

RM 2

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN CHRISTIANITY

Religion 200

Chaminade University of Honolulu

Winter Evening Session, 1998 Pearl Harbor Bldg. 679 2nd Floor

INSTRUCTOR: Achilles S.C. Gacis MA, M.Div.

Th Evenings 1645-2055

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OVERVIEW: This course is designed to provide the student with an opportunity to examine contemporary social issues which the Christian community encounters. The framework for ethical reflection that the student will develop will be based on relevant biblical and theological assumptions that Christianity brings to the debate on these social issues along with the methodologies that bring about social change within the context of the Christian community.

REQUIRED TEXTS: Moral Issues and Christian Response. Jersild and Johnson

CLASS PROJECTS:

1. Maintain a journal on any issue relevant to our coursework. The subject matter must be consistent throughout your compilations. A minimum of ten (10) entries are required. Paste article on facing page, then give your written personal reflections on the opposite page.

2. Each student is required to give a class presentation on any contemporary social issue. The presentation should be ten (10) minutes in length with an outline turned in prior to the presentation. The presentation should include an ethical framework, the identification of the issue and how it relates to the Christian community, and possible solutions.

3. A final major term paper on a topic of interest to the student. The theme and subject matter will be the same as the verbal presentation and will be due on the last day of class. The length should be between ten (10) and fifteen (15) pages. Follow the attached guidelines and your paper will be a success! Bring a large manila envelope, stamped and addressed for return of your paper.

PRELIMINARY OUTLINE: In addition to the textual topics covered we will discuss issues surrounding the **life ethic**: abortion, right to life, euthanasia, transplant/bioethics matters, human progression from birth to death and beyond; the **future**: expectations, inquiries, alternate societies, other cosmoeses, altered states, channelling; the history of Christian response to plagues (**HIV/AIDS**), **racism** and other forms of blatant and latent elitism and superiority, prejudice, evil, crime, punishment, the homeless issue, the attraction of cultic and occultic worship, etc.....

REL 200 Pearl Harbor **CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN CHRISTIANITY**

- JAN 15 INTRODUCTION/SYLLABUS/PAPER GUIDELINES
 (VIDEO: Night and Fog)
 THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO SOCIAL ISSUES.....pp.2-19
 (VIDEO: Heaven)
- 22 FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN MORAL RESPONSE.....pp.20-37
 PERSPECTIVES ON SEXUALITY.....pp.40-59
 (VIDEO: Black Robe)
- 29 RELATIONSHIPS, MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY....pp.60-73
 RACISM: THE CONTINUING STRUGGLE.....pp.76-101
 (VIDEO: Jungle Fever)
- FEB 05 FEMINISM IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY.....pp.102-139
 HOMOSEXUALITY.....pp.140-169
- 12 SHOULD WE LEGALIZE DRUGS?.....pp.172-189
 CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT.....pp.190-208
 (VIDEO: Recycling)
- 19 THE LURE OF CULTIC AND OCCULTIC PRACTICES
 (Presentation)
- 26 THE DEATH PENALTY.....pp.231-253
 GUN CONTROL (VIDEO: Dialog)
- MAR 05 ***JOURNALS DUE***
 EUTHANASIA/SUICIDE.....pp.356-370
 (VIDEO: Whose Life is it Anyway?)
- 12 **+PRESENTATIONS+**
- 19 **+PRESENTATIONS+**

NOTE: Due to the nature of the subjects studied and their impact on contemporary society, course content subject to change with ample notice given to student.

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COURSE OUTLINE:

- Dec. 22 Syllabus Pick-up. Course explanation.
M Introduction. What is "Religion?" A purposeful definition.
The nature of religious studies.
Research methodologies.
Philosophical dimensions of religion.
Impact of religion on the human community.
- 23 **INTRODUCTORY EXAM**
T Semitic Traditions: Judaism.....Ch. 08, p.275
Judaism: **Survival** WORD LIST
Judaism: The Sacred Texts
Judaism: VIDEO (Power of the Word)
Judaism: A look at the Torah
Judaism: Rituals; Passover and Meaning
Judaism: VIDEO (Dead Sea Scrolls)
- 27 Christianity.....Ch. 09, p.324
S Christianity: **Salvation** (Josephus)
Christianity: VIDEO (The life of Jesus).
Christianity: 033-1453 Constantine the Great
Christianity: " " Doctrine of the Trinity
Christianity: " " Seven Ecumenical Councils
Christianity: Dogma, Doctrine & Religious art
Christianity: VIDEO (Sacred Images-Iconography)
- 29 Islam.....Ch. 10, p.379
M Islam: **Submission** VIDEO (The Story of Islam)
Islam: Muhammad; history and development.
Islam: Dogma, Doctrine, and the Five Pillars
All three traditions. VIDEO (JERUSALEM)
- 30 **MID-TERM EXAM**
T South Asian Traditions HinduismCh. 03, p. 84
Hinduism: **Sacrifice**. The Trimurti WORD LIST
Hinduism: The Caste System and Ascetic practices
Hinduism: VIDEO (Dust & Ashes)
Hinduism: VIDEO (Snake Worship)
- Jan. 3 Buddhism: **Selflessness**. Four Noble Truths,Ch. 04, p. 128
S Buddhism: Noble Eight-fold Path, Pali Canon, Triratna
Buddhism: VIDEO (Footprint of the Buddha)
- 5 East Asian Traditions: Taoism: Serenity.....Ch.06 ,p.208
M (VIDEO: Chi, VIDEO: Taoism)
- 6 Confucianism: **Society**. The Analects, Five Values
T
- 8 Shintoism: **Spirit**. The Divine Nation.
Th VIDEO (Japan: Spirit and Form)
- 10 **FINAL EXAM** (Bring index card & SASE for grade mailer...)
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