had short necks and fed on grasses and shrubs. As the food supply on the ground became scarce, giraffes had to stretch their necks to reach the leaves on trees, and they passed along this long neck trait to their offspring. An experiment performed by German biologist August Weismann disproved Lamarcks' theory. Weismann cut off the tails of mice for a number of generations and observed that their offspring continued to have tails of normal length.

In 1858, Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace simultaneously presented a mechanism that showed how organisms changed from one generation to another. Darwin developed his ideas in the 1830s, but did not publish them until after Wallace arrived at similar conclusions. In 1859, Darwin presented his explanation for evolution in his book *On the Origin of Species by Natural Selection*. He explained that modern species were revised descendants of earlier species and he described how this process of "Descent with Modification" had occurred. However, Darwin could not demonstrate the actual mechanism for inheritance.

Gregor Mendel explained the mechanism for inheritance in 1865 when he described the cross breeding of varieties of peas. Mendel demonstrated that organisms acquire traits through units of heredity that later became known as genes. His achievement was not widely noted until 1900, when scientists rediscovered his work.

In the 1950s, the study of evolution entered a new phase when biologists began to determine the exact molecular structure of the proteins in living things. In 1953, Francis Crick and James Watson discovered the structure of DNA. DNA is the ultimate source of both change and continuity in evolution. Changes in DNA, caused by mutation, lead to genetic variation and potentially to the emergence of a new species. All organisms use the same molecular codes. This is very powerful evidence that all living things possess some sort of interrelatedness or share a common ancestor that can be traced back to the origins of life on earth.

One major misconception amongst students is that evolution is only a "theory." Theory in science differs from the everyday use of the word. In laymen's terms, a theory is an unproven idea about a topic. In science, a theory is something that has been tested over and over again and has a strong basis for acceptance. According to Stephen J. Gould, "Evolutionists have been very clear about this distinction of fact and theory from the very beginning, if only because we have always acknowledged how far we are from completely understanding the mechanisms (theory) by which evolution (fact) occurred. Darwin continually emphasized the difference between his two great and separate accomplishments: establishing the fact of evolution, and proposing a theory--natural selection--to explain the mechanism of evolution."

According to biologist Theodosius Dobzhansky, "Evolution as a process that has always gone on in the history of the earth can be doubted only by those who are ignorant of the evidence or are resistant to evidence, owing to emotional blocks or to plain bigotry. By contrast, the mechanisms that bring evolution about certainly need study and clarification. There are no alternatives to evolution as history that can withstand critical examination. Yet we are constantly learning new and important facts about evolutionary mechanisms."

Another misconception is that individual organisms change their characteristics in response to the changing environment. Students often think that the environment acts on organisms to generate new physical characteristics that promote survival and are passed along to the next generation. Actually, genetic variation is already present and the environment "selects" organisms better adapted for survival.

Recommended Sources:

Bryson, Bill. *A Short History of Nearly Everything* (2003).

Dennett, Daniel. *Darwin's Dangerous Idea* (1995).

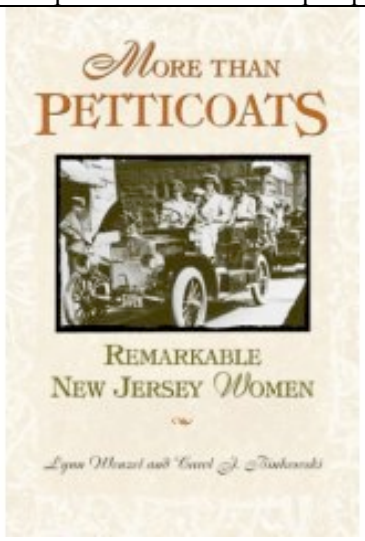
The following questions are adapted from the on-line Hall of Human Origins exhibit guide.

