

**Popular Buddhism: Fact or Fiction?**  
**FYS 189B Spring 2007**  
**Mon. 1:40-3:10 ODY 145**  
**Tues/Thurs 10:10-11:40 Piskor 010**

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Office hours: Sundays 6pm-9pm Tuesdays 8pm-10pm in the front area of ODY, and by appt.  
I. Course Description and Goals:

In this seminar we will critically examine the latest upsurge of western popular culture's interest in all things Buddhist. A quick search on the web reveals dozens of links ranging from monasteries and online Buddhist texts to spas and home decorating; at most newsstands at the airport you'll find a book by the Dalai Lama; and even Hollywood is in on the act. In this class, we will engage in close readings of original Buddhist texts and scholarly work on Buddhism alongside more 'popular' texts and films. This critical investigation requires students to complete a research project that will address, among others, the following questions in relation to one particular school of Buddhism: How is Buddhism being used in popular culture? What is its relation to the philosophy? Why has Buddhism become so popular right now? Are there patterns of Buddhism becoming popular at certain points in history?

At its core this seminar has two primary goals. The first is to cover a set of common readings and through intensive group discussions students will be encouraged to actively explore (and challenge) the intersection between Buddhism as a philosophy; as a part of popular culture; as a response to the times in which we live and as a commodity. The second objective asks each seminar participant to choose a particular topic that relates to the above questions and spend the semester investigating the significant questions, ideas, and themes associated with that chosen topic and what role Buddhism plays in popular culture.

II. Course Objectives:

- A. Develop an appreciation for and understanding of scholarly inquiry
- B. Actively identify an independent research topic and frame a relevant thesis statement (clearly stating what you will argue/prove/demonstrate in the research paper)
- C. Acquire and utilize necessary library skills to conduct a multi-phase research project
- D. Examine, evaluate and integrate multiple sources of information into a coherent research paper
- E. Present research findings in a public venue, emphasizing both oral communication/presentation skills and graphic/visual presentation skills

Required Texts:

Aoyama Shundo *Zen Seeds* (1996) Kosei Publishing Company

Batchelor, Stephen *Buddhism Without Beliefs* (1998) Riverhead Trade

Hacker. *A Writer's Reference*

Hesse, Hermann. *Siddhartha* (2000) Shambala

Loori, John Daido, Ed. *The Art of Just Sitting: essential writings on the zen practice of shikantaza* (2002) Wisdom Publications

Wallace, B. Alan. *The Attention Revolution: Unlocking the Power of the Focused Mind* (2006) Wisdom

*Rowman and Littlefield Guide to Writing with Sources*

Week of	Reading	Assignment
1/22	1/22: Introductions; class question workshop; video "Buddha Realms" 1/23: What is Buddhism? Batchelor Preface and Chapter 1 (Awakening) 1/25: Wallace: Introduction	Class questions (2) and 1 response due Jan. 23 (on Batchelor) <b>**Start Reading <i>Siddhartha</i> (due Feb 5)</b>
1/29	1/29: Life of the Buddha; Batchelor Chapter 2 (Agnosticism) 1/30: Video: <i>The Reincarnation of Khensur Rinpoche</i> + Introduction to Assignment #1 "Buddhism Commodified" 2/1: Conceptual Workshop I (based on the two films from this week plus readings)	Watch <i>Kundun</i> (on reserve at the ODY circulation desk) for conceptual workshop on February 1. <b>**Finish reading <i>Siddhartha</i> for February 5 class</b>
2/5	2/5: Discussion of <i>Siddhartha</i> . Visit to WORD Studio (ODY) 2/6: Discussion of <i>Siddhartha continued</i> 2/8: <b>ODY Workshop: How do you pick a research topic?</b> Brainstorming paper topics. *MEET IN ODY*	Class questions and 1 response due 2/6
2/12	2/12: Intro to précis/annotated bibliography assignment; <b>ODY Workshop Finding popular and Alternative Sources (2:20-3:10)</b> 2/13: Begin Buddhism Commodified presentations* 2/15: Finish Buddhism Commodified; library time to work on Précis/Annotated Bibliography Assignment	*Watch <i>Enlightenment Guaranteed</i> on the network for class on Feb. 19 * EVERYONE should be ready to present on Feb. 13...we will randomly draw names in class to determine presentations.
2/19	2/19: <i>Enlightenment Guaranteed</i> ; Loori: Introduction + "Zazengi: Rules for Zazen" 2/20 Aoyama: 11-22; Wallace: 13-27 2/22 <b>ODY Workshop (10:45): Finding Scholarly Journals</b>	Class questions and 1 response due 2/19 Class questions and 1 response due 2/20
2/26	2/26 Peer Editing of Précis/Annotated Bibliography Assignment 2/27 Batchelor: 21-38; Wallace: 29-42; Aoyama: 23-39 3/1 Conceptual Workshop II Loori: 21-40 *WATCH THE CUP ON THE NETWORK FOR NEXT WEEK	2/26 <b>DRAFT</b> Précis/Annotated Bibliography Assignment (1 <sup>st</sup> half) due in class. 2/27 Class questions and 1 response due 3/1* <b>bring Batchelor, Wallace, Aoyama and Loori to class for the workshop</b> <b>FRIDAY MARCH 2 – Final of Précis/Annotated Bibliography (Part I) due in my office by 4:00 p.m.</b>

