

**History 7680**  
**Religions in the US West**

**I. Contact Information**

Hist 7680      Three Credit Hours  
Location: Irish 211  
Time: Mondays 4:35-7:05

Dr. Colleen McDannell, Professor of History and  
Sterling M. McMurrin Professor of Religious Studies  
Office: 245 Irish Building  
Problems? Call, don't email. Leave a message at (801) 581-4748  
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**II. Introduction and Background**

This graduate colloquium is designed to introduce you to the study of American religions by focusing on one geographical region: the American West. The course is structured by four themes: 1) Religion into the West (stories of migrants and missionaries) 2) Religion in the West (communities, institutions, ethnic groups) 3) Religion out of the West (the impact of Western "style" on national religions) and 4) the Religion of the West (mythology and "core values" of a constructed "West"). As I am interested in how religion is represented in visual culture, a critical aspect of this course will be a discussion of how religion and the West is represented in popular movies.

**III. Objectives**

To gain a basic understanding of the content of American religious history

To deepen our knowledge of where beliefs, rituals, institutions, and core values fit into the "new history of the American West"

To develop a class annotated bibliography on books and articles on the religious history of the American West

To practice the art of thinking creatively and in a disciplined, articulate manner

**IV. Course Readings (alphabetical by author)**

For Reference, optional purchase

Catherine Albanese, *America: Religions and Religion*

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual For Writers* (7<sup>th</sup> edition)

### Required Reading

Jeanne Abrams, *Jewish Women Pioneering the Frontier Trail: A History in the American West* (2006)

John P. Bartkowski and W. Scott Swearingen, "God Meets Gaia in Austin, Texas: A Case Study of Environmentalism as Implicit Religion," *Review of Religious Research* 38 (June 1997), 308-415.

Ray Billington, "Anti-Catholic Propaganda and the Home Missionary Movement, 1800-1860," 22 (1935) *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 361-384.

Darryl V. Caterine, "Border Saints: *Santitos*," in Colleen McDannell, *Catholics in the Movies* (2008)

James D'Arc, "Darryl F. Zanuck's Brigham Young: A Film in Context" in **BYU Studies** 29 (Winter 1989): 5-28.

Ronald L. Davis, "Paradise Among the Monuments: John Ford's Vision of the American West," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 45 (Summer 1995), 48-63.

Matthew Glass, "'Alexanders All' Symbols of Conquest and Resistance at Mount Rushmore," in David Chidester and Edward Linenthal, *American Sacred Space* (1995)

Jane Naomi Iwamura, "Critical Faith: Japanese Americans and the Birth of a New Civil Religion," in Richard Alba, et al *Immigration and Religion in America* (2009)

Jeffrey Kirpal, *Esalen: America and The Religion of No Religion* (2007)

Belden C. Lane, *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality* (2002)

Michael Masatsugu, "'Beyond this World of Transcency and Impermanence' Japanese Americans, Dharma Bums, and the Making of American Buddhism during the early Cold War Years" 77 (2008) *Pacific Historical Review*, 423-451

Jeffrey Marlett, "Life on the Frontier: *Lilies of the Field*" in Colleen McDannell, *Catholics in the Movies* (2008)

James A. Sandos, *Converting California: Indians Franciscans in the Missions* (2004)

David Roberts, *Devil's Gate: Brigham Young and the Great Mormon Handcart Tragedy* (2008)

Gregory Smoak, *Ghost Dances and Identity: Prophetic Religion and American Indian Ethnogenesis in the Nineteenth Century* (2006)

Matthew Avery Sutton, *Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America* (2009)

Ferenc Szasz, "Clegy and the Myth of the American West," *Church History* 59 (1990), 497-506.

