

**ANTHROPOLOGY OF RELIGION**  
**ANTH 409 / 609**

**Fall 2005**  
**T/R 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**  
**510 RASM (Rasmuson Library)**

**Instructor:** Dr. Patty Gray

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**Office hours:** M 10:45-12:45; W 3:30-5:00; R 1:15-3:15; or by appointment.

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**Office Hours:** TBA

**Catalogue Course Description:** Religion or supernatural belief from the perspective of anthropology. Religion in the context of "primitive" society as well as its role in complex society. Religious practitioners, ritual, belief systems and the relationship of religious behavior to other aspects of social behavior. (Prerequisite: ANTH 100x and ANTH 215 or permission of instructor.)

**Course Objectives and Format:** The study of religion can be approached from a variety of perspectives: theological, philosophical, sociological, historical, etc. In this course, students will gain an understanding of the anthropological approach, which privileges local religious experiences and practices and places them in social and cultural context. Students will explore this through extensive reading assignments, intensive, classroom lecture, and lively classroom discussions.

**Required Book**

Brown, Karen McCarthy, 2001, *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

**Additional required book for graduate students**

Morris, Brian, 1987, *Anthropological Studies of Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Obtaining Books:** I do not work with the UAF bookstore, as there are often problems with them, so you will need to obtain books on your own. There are several simple options, including:

- Order through Gulliver's Books, 3525 College Road, 474-9574 (usually takes a week)
- Order online at Amazon.com (free shipping!)
- Order direct from the publisher online or by phone/mail (and pay shipping)
- Order a used copy through Bookfinder.com

If you have *any* difficulty ordering books, I will assist you – if necessary, you can pay me cash or check and we can order the books together online using my credit card. If you need to buy your books from the UAF Bookstore for scholarship reasons, please see me – we will work something out. Books will not be used at the start of the course, so there is time to order them.

## Required Articles

The majority of the reading material for this course is in the form of individual articles that are made available via Electronic Reserve (ERes). Articles may be placed on paper reserve at the Rasmuson Library circulation desk if students request this. ERes may be linked to on the UAF website through the Rasmuson Library page, or directly at the address (<http://eres.uaf.edu/>). Once you are in ERes, you may select either ANTH 409 or ANTH 609 – the same set of readings will show up in either case. Whenever you are asked for a password, type the lower-case letters “rel” (for “religion”). Articles will be arranged by week and will be downloadable as PDF files.

## Course Web Site

We do have a Blackboard site for this class, and you will all be enrolled on it. I am not sure yet how we might use it. We may discuss this as a class. Stay tuned.

## Grading

This is a stacked course, so those registered for undergraduate credit have slightly different requirements than those registered for graduate credit.

For those registered for **UNDERGRADUATE CREDIT**, your grade for the course will be based on the following:

Participation	20%
2 Film Reaction papers (5% each)	10%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%
Term Paper (8-10 pages)	20%

For those registered for **GRADUATE CREDIT**, you will have additional readings and your grade for the course will be based on the following:

Participation*	20%	
Midterm Exam	20%	(Exams will have an additional essay for graduate students)
Final Exam	20%	
Research Paper (about 20 pages)	25%	
Lead one class discussion	15%	

\* Graduate students will have 4 additional meetings outside of regular class hours

NOTE: You must complete all of the assignments to pass the class.

### Explanation of Assignments

**Participation:** This course will rely almost equally on lectures and discussions. With a small class like ours, discussion will not be successful unless all are present and engaged. Therefore, both attendance and active participation are crucial, and are heavily weighted in your final grade. The class participation component of your grade will be based on evidence that you have read, understood, and thought about the assigned readings in advance of class discussion. **If you miss a class, it will be your responsibility to obtain notes from a classmate.** Graduate students, we will meet 4 times outside of class in a “mini seminar” to discuss the Morris book, as well as to discuss your progress on your research paper. We will together arrange a mutually convenient time for these meetings.

**Film Reaction Papers (Undergrads only):** Early in the semester, we will view two films in class. After each film, undergraduates will write a 3-5 page paper reacting to and discussing the film in light of what we have been learning in the course so far.

**Exams:** There will be a take-home midterm and an in-class final exam. Exams will be based on readings, lectures, films, and discussions, and will be a mixture of short answer and essay. Graduate students will be required to answer an additional essay question on each exam, related to their additional readings.

