

Weekly Suggested Class Reading and Topic Schedule: Religion and Violence

Class #1 April 16: Suggested reading- Karen Armstrong, Introduction

A round robin of brief self-introductions including, for those who may feel so prompted, a word or two about what brings you to this course.

Brief review of class meeting procedures.

Class discussion. What do we understand by 'religion'?

Lecture. Religion has been a career long interest of mine, both teaching and research. What interests me most about religion?

Class #2 April 23: Suggested reading- Karen Armstrong, chapters 1,2

Lecture: Collective violence, warfare in human history

Class discussion.... suggested topics A) Warfare is enacted by people. What motivates the enactment? B) An outrageous proposition: Killing and violence are but very small parts of the enactment of warfare (and hunting).

Class #3 April 30: Suggested reading- Karen Armstrong, chapters 4,7

Religion and warfare in history: The Hebrew dilemma and the Muslim dilemma.

Class #4 May7: Suggested reading- Karen Armstrong, chapter 8

Religion causes warfare. Two oft cited examples in support of this: the Crusades, and modern Jihad.

Class # 5 May14: Suggested reading: Karen Armstrong, chapters 12,13

Modern terrorism and Jihad under the microscope.

Class # 6 May 21: Suggested reading- Karen Armstrong, Afterword, Postscript

Social historical understanding of the relationship between religion and violence.