1. Why do skeletons of a chimpanzee, a modern human, and a Neanderthal introduce the exhibition?
2. How are these skeletons similar and different?
3. What can fossils reveal about extinct species?
4. Which hominids are now extinct?
5. Which hominids lived longer than Homo sapiens?
6. Which hominids lived on Earth at the same time?
7. How are the chromosomes of humans and chimps similar? How are they different?
8. What mechanisms produce genetic variation?
9. How do the footprints of Australopithecus compare to your feet and stride?
10. What do observations suggest about the individuals who left them?
11. What evidence was used to reconstruct how other hominids might have looked and lived?
12. How has the hominid family changed over time?
13. Which cell structures contain DNA?

Contrasting Points of View Allow Students A Broader Study of Historical Events

by Elaine Lawrence

The traditional U.S. social studies text tends to gloss over the contributions women and children offered during the development of this nation. In addition, most students learn only the American point of view from social studies textbooks. Many teachers are aware of this and incorporate supplemental materials. Outstanding educators embed these contributions within the course of study rather than only addressing them during a specific week or month. The quandary faced by teachers is how to provide students with multi-perspective learning opportunities that are seamlessly integrated. Less traditional text materials sometimes provide a window that allows students to view events or topics from a different perspective.



I recommend the series *More Than Petticoats* (Guilford, CT: Globe Pequot Press) that offers examples of contributions made by women in each state. It includes some women that students have heard about before. Molly Pitcher is in *More Than Petticoats: Remarkable New Jersey Women* by Lynn Wenzel and Carol Binkowski (2003) and Harriet Tubman is in *More Than Petticoats: Remarkable New York Women* by Antonia Petrash (2002). However, they are covered in a somewhat different fashion than in traditional textbooks. Dana Lindaman and Kyle Ward's book, *History Lessons: How Textbooks From Around The World Portray U.S. History* (NY: New Press, 2004), offers readers perceptions of U.S. historical events from other nations' viewpoints. Richard Wyman's *America's History Through Young Voices: Using Primary Sources In The K-12 Social Studies Classroom* (Boston, MA: Pearson, Allyn and Bacon, 2005) depicts U.S. history through the eyes of children and adolescents.

Excerpts from the story of Deborah Dunch Moody, from *More Than Petticoats: Remarkable New York Women,* could be used during lessons on the Northwest Ordinances, the Homestead Act, or freedom of religion. Most social studies textbooks explain plots of land were distributed under the Northwest Ordinances and the Homestead Act. This can be compared to the account given by Deborah Moody.

Deborah Moody placed an exceptionally high value on freedom of religion. An examination of her life and values could enhance the study of the New England town meeting style of government, the persecution of persons throughout U.S. history (e.g., Salem witch trials), and the development of the Bill of Rights.

Teachers can assign individuals or groups specific chapters from Lindaman and Ward's *History Lessons*. It is divided into themes with several chapters within each theme. The Westward Expansion section covers material from 1800s U.S. history: three wars, immigration, slavery, Manifest Destiny and the Monroe Doctrine. Using this book and their regular textbook, students can construct a comparison chart showing how people from different countries view the same events differently. Students could also prepare presentations or papers indicating how views are similar or different for a variety of topics. Similar activities could be set up using Wyman's *America's History Through Young Voices* depicting viewpoints from children and adolescents. Students can also use these books to make comparisons between historical figures and people currently in the news.

These books show that women, children, and other groups neglected in the standard textbooks participated in the development of this country, while the comparative approach involves students in grasping interesting concepts rather than just memorizing facts necessary to pass tests.

Field Trips Bring History Alive

by Nancy Hinkley and Casey T. Jakubowski

Many people remember the days when, in elementary school, their classes went to an off-site location to learn about dinosaurs, wars, or ride an amusement park thrill ride. Today, these childhood field trips are under assault in a budget-conscious world with standardized tests and reduced tax bases. Field trips are viewed as luxuries and are often cut from budgets in exchange for increased teaching time in classrooms or needed educational supplies. Field trips do play a significant role in helping students learn and use knowledge from the classroom. In this piece, two examples will demonstrate how important fieldtrips are to students who do not normally have many opportunities to explore the greater world.