**Undergraduate Term Papers:** You must select a topic relevant to what you are learning in the course. Topics should be approved in advance by Dr. Gray, as early in the semester as possible. (If you have trouble thinking of a topic, I will be happy to brainstorm with you.) You will use a combination of books, articles, and Internet sources to gather the information you need. Undergraduate papers must be 8-10 pages in length.

**Graduate Student Research Papers:** Your paper may be written on any topic of your choice, as long as it applies one or more of the theoretical approaches studied in the course to understanding a form of religious experience situated in its sociohistorical context. Topics should be approved in advance by Dr. Gray, as early in the semester as possible. The content of the paper must reflect serious use of published books and scholarly articles; primary sources may be used if you wish. Graduate student papers should be 18-22 pages in length.

**ALL PAPERS:** Papers must be typed and double-spaced, using 12-point font, and must use acceptable and consistent methods for citation of sources and bibliography format. If you are unsure of this, please ask – I will be happy to show you how it is done. Please observe closely the proper page length for your paper – papers that exceed the upper page limit are as bad as papers that do not reach the lower limit.

**Graduate Student Discussion Leading:** Basically, I will turn most of one class period over to you. This can be done any time during the semester – talk to me about any topic that particularly interests you. You can consult with me individually about how to approach the task of leading discussion for that day.

## Support Services

Student Support Services are available at UAF. These services include: 1) free tutorial services; 2) small study groups; 3) academic advising, mentoring, and personal support; 4) direct financial assistance to qualified Pell Grant recipients; 5) use of laptop computers, labs, and other technology resources; and 6) cultural and social engagement. The office is located at 508 Gruening Building, and the phone number is 474-6844. You may also obtain additional information about support services at: [www.uaf.edu/sssp/index.html](http://www.uaf.edu/sssp/index.html)

## Academic Honesty & Plagiarism

I expect you to do your own work in accordance with the UAF Student Code of Conduct (<http://www.uaf.edu/catalog/current/academics/regs3.html>). It should go without saying that cheating and plagiarism cannot be tolerated in any form in scholarly work, but it will be stated for the record that **any exam or paper that contains plagiarized material will receive a grade of zero, and may possibly be grounds for flunking the class.** Be sure you understand what constitutes plagiarism and what are acceptable forms of citing published (and unpublished) material. For an explanation of what constitutes plagiarism see:

<http://www.uaf.edu/library/instruction/handouts/Plagiarism.html>

For an explanation of how to properly cite sources see:

<http://www.uaf.edu/library/instruction/handouts/Citing.html>

## Final Comments

If you run into problems during the semester that affect your attendance or coursework, be sure to let me know – exceptions can always be made for illness and emergencies. It is very important to *notify me in advance* if at all possible – I will be less sympathetic to excuses made after the fact. Feel free to call or e-mail me at any time, and to talk to me before or after class, or during my office hours.

*The University of Alaska is committed to providing equal access for students with disabilities. If you experience a disability and will need special accommodations, please contact me during my office hours.*

**This syllabus is like an agreement between you and me: I agree to fulfill my obligations as outlined here, or else announce any changes clearly and well in advance; you agree to do the same.**

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Readings should be completed *before* the week starts, as we will discuss them during that week and I will assume you are familiar with them. We will take up readings roughly in the order in which they are listed.

### PART I: SCRATCHING THE SURFACE

Week	Dates	Topics & Activities	Assignments DUE
0	Sep. 1	<b>Topic:</b> Introductions <b>Readings:</b> None yet!	
1	Sep. 6 & 8	<b>Topic:</b> The surface layer of reality: "World Historical" religions <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warms et al. 2004, "Islam," "Christianity," "Judaism," "Buddhism," and "Hinduism"</li> <li>• Hefner 1998, "Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism in a Globalizing Age"</li> </ul>	

