

PCGR 6410-001– Psychology and Religion/Spirituality
Fall 2015

Syllabus and Course Materials by Lisa Cataldo, PhD

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Course Description

Both psychology and religion address, in distinct ways, questions about ultimate concerns: love, desire, identity, purpose, and meaning in human life, and how our humanity develops and finds expression in relation to self, others, and the sacred. In this course, we will explore the ways in which psychological and religious experience are interrelated on both the individual and collective levels, so that we may examine our religious lives psychologically, and vice-versa. Issues to be explored include the Unconscious, faith development, God-images, the body, the psychological power of religious symbols, the difference between submission and surrender, and prayer. A growing awareness of our own emotional, psychological, and spiritual dynamics is integral to this undertaking, and will be included in our study.

Goals and Assessment

During the course, students are expected to:

- Learn the psychoanalytic approaches, perspectives and vocabulary that are introduced in this course.
- Pay attention to their affective and spiritual responses to the material
- Dialogue with a text, *thinking critically* about psychological and theological propositions (their own and those of the authors we study).
- Recognize and evaluate the methodology used by authors who examine the relationship between psychology and religion, and incorporate socio-historical context into their evaluation of psychological and religious ideas.
- Consider and cogently discuss the inter-relationship between psychology and religion, and psychology and spirituality, and begin to articulate their own methodology.
- Demonstrate their understanding of the theories and concepts we study by consideration of a religious question, or a clinical, professional or autobiographical situation, demonstrating competent use of at least three different theoretical approaches.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to think critically about religious experience and belief from a psychological perspective.
- Analyze individual and collective religious life from a psychoanalytic perspective.
- Discuss the impact that methodology has on conclusions regarding religious belief and practice.

Course Requirements

1. **(40%) Thorough preparation and participation.** This means listening to, reading, and viewing assigned material for each module before participating in discussion. Weekly postings on discussion boards are expected each week:

Approximately 500 words total each week, spread across 1 main post and 2 responses to your classmates' postings. ***Please note: your weekly discussion postings and responses must include reference to specific reading material, including citations.* During the 8 weeks of the course, 7 postings (and 14 responses) are required.

2. **(10%) "Two Voices" exercise** (week 1)
3. **(50%) Essay-Question Responses.** Four short essays (each 3-4 pages, double spaced) in response to take-home questions that will be assigned after completing the reading for weeks 3, 5, 7 & 8. (See below for details). Of the four essays, your three highest grades will count toward your final grade.

NOTES ON ASSIGNMENTS:

****Please note that all written assignments must be submitted on time****

Extensions will not be allowed except under extraordinary circumstances, and must be requested in advance.

Regarding the Essay-Question Responses:

During weeks 3, 5 and 7, students will receive essay questions. You will have a choice, and are to answer only one. The questions will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of the theories and concepts we have studied in the previous two weeks, by considering a religious question, or a clinical, professional, or autobiographical situation, and then using the course material to analyze or evaluate that question or situation.

During week 8, students may formulate their own question, in dialogue with the professor. Material covered may be from throughout the course. This is an opportunity to go deeper with material that is particularly interesting to you, relevant to your work, or that you initially struggled to understand.

Parameters for written assignments:

APA Style: All journals and postings must use **APA style** for citations. If you are not familiar with this style, please look it up, or seek help from the library.

Inclusive language: In keeping with 21st-century scholarship, ethical practice, and the policies of Fordham GSRRE, inclusive language regarding humanity is **required** in all assignments. You are also strongly urged to use inclusive language when referring to God or the sacred (this may be gender-neutral, or alternating gender-specific pronouns). If the latter practice is new to you, try to make an experiment of it for the semester.

NOTES on THINKING, DIALOGING and WRITING:

1. **Open-mindedness:** Many of the concepts we study may feel new; some may feel alien to your own religious experience or belief. It is important to study with an open mind, giving new ideas a chance to work in you before either rejecting or accepting them. One of this course's objectives is to be able to reflect upon and assess your own religious/spiritual stance in light of various psychological theories. This requires a willingness to examine and question your experience/beliefs with the same open mind.
2. **Mutual respect and confidentiality:** I hope that we will all share freely from our experience during this course. To ensure that everyone feels free to do so, it is important that we listen and speak respectfully to each other. Also, all personal or case material shared in this class should be treated as confidential information, not to be shared without permission. All written material submitted to me will be treated as such.