Middle School Students

The school district where we were employed established a summer school program for at-risk and failing middle school students. The class was composed of all boys in grades 6-8. The sessions met for five weeks, five days a week, for three hours. The goals of the sessions included improving study and reading skills, as well as remediation in preparation for the next school year. A number of students in the class had failed social studies, some by a significant margin. In order to prepare the students for the next grade, the class began a review session that integrated language arts and social studies. A significant area of concern for our students was writing. In order to assist the learners in preparation for the grade eight social studies assessment, we concentrated on writing through journals, diaries and reports. One of the projects the class engaged in involved using local history to help enliven the seventh grade social studies American history curriculum. A primary focus of the project included using primary source documents and document-based essay questions.

The town, centered in the "Leather Stocking region" of upstate New York provided a number of wonderful field trip destinations, all within walking distance of the school. Students were taken to the town's pioneer cemetery where they were divided into teams to answer questions about the cemetery. They located the ages of the deceased and poetry or engravings on gravestones. This exercise encouraged students, many of who did not like to engage in critical thinking, to think about and ask questions concerning the town's heritage.

During the mini-field trip, students were expected to behave appropriately, which was discussed with students before the trip. They were asked to respect the cemetery as a place of learning, history and consecrated ground. Students, some of whom had previous negative experiences with legal authorities, were briefed about the penalties for disturbing grave markers.

Before the visitation, one of the authors made a trip to the cemetery to pick out the most interesting stones. The criteria for selecting stones included: age of the entombed, style of the stone, interesting inscriptions, and family plots. The teacher also sketched a map with group territories. Teams were provided with pencils, question sheets, and clipboards. Students were expected to answer questions completely and with justification. One question involved evaluation: "What was the most interesting head stone and why?" Other questions required students to rate the condition of the stones.

Students were encouraged to work as teams and engage their peers in conversations appropriate for a cemetery. Setting expectations early on about public behavior helped to meet one of the goals of the field trip. Students were expected to demonstrate that they were ready for other trips during the summer, such as a recreational field trip, a trip to a bookseller, and a trip to a college.

Following the cemetery trip, students were instructed to select one of the individuals whose markers they had examined and to research the deceased person's life in the library and town historian's office. Many of the students were eager to learn more about families and children buried in the cemetery. Because of the difficulty finding information about children, researchers were encouraged to find patterns among tombstones. One student was puzzled at the number of children who all died in the same month during the late 1800s. Another student discovered a correlation between the size of headstones and the importance of an individual. Some students

discovered a pattern to the burials, family groups, and the linear progression of burials across the grounds.

Student findings illustrate the importance of trips as a support for differentiated instruction. Teachers discussed the steep infant mortality rate and epidemics of the early national period, but students need to find evidence and draw their own conclusions. One essential resource was *At Rest in Delaware County*, a locally published book that included transcriptions from tombstones, as well as burial dates and the locations of relatives in other cemeteries across the county.

After students had spent a week researching their individual or group, we held classes in the school library where students read about the historical era when their individuals had lived. The teachers also provided students with documents from the local historical society, including Civil War muster roles, property maps, and additional cemetery burial lists. Students, many of whom did not engage in social studies during the regular school year, suddenly became interested in national level events, such as the Civil War, which influenced "their" research and their village.

For the next part of the project, students selected a fictional book set during the lifetime of the person they had researched. They reviewed the book, created a graphic display using timelines, pictures, maps, and quotes, and shared the story with the class. Timelines interwove national and local historical events. The final part of the project involved creating a five-entry diary for their individual. It had to reflect on national events as well as local events that influenced life in the village. One interesting diary entry, based on research in the New York State Historical Association archives, was the reflection of a local man on the assassination of President Lincoln.

High Needs High School Students

A second example of the power field trips can have in integrating social studies into curriculum emerged last year in a self-contained social studies classroom for special education students. Moderately disabled high school students in an American history class had an opportunity to travel to the Hyde Park historical site. The field trip combined school-based social studies learning with an opportunity for real life interaction skills.

The class, which was studying about the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, read an adaptive textbook and articles from the popular press to gain background. They also watched historical documentaries about homes and lives from the time period.

Before traveling to Hyde Park, students helped plan the trip. They used maps and an atlas to select the best route taking into account geographic factors. They also worked on a budget and examined web material from Hyde Park as a preview for the field trip. The field trip to the historical site allowed the self-contained students to demonstrate the application of history, economic and life skills in a unique situation.