3/5	<p>3/5: <b>WORD Studio workshop:</b> How to write an Outline for a Research Paper; Discussion of <i>The Cup</i>; <b>Introduction of Problematic and final paper assignments</b></p> <p>3/6: Discussion of <i>The Cup</i> cont.; Batchelor 39-54;</p> <p>3/8: <b>Brush Art Gallery</b> – Buddhist Art and Images Reading: handout to be provided</p>	3/6 Class questions and 1 response due
3/12	<p>3/12: Batchelor: 55-74; Aoyama: 45-65</p> <p>3/13: Loori: 67-70; 105-116.</p> <p>3/15: Wallace: 43-68</p>	<p>3/12 Class questions and 1 response due</p> <p>3/13 Class questions and 1 response due</p> <p><b>3/16 Problematic Assignment Due March 16 on ANGEL</b></p>
3/19	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
3/26	<p>3/26: Conceptual workshop III Loori: 127-134; *bring all texts to class*</p> <p>3/27: Batchelor 74-115</p> <p>3/29: Wallace 68-97.</p>	<p>3/27 Class questions and 1 response due</p> <p><b>3/29 Précis/Annotated Bibliography due (Part II)</b></p>
4/2	<p>4/2: Visit / lecture from Professor R.E. Carter – “The Way of Flowers: Eternity is in the Moment” handout or ANGEL (TBA) <b>Mandatory attendance at 4:30 lecture</b></p> <p>4/3: <b>Outline of final paper due for oral presentation and class feedback*</b></p> <p>4/5: <b>Continuation of outline presentations</b></p>	<p>4/3 * final paper outline due; Oral presentations #2. Work on draft of final paper due 4/19</p>
4/9	4/9, 4/10, 4/12 Individual Conferences all week – to discuss Problematic/final paper outlines	<b>WORK ON FINAL PAPER - Draft due 4/19</b>
4/16	<p>4/16: Workshop: What makes a good research presentation?</p> <p>4/17: Wallace 98-116 , Aoyama – choose your favorite selection.</p> <p>4/19: <b>ODY – Individual consultations and library work *meet in ODY*</b></p>	<b>4/19 Draft due (on ANGEL)</b>
4/23	4/23, 4/24, 4/26: Individual Conferences to discuss drafts	Work on final paper
4/30	4/ 30, 5/1, 5/3: Research Presentations	Work on final paper <b>due 5/3 (along with portfolio)</b>

### III. General Policy For All First Year Seminars:

The FYS strives to continue the communication skills, critical thinking, ethical reflection, and liberal learning goals of the FYP, but with a specific focus on critical inquiry and research. Each of you will engage in a research project of significant depth over the course of the semester. Our learning goals for that research project include that you:

- Be introduced to ways of conducting productive and imaginative inquiry and research in order to become a part of the various conversations surrounding issues.
- Learn to differentiate among the various ways that information is produced and presented, between popular and scholarly journals and books, between mainstream and alternative publications, between primary and secondary sources.
- Learn how to evaluate and synthesize information, whether gathered from traditional sources, such as books and journals, or from websites or electronic media.
- Begin to develop the skills of critical analysis in the interpretation and use of information gathered from any source.
- Be introduced to the ethical obligations that scholars have to both responsibly represent their sources and inform their readers of the sources of their information, as well as learning, and being held responsible for the proper use of, the conventions of scholarly citation and attribution.
- Present the results of your research through writing, speaking, visual elements, or other multimedia forms in such a way that you demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively using the rhetorical conventions of the chosen form

#### B. Format for Papers:

All papers should be typed on the computer. You should *save your work frequently and keep back-up copies on your own disk!* Periodically, you may be asked to submit your papers on disk or through ANGEL so be sure to save *all* work on a disk.

#### C. Plagiarism & Cheating:

FROM THE STUDENT HANDBOOK:

##### ***Academic Dishonesty***

1. It is assumed that all work submitted for credit is done by the student unless the instructor gives specific permission for collaboration.
2. Cheating on examinations and tests consists of knowingly giving or using or attempting to use unauthorized assistance during examinations or tests.
3. Dishonesty in work outside of examinations and tests consists of handing in for credit as original work that which is not original, where originality is required.

##### **The following constitute examples of academic dishonesty:**

- a) *Plagiarism*: Presenting as one's own work the work of another person - words, ideas, data, evidence, thoughts, information, organizing principles, or style of presentation-without proper attribution. Plagiarism includes paraphrasing or summarizing without acknowledgment by quotation marks, footnotes, endnotes, or other indices of reference (cf. Joseph F. Trimmer, [A Guide to MLA Documentation](#)).
- b) Handing in false reports on any experiment.
- c) Handing in a book report on a book one has not read.
- d) Falsification of attendance records of a laboratory or other class meeting.
- e) Supplying information to another student knowing that such information will be used in a dishonest way.
- f) Submission of work (papers, journal abstracts, etc.) which has received credit in a previous course to satisfy the requirement(s) of a second course without the knowledge and permission of the instructor of the second course.