TEXTS

Required:

Individual articles and readings provided in the Learning Space on Blackboard

Palmer, Michael (1997) *Freud and Jung on Religion*, Routledge

Campbell, J, ed. *The Portable Jung*, New York: Penguin

Jung, C.G. (1958) *The Undiscovered Self*. New York: Penguin

Ulanov, Ann and Barry (1983) *Primary Speech: A Psychology of Prayer*, Westminster John Knox

Recommended

1. Freud, S. (1961) *Future of an Illusion*, W.W. Norton
2. Freud, S. (1961) *Civilization and Its Discontents*, W.W. Norton
3. Jung, C.G. (1963) Jaffe, Ed. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Vintage
4. Ulanov, Ann Belford (2002) *Picturing God*, Wipf & Stock

CLASS SCHEDULE

Please see the online Learning Space for module schedule. The readings for each week can also be found in that week's folder in the "Syllabus and Course Documents" section.

I. FOUNDATIONAL THEORIES in PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION

Week 0 Introduce yourself on the "Introductions" discussion board

Week 1 ***Why Psychology and Religion?***
(Note the "Two Voices" assignment due this week)

READING:

- L.M. Cataldo, Excerpt from *A Penultimate God*
- Abraham Maslow and Peak Experiences (summary handout)
- A.B. Ulanov – "The Christian Fear of the Psyche" from *Picturing God*

OPTIONAL:

W. James, Excerpt from *Varieties of Religious Experience*

Week 2 Part I: *Freud and the Dynamic Unconscious*
Part II: *Freud and Religion: The Future of Our Illusions*

READING:

Part I:

- C. Brenner, "Two Fundamental Hypotheses" in *An Elementary Textbook of Psychoanalysis*
- S. Freud, "A Note on the Unconscious in Psychoanalysis," 1912, in *General Psychological Theory*

OPTIONAL:

- Fiction: Frank O'Connor: My Oedipus Complex (this short story is a great and fun illustration of the Oedipus Complex in "real life")
- Sigmund Freud quotes (online link)
- Freud Biographical Snippets: read something about the life and times of Freud, to help you understand his context - explore this site and links as much as you like. If you find something particularly interesting, post the link for us in this week's discussion board.

Part II:

- Freud, S. "Obsessive Acts and Religious Practices," 1907, in *Character and Culture*
- M. Palmer, Chapters 1 & 2 in *Freud and Jung on Religion*

OPTIONAL:

- S. Freud, *The Future of an Illusion* (Read the first few chapters thoroughly - At least skim the rest of the book)
- S. Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Ch. 1 (to bottom of p. 33 only)
- M. Palmer, *Freud and Jung on Religion*, Ch. 3 and pp. 70-75

- Edmundson, M. (2007) *Freud, Defender of the Faith*. New York Times. Sept. 9, 2007. This article talks about the development of Freud's views on religion, and postulates that perhaps Freud found a way to embrace Judaism (sort of) near the end of his life.
- Edmundson, M. (2006) *Freud and the Fundamentalist Urge*. New York Times, April 30, 2006. In this article, Edmundson looks at Freud, Hitler, and the draw of fundamentalism.

Week 3 **Part I Jung: The Terrain and Function of the Unconscious**
Part II Jung and Religion: Psyche and Symbol

(Note the first essay assignment is due at the end of this week. Essay questions will be distributed later in the week.)

READING:

Part I:

- M. Palmer, pages 85-108 in *Freud and Jung on Religion*
- *The Portable Jung*, ch. 2 "The Structure of the Psyche"; ch. 4 "The Concept of the Collective Unconscious"; ch. 6 "Aion: Phenomenology of the Self"

Part II:

- M. Palmer, pages 108-165 in *Freud and Jung on Religion*
- Jung, *The Undiscovered Self* - as much as you can get through

OPTIONAL:

- More from *The Portable Jung* (chapters 1, 5 and 9)
- Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Ch. XII and Retrospect

II. PLAY, RITUAL, AND THE RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION

**Week 4 Part I: *The dynamics of faith development:
Childhood relationships and the image of God***

Part II: *Religion and creativity: Doing, being, and playing*

READING:

Part I:

- D.W. Winnicott: Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena in *Playing and Reality*
- D. W. Winnicott – The Transitional Space and the Creative Life (summary handout)
- E. Berne DeGear, The Bible as Transformational Object

Part II:

- AM Rizzuto, Birth of the Living God, Ch 1, 10 (skim ch 8)
- A & B Ulanov, "Prayer and Projection" chapter 3 in Primary Speech
- W. Meissner, Ignatius of Loyola: Psychology of a Saint (excerpts)

Week 5 ***The Religious Imagination: What happened to Mother?***

(Note the second essay assignment is due at the end of this week. Essay questions will be distributed later in the week.)