Additional benefits of the field trip were the evaluative possibilities of the experience. In New York State, significantly disabled students are required to compile an alternative evaluative assessment in the form of a portfolio. Students need to demonstrate their ability to use social studies skills and thought processes in order to pass the evaluation of that portfolio. By arranging the field trip, the self-contained classroom teacher created situations that allowed the students to demonstrate a number of social studies skills. The class used geography to help plan routes from the school to the historical site. The group used economic thinking to design a budget for themselves on the trip. The students saw how different people in different eras lived. Additionally, the field trip provided reinforcement to classroom-based instruction. Skills learned in school were used in real life situations.

Many at-risk students do not have opportunities to learn skills and content knowledge outside of school. Under intense pressure to perform on high stakes exams, the very type of activity useful to promote learning with high-needs children is taken away. Increased test preparation is not always the solution to help students transition from middle school to high school, and then to the post-graduation world. It is our belief the opportunities presented to high needs children during field trips and field-based learning experiences are an important and necessary part of their learning experience.

Mini-Grant Promotes History in an Elementary School Classroom

by Claudia Carpenter

Many secondary school social studies teachers bemoan the absence of social studies and history in the elementary school curriculum. Claudia Carpenter, a fifth grade teacher at Sunrise Drive Elementary School, Sayville, New York was awarded a mini- grant from the New York State Council for the Social Studies. She used the mini-grant to develop and field test lessons on the "Roaring Twenties," the emergence of jazz in Harlem, the Great Depression, and World War II. She feels that while it was a lot to cover, and deep material for fifth graders, it was the highlight of their year. Each year the NYSCSS awards four mini-grants worth $500 to members of the counsel who want to create, explore or enhance instruction in social studies. Award recipients are required to present at the annual conference or submit an article to *Social Science Docket*. For information about the mini-grant program contact Tim Potts at tpotts@monticelloschools.net or tpotts100@hotmail.com.

We started our study with research. The textbook provided basic facts, a timeline of the events, and a general sense of what was happening in the United States. The topics were interesting, but the book itself was rather dull. I played a little Duke Ellington and read to the class from a picture book about him (*Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra* by Andrea Pinkney, illustrated by Brian Pinkney, NY: Hyperion Books for Children, 2007). Suddenly, a few faces were looking intently at the collection of books and CD's in my sharing basket. Questions started coming at me faster than I could answer. Who is Ella Fitzgerald? Why is there so much about music in the basket? Can we listen to this CD? May I have the book to reread? Didn't Langston Hughes write poetry? At that point I knew we were on our way!

I organized the project into four main sections. First we read everything we could on the "Roaring Twenties," jazz in Harlem, the Great Depression, and the World at War. I created a reading table filled with Guided Reading books, non-fiction resources, and photographs from the Jackdaws Roaring 20's and Great Depression collections. The children also found books in the school and local libraries.

Their group assignment was to create a PowerPoint presentation on their topic. As groups began working, students shared technology expertise and reference material. I was seeing compromise, conversation, and creativity at its best in my work groups. Music clips from the Internet were added for Duke, Ella and Louis Armstrong. The children had to really search for material on Fletch Henderson and were unable to find one of him playing. The Technology Director in our High School showed the children how they could record and input their own voices into the PowerPoint presentations. Students, including my weakest readers, worked on fluency, to prepare for being recorded. With the PowerPoints done, momentum was at a high and we moved to our next activity.

I brought in paintings by a local artist including one about dancers. Because the class had developed an appreciation for jazz, we played music while they worked with "craypas" to create artwork for our *ART of the Times* wall. Because some of the children were intrigued by dancing, we researched the steps and were soon dancing to the music. Overtime, the idea of a documentary CD was born. The band teacher taught the children a short piece by Duke Ellington and the High School Technology Director offered to record and film the students.

For the Great Depression, we used the Jackdaws materials purchased with grant funds. Using the broadsheets, documents, and the photo collection, we delved into the causes and effects of the events. We used photos to create a Depression Museum and students wrote stories to accompany the photos, giving voice to the anguish on the faces. The students decided to include both "Good Times" and "Hard Times" in their class documentary.