Duncan Ryuken Williams, "From Pearl Harbor to 9/11: Lessons from the Internment of Japanese American Buddhists," in Stephen Prothero, ed. *A Nation of Religions* (2006)

Randi Jones Walker, *Protestantism in the Sangre de Cristo, 1850-1920*, 1991

Susan Yohn, "An Education in the Validity of Pluralism: The Meeting between Presbyterian Mission Teachers and Hispanic Catholics in New Mexico, 1870-1912," *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Autumn, 1991), pp. 343-364

### Films

<i>Brigham Young</i> (1940)	PN1997 .B76235 2003
<i>Lilies of the Field</i> (1963)	PN1997 .L54 2001
<i>Santitos</i> (1999)	PN1997 .S1776 2003
<i>God's Army</i> (2000)	PN1997 .G56836 2000
<i>Brigham City</i> (2002)	PN1997.2 .B75 2002
<i>States of Grace</i> (2005)	
<i>My Darling Clementine</i> (1946)	PN1997.A1 E88 2007
<i>Crash</i> (2006)	PN1997.2 .C73 2006
<i>Twilight</i> (2009)	PN1997.2 .T95 2009

## V. Scheduled Topics

Mondays	Topic	To Have Read:
Week 1 <b>Aug 24</b>	Introduction <b>Where is the West? What is Religion?</b>	
Week 2 <b>Aug 31</b>	Religion into the West: <b>Missionaries and Natives</b>	Sandos, <i>Converting California</i>
Week 3 <b>Sept 7</b>	<b>Labor Day, No Class</b>	-----
Week 4 <b>Sept 14</b>	Religion into the West: <b>Getting the Faithful to the Promised Land</b>	Roberts, <i>Devil's Gate</i>
Week 5 <b>Sept 21</b>	Religion into the West: <b>Protestants Creating "America" in the West</b>	Billington, "Anti-Catholic Propaganda" Yohn, "An Education in . . ." Walker, <i>Protestantism in the Sangre de Cristo</i>
Week 6 <b>Sept 28</b>	Religion into the West: <b>Representing Transformation</b>	Films: <i>Brigham Young</i> (w/ D'Arc article) <i>Lilies of the Field</i> (w/Marlett article) <i>Santitos</i> (w/Caterine article)
Week 7 <b>Oct 5</b>	Religion in the West <b>Minority Community Life</b>	Abrams, <i>Jewish Women</i>
Week 8 <b>Oct 12</b>	<b>Fall Break, No Class</b>	-----
Week 9 <b>Oct 19</b>	Religion in the West <b>Prophetic Movements</b>	Smoak, <i>Ghost Dances</i>
Week 10 <b>Oct 26</b>	Religion in the West: <b>Japanese Americans</b>	Masatsugu, "Beyond This World" Williams, "From Pearl Harbor" Iwamura, "Critical Faith"
Week 11 <b>Nov 2</b>	Religion in the West: <b>Representing Mormons</b>	<i>God's Army I</i> <i>States of Grace (God's Army II)</i>

		<i>Brigham City</i>
Week 12 <b>Nov 9</b>	Religion out of the West <b>The Evangelical Impulse</b>	Sutton, <i>Aimee Semple McPherson</i>
Week 13 <b>Nov 16</b>	Religion out of the West <b>The Spirituality of No Religion</b>	Kirpal, <i>Esalen</i>
Week 14 <b>Nov 23</b>	Religion of the West <b>Sacralized Geography</b>	Lane, <i>Landscapes of the Sacred</i>
Week 15 <b>Nov 30</b>	Religion of the West <b>Competing Mythologies</b>	Bartkowski, "God Meets Gaia" Glass, "'Alexanders All' Symbols" Szasz, "Clergy and the Myth"
Week 16 <b>Dec 7</b>	Religion of the West <b>Utopias and Dis-utopias</b>	<i>My Darling Clementine</i> (w/Davis) <i>Crash</i> <i>Twilight</i>

## VI Assignments

Three Creative Essays (Two on Readings, One on Film session, 100 pts each) 75%

Each student will write three essays reflecting on either *two* of the books or one of the film sessions. These essays will be between five and seven pages long, double spaced, stapled, with room for comments on the right margin. Do not exceed seven pages.

The point of the essay is to illustrate your ability to think creatively and to write persuasively. Each essay should have an argument introduced early in the text and supportive evidence to illustrate your point. You should build your thesis around something in the *two* books or *three* films. Draw from your own area of expertise. Make connections that illustrates your own depth of knowledge that adds something new and different to the subject we are discussion. Strive to challenge assumptions and write about something that not the obvious. I want to see *your* ideas. Stick to the topic of "Religion in the US West" but don't be afraid to introduce other materials to support your argument. Be daring. Take intellectual risks. Be thorough.