### PART II: DIGGING A LITTLE DEEPER

2	Sep. 13 & 15	<b>Topic:</b> Anthropological study of religion <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bowen "Social theory in the Anthropology of Religion"</li> <li>• Sir James George Frazer, excerpt from <i>The Golden Bough</i> (SKIM)</li> <li>• Edward Burnett Tylor, excerpt from <i>Primitive Culture</i></li> <li>• Emile Durkheim, excerpt from <i>The Elementary Forms of Religious Life</i></li> <li>• Malinowski, "Magic and Religion"</li> </ul> <b>Recommended:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excerpt from Lambek, ed., <i>A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion</i> (Intro)</li> <li>• Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System"</li> </ul>	
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3	Sep. 20 & 22	<p><b>Topic:</b> Belief &amp; Practice, Evangelism &amp; Conversion, Syncretism  <b>FILM:</b> <i>Trobriand Cricket</i>  <b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mama Lola</i>, both Prefaces, Introduction</li> <li>• Malcom Ruel, "Christians as Believers"</li> <li>• John &amp; Jean Comaroff, "The Colonization of Consciousness"</li> <li>• Christopher Duncan, "Untangling Conversion"</li> <li>• Eric Wolf, "The Virgin of Guadalupe"</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brouwer, Gifford and Rose, "South Korea: Modernization with a Vengeance, Evangelization with an Edge"</li> </ul> <p><b>GRADS</b> read Morris Intro, Ch. 1-2</p>	
4	Sep. 27 & 29	<p><b>Topic:</b> Myth, Symbolism, Religious objects  <b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mama Lola</i>, Ch. 1 and 2</li> <li>• Evans-Pritchard, "The Problem of Symbols"</li> <li>• Malinowski, "Myth in Primitive Psychology"</li> <li>• Radin, "The Winnebago Trickster Figure"</li> <li>• Bowen, "Objects, Images, and Worship"</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sherry Ortner, "On Key Symbols"</li> <li>• Levi-Strauss, "A Jivaro Version of <i>Totem and Taboo</i>"</li> </ul>	
5	Oct. 4 & 6	<p><b>Topic:</b> Ritual &amp; Taboo, Sacrifice, Pilgrimage  <b>FILM:</b> <i>Holy Ghost People</i>  <b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mama Lola</i>, Ch. 3</li> <li>• Roy Rappaport, Excerpt from <i>Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity</i></li> <li>• Mary Douglas, "Taboo"</li> <li>• Godfrey Lienhardt, Excerpt from <i>The religion of the Dinka</i></li> <li>• Mary Lee Daugherty, "Serpent-Handling as a Sacrament"</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victor Turner, "Betwixt and Between"</li> <li>• Raymond Firth, "Offering and Sacrifice: Problems of Organization"</li> <li>• E. Valentine Daniel, Excerpt from <i>Fluid Signs</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Trobriand Cricket</i>  <b>Reaction Paper</b>  <b>DUE ON TUESDAY</b></p>

6	Oct. 11 & 13	<p><b>Topic:</b> Religious specialists: Spirit Healers, Priests, Altered states of consciousness</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mama Lola</i>, Ch. 4</li> <li>• Victor Turner, "Religious Specialists"</li> <li>• Alice Beck Kehoe, Excerpts, from <i>Shamans and Religion</i></li> <li>• Will Adcock, Excerpts from <i>Shamanism: Rituals for Spirit Journeying and Creating Sacred Space</i></li> <li>• Michael Brown, "Dark Side of the Shaman"</li> <li>• Katz &amp; Biesele, "Healing Makes Our hearts Happy"</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• R.B. Williams, "Training for Religious Specialists for a Transnational Hinduism"</li> <li>• T. Bulgakova, "Shaman on the Stage"</li> <li>• J.M. Atkinson, "Shamanisms Today"</li> <li>• Janice Boddy, "Spirit Possession Revisited"</li> </ul> <p><b>GRADS</b> read Morris Ch. 3-4</p>	Midterm passed out on Thursday
7	Oct. 18 & 20	<p><b>Topic:</b> Religious use of drugs</p> <p><b>Film Excerpt:</b> <i>Warriors of the Amazon</i> (Yanomamo drug preparation and use)</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mama Lola</i>, Ch. 5</li> <li>• Excerpts from Jochelson, <i>The Koryak</i></li> <li>• J.S. Slotkin, "The Peyote Way"</li> <li>• M. Kiyaaani &amp; T.S. Csordas, "On the Peyote Road"</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marlene Dobkin de Rios, "Twenty-Five Years of Hallucinogenic Studies in Cross-Cultural Perspective"</li> </ul>	<i>Holy Ghost People</i> Reaction Paper DUE ON TUESDAY
8	Oct. 25 & 27	<p><b>Topic:</b> Witchcraft, Sorcery, Divination, Oracles, Magic</p> <p><b>Film excerpt:</b> <i>Witchcraft Among the Azande</i></p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mama Lola</i>, Ch. 6</li> <li>• Evans-Pritchard, "Witchcraft Explains Unfortunate Events"</li> <li>• Piers Vitebsky, Excerpt from <i>Reindeer People</i> on divination</li> <li>• Malinowski, "Rational Mastery by Man of His Surroundings"</li> <li>• George Gmelch, "Baseball Magic"</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Todd Sanders, "Reconsidering Witchcraft"</li> <li>• Frazer, "Sympathetic magic"</li> </ul>	<b>Take-Home Midterm</b> DUE ON TUESDAY