To get the sense of the Great Migration, technological change, and the uneasiness during wartime, we began reading biographies of important people and researched the ways industrial expansion contributed to economic and cultural change. A piece was added to the project CD and students completed a photo analysis activity about "Life in the U.S. during WWII."

Our final task was to share our work with other classes and the community. We hosted an Open House that included our Depression Museum, Art Wall, Photo Analyses, and Documentary. The children ran the entire presentation, and even distributed ration coupons for the snacks! This was the most intensive unit of study I have ever undertaken, and the most rewarding. I think it could be summed up in the words of one of my students. " Now I know why they call it living history!"

Using UN Simulations to Examine Human Rights

by Pam Becker

The role of the United Nations in global politics is coming under increasing debate as its policies and effectiveness are being criticized. Lost in the discussion is the vital role United Nations committees are playing in addressing human rights issues around the world. To help students understand how the United Nations operates and the programs it sponsors to help alleviate human suffering, students are assigned specific U.N. committees to research and are asked to address given human rights issues within the framework of those committees. Students are required to write position papers and then present them to the class. Timeframes may vary depending on the skill level of the students and availability of computers for research.

Task: The purposes of the United Nations, as set forth in the Charter, are to maintain international peace and security; to develop friendly relations among nations; to cooperate in solving international economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems and in promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; and to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in attaining these ends. To achieve its purposes, the United Nations has a number of standing (permanent) committees, commissions, and agencies including UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund), the World Health Organization, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (the U.N.'s Refugee Agency), and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). Use the following websites to research a committee, commission, or agency: http://www.unicef.org/; http://www.who.int/en/; http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home; http://www.unifem.org/.

Research Guidelines:

1. You must know the general position of your country. If your country has no position on a specific topic, think out what your own position is.
2. You should know the major area of concern or mission statement of your committee.
3. What is the history of this issue? Who are the major players? Why is this issue so important to the global community?
4. How would you solve this problem? If your country has an interest in this issue, make sure the solution of the problem is in your country's best interest. If your country has no stake in this particular issue, make sure the solution to the problem will benefit the global community.

Writing Guidelines:

1. State the issue, include important background information, and explain why this topic is of international importance (What is going on? Who is involved?).
2. Why should your committee care? What are some of the things that your committee deals with?
3. What are the best ways to solve this problem? Explain how these proposals would help solve the problem.

Overcoming the "Digital Divide" in Social Studies

by Roberto Joseph and Marlene Munn-Joseph

Since the early 1980s when computers began to infiltrate the educational system, schools with low access to computers, or with outdated equipment, were almost always the schools with large numbers of students of color. Lloyd Morrisett, the former president of the Markle Foundation, is credited with giving this disturbing trend the title "digital divide." Back then, the digital divide was about how many computers were available in schools based on race, ethnicity, gender and social class. The key concern was one of *equality*, a quantitative concept that is about counting the amount of computers available in schools.

In the mid-to-late 1990s, "digital divide" was redefined as access to the Internet. In 1998, in public schools with 50 percent or more minority enrollment, the ratio of students to computers with Internet access was 18:1. It was 10:1 in schools with less than 6 percent minority enrollment. However, this gap has shrunk. In 2005, in public schools with 50 percent or more minority enrollment, the ratio of students to computers with Internet access was 4:1, and 3:1 in schools with less than 6 percent minority enrollment. As a result, the term "digital divide" is undergoing yet another shift.

With the pressure on school districts to meet the federal requirements under "No Child Left Behind," many schools, particularly in minority communities, are purchasing "drill and practice" software that emphasize route memorization and lower order thinking skills. However, in more affluent and largely White communities, technology is used to develop higher order thinking skills. The "digital divide" is now about the types or the quality of ways technology is used in the classroom. Social Studies teachers can address the new "digital divide" in a myriad of ways. There are various types of instructional software and new web-based tools that social studies teachers can integrate into the curriculum that promote higher order thinking.