Claims of ignorance and academic or personal pressure are unacceptable as excuses for academic dishonesty. Students must learn what constitutes one's own work and how the work of others must be acknowledged.

You are reminded that you signed and are bound by the following statement prior to registration for classes:

*"I hereby acknowledge that I have read the above document and I understand my responsibility in maintaining the standards of academic honesty at St. Lawrence University."*

Should you violate the honor code you will be reported to the Academic Honor Council.

#### D. Late Policy:

The relevant due dates are indicated on the syllabus, and you are expected to meet them without fail. **Late assignments will be penalized at .25 on a 4 point scale per day (beginning the moment the assignment is due).** Requests for extensions must be made prior to the due date and must be supported by sufficient documentation. The following excuses will not be accepted: computer problems of any sort; forgetfulness; oversleeping; loss of syllabus; travel conflict; other assignments (including tests) due in another course. If you must miss class the day an assignment is due, you are expected to turn it in early.

#### IV. Evaluation & Grading:

##### *Attendance & Participation* (10% of Course Grade)

Attendance and participation in *all* classes is required. Unpreparedness, lack of *active & attentive* participation, or more than *two* absences will result in a dramatic reduction in your course grade.

##### *Course Writing & Informal Assignments* (10% of Course Grade)

You will be assigned some type of writing assignment in response to every reading and film in class. They must be completed in advance of the class period at which the reading is due, viewing of a film, or attendance at a lecture. **You are to keep all these writings in your portfolio along with all the drafts of your formal essays.** Additionally, you will be expected to come to each class period with at least two class questions that focus on the day's assigned reading. These questions should be typewritten and you are required to respond to one of the two questions (½ page, typewritten, double spaced). (**Note:** a good discussion question is not simply a 'yes' or 'no' question. A good class question provokes the discussants into thinking more deeply or critically about the reading. This will be explained in the Question Posing Workshop in our first class.)

##### *Précis / Annotated Bibliography Assignment* (25% of Course Grade)

You will be expected to complete an annotated bibliography focusing it on the information sources you will be utilizing for your final research paper. This assignment requires you to find six articles for your topic and write a précis or annotation for each article. The expectation is that the bibliography will contain at least six different sources of information that you intend to use for your final paper (not including websites). No more than three can be sources from popular literature. At least three of the sources need to come from scholarly journals or books. An annotated bibliography includes a brief -- yet complete -- overview of the readings' main points/themes and how the article or book fits into your particular paper. You should refer to the Hacker text when formatting your bibliography so as to be certain you are doing it correctly. Use MLA style.

**There are two stages to this assignment: Part I is due 3/2; Part II is due 3/29.** A detailed assignment sheet will be distributed in class.

##### *Problematic* (10% of Course Grade)

In order to write a good research paper, it is important to have a clear focus of not only the '*what*' of your paper, but also the '*why*' and '*how*' of your topic. How is your topic relevant to the course themes? Why is your topic important? What question(s) are you trying to answer? What is your hypothesis? This assignment requires you to write a short (3 page max) paper answering these questions or, in philosophical research terms, stating the problematic of your paper. This will also help you form your outline for your paper.

##### **Due 3/16**

A detailed assignment sheet will be distributed in class.

*Oral Presentations (20% of Course Grade)*

Over the course of the semester you will be expected to publicly present informational updates on your independent research to the rest of the class.

**1) “Buddhism Commodified”:** To begin our look at Buddhism as commodity, in class either **2/13 or 2/15** you will be asked to prepare a brief (5 minute) presentation where you will share with the rest of the class the results of your Buddhism shopping expedition. Each class member will be reimbursed for up to \$10 to purchase something Buddhist and discuss its relation to the philosophy of Buddhism as we have been studying it. A detailed assignment sheet will be distributed. **Everyone should be prepared to present on the 13<sup>th</sup>.**

**2) On 4/3** you will be asked to prepare a one-page hand-out (making enough copies for the entire class) and publicly present aspects of the outline of your research paper to the rest of the class (5 minute presentation). The underlying purpose of this presentation is to give you a chance to speak more definitively about your research topic and how you have designed to approach your research.

During the final two weeks of the semester students will work in groups organized by themes to present aspects of their independent research together. Included in this presentation is an expectation that you will not only speak clearly, confidently and intelligently about their individual research but will additionally present you information in a graphically/ visually appealing format. For example, I could easily see how you might present their research findings through a Power Point presentation or poster board presentation.

*Final Paper (20% of Course Grade)*

Through a series of consecutive writing assignments (précis, problematic, detailed outline) you will work toward completing a 5-7 page section of a comprehensive research paper by the end of the semester.

*Portfolio (5% of Course Grade)*

Portfolio of work throughout the course and a reflective essay.

Grading Summary:

Attendance & Participation	10%
Course Writing & Informal Assignments	10%
Précis/Annotated Bibliography	25%
‘Problematic’	10%
Oral Presentations	20%
Final Research Paper	20%
Portfolio	<u>5%</u>
	100%