9	Nov. 1 & 3	<p><b>Topic:</b> Ghost, Souls, Ancestors, Vampires, Zombies</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mama Lola</i>, Ch. 7</li> <li>• Stein &amp; Stein, "Souls, Ghosts and Death"</li> <li>• Additional reading TBA</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBA</li> </ul> <p><b>GRADS</b> read Morris Ch. 5</p>	<p><b>NO CLASS THURSDAY (AAASS)</b></p>
10	Nov. 8 & 10	<p><b>Topic:</b> Death, Funerary practices, Post-death observances, Days of the dead</p> <p><b>Film excerpt:</b> <i>Horses of Life and Death</i></p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mama Lola</i>, Ch. 8</li> <li>• Bowen, "Death Ritual and the Social Order"</li> <li>• Review Lienhardt, pp.333-335</li> <li>• Anna Kerttula, Excerpt from <i>Antler on the Sea</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malinowski, "Baloma, Spirits of the Dead in the Trobriand Islands" in <i>Magic, Science and Religion</i></li> </ul>	
11	Nov. 15 & 17	<p><b>Topic:</b> Gods, Spirits, Angels, Demons, etc.</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mama Lola</i>, Ch. 9</li> <li>• Stein &amp; Stein, "Gods and Spirits"</li> <li>• R. Anderson, "The Menu of Humanoid Possibilities" in <i>The Ghosts of Iceland</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBA</li> </ul>	
12	Nov. 22 & 24	<p><b>Topic:</b> Religion in social movements</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mama Lola</i>, Ch. 10</li> <li>• A.F.C. Wallace, "Revitalization Movements"</li> <li>• A.B. Kehoe, "The Ghost Dance Religion"</li> <li>• P.M. Worsley, "Cargo Cults"</li> <li>• W.F. Lewis, "Urban Rastas in Kingston, Jamaica"</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ralph Linton, "Nativistic Movements"</li> </ul> <p><b>GRADS</b> read Morris Ch. 6</p>	<p><b>NO CLASS THURSDAY (Thanksgiving)</b></p>

13	Nov. 29 & Dec. 1	<p><b>Topic:</b> New Age religion</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mama Lola</i>, 11 and 12, Afterword</li> <li>• T.M. Luhrmann, "The Goat and the Gazelle: Witchcraft"</li> <li>• Anna Kerttula, Excerpt from <i>Antler on the Sea</i></li> <li>• R. Anderson, "New Age Elves and Fairies" in <i>The Ghosts of Iceland</i></li> <li>• Michael F. brown, Excerpt from <i>The Channeling Zone</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lorne L. Dawson, "Who Joins New Religious Movements and Why?"</li> <li>• S. Magliocco, "Ritual is my Chosen Art Form" (on Wicca)</li> <li>• S.D. O'Leary, "Cyberspace as Sacred Space"</li> </ul>	<p><b>NO CLASS THURSDAY (AAA)</b></p>
14	De. 6 & 8	<p><b>Topic:</b> Catch-up, Review, Final discussion of <i>Mama Lola</i></p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mama Lola</i>, Afterword</li> </ul>	<p><b>Undergraduate Term Papers and Grad Research Papers DUE ON THURSDAY</b></p>

**FINAL EXAM: SATURDAY, DEC. 17, 2005, 10:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.**