There are five types of instructional software that social studies teachers can use with students: drill and practice, instructional games, tutorials, simulations, and problem-solving environments. Software is considered instructional when it includes at least one of the following features: information, examples, guidance, practice, feedback, and an assessment of student learning. Teachers can use visual graphics, virtual worlds, field trips, and digital storytelling to enhance instruction, although these are not considered instructional software unless they incorporate these other features.

A broader use of emergent technologies, especially web-based technologies, that promote skills such as analysis, synthesis, problem identification, meaning making, and determining the validity of information, will address the issue of a quality and equitable educational experience, as well as alter the traditional roles of teachers and students. One change will be that teachers will become more dependent on the technical expertise of students.

Drill and Practice software provides exercises in which students work on example items, usually one at a time, and receive feedback on their correctness. This type of software is not meant to introduce new information or to teach a topic. It is presumed that the teacher has already provided the instruction and is using the software for practice and route memorization. This type of software is perhaps the most popular in schools and generally does not promote higher order thinking. Characteristics of good "Drill and Practice" software include: Adequate coverage of the content domain, user control over the pace of the presentation, answer judging, appropriate feedback for correct and incorrect answers, immediate feedback, motivation, and saving teacher time. Sample social studies activities/software include: vocabulary skills, memorizing important dates, people, states and capitals. Owl and Mouse Educational Software's U.S. Map Puzzle is an example of a social studies "Drill and Practice" software that assists students in learning the U.S. states and capitals (http://www.yourchildlearns.com/puzzle_us.htm).

Instructional Games are a form of "Drill and Practice" software designed to increase motivation by adding game rules and/or competition to learning activities. Characteristics of good instructional games include: appealing formats and activities, instructional value, physical dexterity, and minimum violence/aggression. Sample social studies activities/software

include: National Geographic Trivia Trek 2002 and Classroom Jeopardy! U.S. History, Geography and Civics.

Tutorial software is designed to include an entire instructional sequence similar to a teacher's classroom instruction on a topic. Tutorials generally present new information to students using various computer-based instructional strategies. This type of software provides many examples helping students gain a solid foundation for the concept(s) to be learned. Tutorials provide guidance with feedback and an assessment of student learning. Because instruction is embedded within the tutorial, this type of software usually provides teachers with the opportunity to be a guide on the side. Characteristics of good Tutorial software include: Extensive interactivity, thorough user control, appropriate pedagogy, adequate answer-judging and feedback capabilities, appropriate graphics, and adequate recordkeeping. Sample social studies activities/software include *Plato Secondary Social Studies Worldview*. The Global Studies program offers 450 hours of instruction, 39 chapters, practice questions, a glossary, 450 biographies, 33 essay questions with sample essays, over 1800 questions, and mini-lessons.

Simulated Problem Solving Environment is a computerized model of a real or imagined system that is designed to immerse students in problem-solving scenarios. Generally, there are two kinds of simulations: those that teach *about* something and those that teach *how to do* something. Simulations in social studies generally teach *about* something. The most popular simulations for social studies are situational simulations that provide students hypothetical problem situations and ask them to react. This type of software typically encourages higher order thinking skills. Characteristics of good Simulation software include: compress time, slow down processes, get students involved, make experimentation safe, make the impossible possible, save money on other resources, allow repetition with variations, and allow observation of complex processes. Sample social studies activities/software include: *Oregon Trail 5th Edition*, *Decisions, Decisions 5.0*, and *Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?*

Visual Graphics software that allows students to represent abstract concepts concretely is very popular in schools. Students can create concept maps, neighborhood maps, work with graphic organizers, and design timelines based on various historical periods. This type of software helps students to represent knowledge in multiple ways. *Inspiration 8.0* is a very popular program that allows students and teachers to design concept maps and graphic organizers. *Mapmaker's Toolkit* allows student and teachers to create and interpret current and historical maps. *Timeliner 5.0* allows students to create their own timelines, or you can use the many templates that come with the software.