*Please include at least one direct quotation* from the materials or from another source. Cite this in proper University of Chicago notation style and add it, and any other sources consulted, in a formal bibliography at the end of the essay. Edit your piece of writing carefully and make sure it works as a coherent, well developed, mechanically flawless essay. Your grade will depend as much your essay's ability to clearly and correctly communicate your ideas as it will on the insightfulness of your thoughts. Words count.

Do not write a book review. Do not summarize the books or film. Do not string together quotes from other people's writing. Do not repeat yourself. Do not use academic jargon or obfuscation. Do not pontificate. Use your own expertise to make observations that are

unique, concise, provocative, and speculative. Find and develop your own voice, using the insights of others a flavoring—not the meat.

Students will sign up for essays and turn them in on the assigned day. If there is a problem with that, please call me before class.

Annotated Bibliography      25%

As a class, we will create an annotated bibliography. This will be done through a wiki process. When the bibliography is finished, it will be posted on the web site of the “Religions in the US West” run out of the University of Arizona. The goal of the bibliography is to have a concise summary of core books and articles for researchers and teachers to access. Recent works and “classic” texts will be abstracted.

Authors will be either be “senior” or “junior” abstractors. Senior abstractors will write 200-250 word abstracts of books, essays in edited books, and journal articles. These will initially be chosen from a list but when that list is exhausted, students will add titles. Senior abstractors will compose a first draft by summarizing the book or article. Abstracts should contain the who, what, where, how, and why of the essay or book (see handout). It should include the thesis [in a sentence or two] and the types of sources. Ask yourself, in ten years when I have forgotten this book, will this abstract tell me what it is about?

After the abstract is posted, junior abstractors will also “quick read” the book or article—contacting the senior abstractor to get the text. Junior abstractors will edit the senior abstractor’s entry: adding what might be left out, smoothing out the language, correcting the spelling and citation style, and making sure the abstract does not exceed the word length. They will check to see if articles are in e-form on JSTOR or Project Muse. Once the abstract is edited, the senior abstractor will approve the edited abstract and “close” the entry.

For an “A” grade (95) students will act as senior abstractor for 10 books, 10 articles, and junior abstractor for 10 entries. For a “B” grade of 85 they will act as senior abstractor for 5 books, 5 articles, and junior abstractor for 5 entries.

Books and articles will be chosen on a “first come, first serve” basis, so quickly claim your entries by putting your name by the citations you want to write as junior or senior author. If all the citations on the lists are chosen, you must add citations by searching on journal indexes or in the library. Please choose books from our library and articles that are accessible via the internet. Do all your senior author abstracting before moving on to the junior author entries.

Abstract consistently throughout the course so as not to create a bottleneck at the end of the course. Final abstracting is due **November 30 at midnight**. The finished product will be distributed on the last day of class.

## VII. Evaluation Scale

Grading Scale:

A	93-100	C+	77-79	D-	60-62
A-	90-92	C	73-76	E<	60
B+	87-89	C-	70-72		
B	83-86	D+	67-69		
B-	80-82	D	63-66		

Creative Essays	300 points	(100 points each)
Bibliography	100 points	

## VII Classroom Policies

It is expected that students will attend all classes, having read the assigned reading and viewed the films (recently!). Please be prepared for careful listening and discussion. Graduate students, in particular, must make this seminar exciting by talking with each other not just to me. If you prefer to be quiet; sitting back and listening to those more comfortable at verbal interaction—your grade will suffer. Observers will receive no more than a standard grade.

Please come and talk with me if you have any questions about how I define “observer” and how I can help you become a more active participant in our class.

Classes will begin and end on time, so please do not be late for class. Turn off your cell phones and do not engage in any electronic distraction. Cheating or plagiarism will result in failing the assignment and the class. If you do not know what constitutes such misconduct, check with me and read the Student Code.

Likewise, if you have any problems speaking up in class, arriving on time, or watching movies that deal with adult situations, please tell me within the first week of class. If you don’t talk with me immediately, I will assume that all students can meet these basic expectations.

### ADA Statement

University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.

Student/Faculty Responsibilities:

All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, and I will do so, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.