READING:

- D.W. Winnicott, *Home is Where We Start From*, "The Mother's Contribution to Society"
- L.M. Cataldo, Mother as Theological Problem

OPTIONAL:

- E. Erikson, *The Life Cycle Completed*, Chart, and pp. 34-53

III. RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN HEALTH AND UNHEALTH

Week 6 ***Surrender and Submission in Spiritual Life***

READING:

- L. Cataldo, "Where God is Between Us: Religious Experience, Surrender and the Third in Clinical Perspective"
- A & B Ulanov, "Moral Masochism and Religious Submission" in *Religion and the Unconscious*

Week 7 ***Faith, spirituality and the body***

(Note the third essay assignment is due this week. Essay questions will be distributed later in the week.)

READING:

- A. Ulanov, "Body" in *Finding Space: Winnicott, God and Psychic Reality*
- Reading on neuroscience and neuroplasticity (see learning module)
- Ulanov, Ann and Barry, "Prayer and Aggression" and "Prayer and Sexuality" chapters 7 and 8 in *Primary Speech*

Week 8 ***Living spirituality***

(Note the final essay assignment is due this week)

READING:

- C.K. Gillespie, *Psychology and American Catholicism*, Ch. 11, "Current and Future Issues: Controversy and Collaboration"
- Ulanov, *Primary Speech*, Chapters 1, 2 & 11
- Ulanov, *The Wisdom of the Psyche*, Ch. 1 "The Ministry of the Ego"

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

This is a brief bibliography of some good sources in the field. It is only a sampling of the sources on the subject of psychology and religion, religious experience, and spirituality. I encourage you to do more exploration on your own. Some of the course readings will come from this list. I will be adding to this bibliography during the semester. Look for updates in Course Documents.

- Bingaman, K. (2007). *Treating the New Anxiety: A Cognitive-Theological Approach*. New York: Jason Aronson.
- Black, D.M., Ed. (2006). *Psychoanalysis and Religion in the 21st Century: Competitors or Collaborators?* New York: Routledge.
- Capps, D. (1993). *The Depleted Self: Sin in a Narcissistic Age*. Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Frawley-O'Dea, M.G. and V. Goldner. (2007). *Predatory Priests, Silenced Victims: The Sexual Abuse Crisis and the Catholic Church*. New York: Analytic Press.
- Freud, S. (1961) *Civilization and Its Discontents*, W.W. Norton
- Freud, S. (1961) *Future of an Illusion*, W.W. Norton
- Gillespie, C.K. (2001) *Psychology and American Catholicism: From Confession to Therapy*. New York: Crossroad.
- Jacobs, J. and D. Capps, Eds. (1997). *Religion, Society, and Psychoanalysis: Readings in Contemporary Theory*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Jones, J.W. (1991). *Contemporary Psychoanalysis and Religion*.
- Jones, J.W. (1996). *Psychoanalysis, Feminism and Religion*.
- Jones, J.W. (2002). *Terror and Transformation: The Ambiguity of Religion in Psychoanalytic Perspective*. New York: Taylor and Francis.
- Jones, J.W. (2008). *Blood That Cries Out from the Earth: The Psychology of Religious Terrorism* New York: Oxford
- Jung, C.G. (1957, 1958) Hull, Trans. *The Undiscovered Self*, Signet
- Jung, C.G. (1963) Jaffe, Ed. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Vintage
- Lowen, A. (1972) *Depression and the Body*, Penguin
- Palmer, Michael (1997) *Freud and Jung on Religion*, Routledge
- Parsons, W.B., D. Jonte-Pace, and S. Henking, Eds. (2008). *Mourning Religion*. Charlottesville: U. Virginia Press.
- Peterson, G. (2003) *Minding God: Theology and the Cognitive Sciences*. Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Rizzuto, A. (1979). *The Birth of the Living God*. Chicago: U. Chicago Press.
- Shorto, R. (1999). *Saints and Madmen*. New York: Henry Holt.
- Starr, K. (2008). *Repair of the Soul: Metaphors of Transformation in Jewish Mysticism and Psychoanalysis*. New York: Routledge.
- Ulanov, A. (2007). *The Unshuttered Heart: Opening to Aliveness/Deadness in the Self*. Nashville: Abingdon.
- Ulanov, A. and B. (1975). *Religion and the Unconscious*. Philadelphia: Westminster.
- Ulanov, A. and B. (1982) *Primary Speech: A Psychology of Prayer*, Westminster John Knox
- Ulanov, A. (2002) *Picturing God*, Wipf & Stock
- Winer, J. and W. Anderson, Eds. (2007) *Spirituality and Religion: Psychoanalytic Perspectives*. Catskill, Psychology and Religion/Spirituality