Virtual Worlds and Field Trips provide social studies teachers with innovative ways of enhancing geography skills. Social studies teachers can use *Google Earth* (http://earth.google.com/) to take students on virtual field trips around the world. *Google Earth* provides satellite imagery, maps, terrain, and 3D buildings to bring the world's geographic information in your classroom. *Second Life* (http://secondlife.com) is an online 3-D virtual world that many educators are looking into for educational possibilities. Social studies teachers can work with students to recreate and reenact historical periods. Users interact with each other within the 3-D virtual environment as avatars— a 3-D virtual representation or persona of self.

Digital Storytelling is on the rise in many schools today. There are many different ways of designing a digital story. Students can create personal narratives allowing them to share experiences and center learning through their own voices. Students can create photo stories that examine historical events and inform or instruct. This type of software encourages design and creation. Students can shoot and import video and digital photographs. Start with *Microsoft Photo Story 3*, a free software for Windows (http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/photostory/default.mspx). You will just need to download *Windows Media Player 10* in order to view and use *Microsoft Photo Story 3*.

Emerging Web-based Technologies

The communicative technologies described below move students from knowledge acquisition to knowledge production. These tools allow students to conduct research and share their work with others and to receive feedback and critique. These tools also allow

other students across the globe to assist in knowledge production. *Web 1.0* was a read-only system. Websites you visited could be viewed, but not changed or edited. *Web 1.0* required knowledge of *Hypertext Markup Language* (HTML) or a web-editing tool such as *Dreamweaver* in order to make changes to a website. *Web 2.0* is a read/write system. Websites can be changed and edited from any web browser without knowledge of HTML or a web-editing tool. Some of the exciting new *Web 2.0* technologies are Blogs, Wikis, Really Simple Syndication (RSS), and Social Bookmarking.

Blog is a type of web-based personal journal that can be organized around the blogger's reflections, interests, or even course topics. People who visit blogs add comments that show up below the blogger's reflections. These comments become a permanent and important aspect of the blog. One of the many reasons people blog is to get feedback from visiters. Good places to start are *Edublogs* (http://edublogs.org/) and *Wordpress* (http://drrob.wordpress.com/). As students post assignments on their blogs, they create an online portfolio where the instructor and classmates can comment on the work. Social studies teachers can also create a classroom blog organized around the topics in your curriculum. Individuals with knowledge of the topic can be invited to comment. A good example is http://eev.liu.edu/KK/na/implementation.htm.

Wikis are websites that anyone can edit. They provide teachers and students with new opportunities to collaborate and publish work in a web-based environment. The most popular example of a wiki is the free online encyclopedia *Wikipedia* (http://www.wikipedia.org/). A good place to start with wikis is *Peanut Butter Wiki* (http://pbwiki.com/). *Education World* has a good set of resources to help you learn more about wikis (http://www.education-world.com/a_tech/sites/sites079.shtml). For a list of ideas on how you can use wikis in your classroom, visit http://wik.ed.uiuc.edu/index.php/Wiki_in_a_K-12_classroom.

RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication or Rich Site Summary. RSS allows students to receive multiple news feeds in one website. When a news story is updated, an RSS feeder will check for these new stories, collect them and send them to your website. The most popular RSS readers include the following.
Bloglines (http://www.bloglines.com)
FeedBurner (http://www.feedburner.com)
Feedster (http://www.feedster.com)
Google Reader (http://reader.google.com)
MyYahoo! (http://my.yahoo.com/s/rss-faq.html)
Technorati (http://www.technorati.com)

Social Bookmarking allows students to access, store, and organize bookmarks over the Internet. One of the most popular social bookmarking websites is *'Del.icio.us'* (http://del.icio.us/). Each time you save a website to your bookmarks you have the option of providing several keywords to describe the site. Teachers can give students access to their *'Del.icio.us'* website where they can use your bookmarks. This helps teachers direct student research projects.

Digital Video and Youtube allow students to create and display their own educational videos. July 23, 2007, was a historic moment for technology and politics in the United States, as CNN hosted the YouTube Debates. Students were asked to create a video of themselves asking a question for one or more the democratic candidates (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5mDCDAkOlQ). One question that was selected for the live airing of the CNN program was "Is Obama Black Enough? Hillary Woman Enough?" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=utf4-LPhUz0).

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