

American Religions in a Global Context: Proseminar (RELIGST 359A)

Wednesdays, 11:30AM-1:20PM, lunch provided

1 unit, 3 meetings per quarter

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The proseminar is generously sponsored and funded by the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity at Stanford.

The Proseminar is a cornerstone of the American Religions in a Global Context Initiative. The purposes of the Proseminar are:

- To build community among graduate students and faculty who are interested in understanding the dynamics of religion in American life, and American religious dynamics in the world;
- To offer attendees the opportunity to read and offer feedback on each other's work; and
- To read and discuss new books and works-in-progress by leading scholars in the field.

To receive the 1 unit of credit for the proseminar, students are expected to attend and actively participate in each session, to circulate at least 1 paper for discussion, to respond to at least 1 paper, and to attend at least 1 dinner with an external faculty guest. Auditors who do not sign up for the 1 unit of credit are also welcome to attend, though enrolled students will receive priority for paper workshopping and responding.

We will typically discuss 2 papers at each session (excluding sessions with a faculty guest). The format for paper discussion is as follows:

- The paper's author will begin by briefly explaining the context of the piece: i.e. is it part of a larger work? A stand-alone article? A paper written for a class? What are the author's hopes for the piece? What questions does the author have about the piece/what are areas on which the author would particularly like feedback and help? (<5 mins)
- The paper's respondent will offer a brief assessment of the piece. Think of this as practice for offering paper comments at a conference: i.e. what are the paper's key contributions to the field (however construed)? What does the author do particularly well? What might the author want to consider in future iterations of the piece? The comments need not be exhaustive; think of this as a way to jumpstart conversation with the rest of the class. (<5 mins)
- The floor will be open to comments/questions from the class and responses from the author.

Required Readings:

- Joel Cabrita, *The People's Zion: Southern Africa, the United States, and a Transatlantic Faith-Healing Movement*
- Terence Keel, *Divine Variations: How Christian Thought Became Racial Science*, and work-in-progress by Professor Keel
- Anthony Petro, *After the Wrath of God: AIDS, Sexuality, and American Religion*, and work-in-progress by Professor Petro

- Emily Suzanne Clark, *A Luminous Brotherhood: Afro-Creole Spiritualism in Nineteenth-Century New Orleans*, and work-in-progress by Professor Clark

2019-2020 SCHEDULE

Fall Quarter:

Wednesday, October 2 – Introductions; discussion with Joel Cabrita, *The People's Zion: Southern Africa, the United States, and a Transatlantic Faith-Healing Movement*

Wednesday, November 6

Wednesday, December 4 – Discussion with Terence Keel, *Divine Variations: How Christian Thought Became Racial Science*, and work-in-progress by Professor Keel (to be distributed before the seminar)

Winter Quarter:

Wednesday, January 8 – Discussion with Anthony Petro, *After the Wrath of God: AIDS, Sexuality, and American Religion*, and work-in-progress by Professor Petro (to be distributed before the seminar)

Wednesday, February 5

Wednesday, March 4

Spring Quarter:

Wednesday, April 8

Wednesday, May 6

Wednesday, June 3 (tentative) – Discussion with Emily Suzanne Clark, *A Luminous Brotherhood: Afro-Creole Spiritualism in Nineteenth-Century New Orleans*, and work-in-progress by Professor Clark (to be distributed before the seminar)