



Journey Through Religion

Analytic Journal

This analytic journal is intended to provide you with a written account of your encounters with the various expressions and characteristics of religion.

Analytic Journal Instructions:

Important note: Since you are like an auditor in a college course, completing the journal is simply for your own benefit. If you like, in the chapters when a journal entry is "due," you will be able to post your "answers" in the comments section of a lesson for other students to react to. You will get more out of the class if you take the time and effort to complete the journal assignments, whether or not you share your answers. But the choice is entirely yours. No matter your choice, you are strongly encouraged to read this packet to better understand what would be required in a complete college course and all that is going on in this course.

General Guidelines:

Your journal is intended to provide you with a written account of your encounters with the various expressions and characteristics of religion. Some journal assignments will require you to explore religious traditions from sources outside the assigned texts--in newspapers, magazines, the world wide web, and a library. Other journal assignments will require you to examine the assigned readings more deeply.

During the course, you will have seven journal entries--each requiring you to do something different. Specific directions are given below for each assignment during the course. You should see the course syllabus to see when each journal assignment is due.

While the different assignments will vary, here are some general journal writing guidelines.

1. Be sure to read the instructions for each assignment carefully and follow them.
2. While your journal replaces a term paper, your journal is a relatively informal piece of writing.
3. You are still expected to use complete sentences in proper paragraph form. (Paragraphs are usually 3-7 sentences long and have a central idea, with supporting details in the body of the paragraph). When you begin a new idea, you should start a new paragraph.
4. The early journal assignment instructions provide a suggested structure and indicate the recommended number of paragraphs you should write in each section. These guidelines indicate the basic requirements for good (above average) college work (B level). To receive an A, an assignment must be exceptionally superior in some aspect, such as insight, though not necessarily greater than the suggested length.
5. Clearly mark in your written entries which section of the specific assignment you are doing.
6. While occasional spelling and grammar errors are expected in informal writing, you should still use correct grammar and spelling. Reread your journal entries to make sure there are no glaring errors.
7. Strong journal entries will use the terms and concepts from content sessions and the readings AND will define these terms. When using these terms and concepts, be especially mindful of spelling and correctly using the new vocabulary you learn in the course.
8. When you use direct quotations from ANY source (including the required texts for the course), it should be clear which source you took it from. You should write the page number the quote appears in parentheses after the quotation. For example: Comstock claims that the "Catholic moral code stresses the sanctity of life" (234).
9. If you paraphrase (put material in your own words), the source you took the material from should be clear, but you do not need to include the page number. An easy way to include information about the source is to incorporate it into the sentence. For example: According to Comstock, Roman Catholicism highly values human life.

When you use an Outside Resource for use in your Journal:

1. In your written journal entry, you must provide complete bibliographic information using an appropriate style manual for all sources you use in your journal, EXCEPT for the required texts from the course.

Bibliographic information will provide all the information about the source needed to locate the source easily. You may include this information at the beginning or end of your journal entry.

2. You must organize and format your bibliographic information using a style manual like the MLA or the APA. Style manuals dictate what information is required, the order in which the information should appear, correct punctuation, etc. For those who prefer to use the World Wide Web for simple guidance, here are two sites that provide reliable information.

APA (American Psychological Association)

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/index.html

MLA (Modern Language Association)

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html

3. If you are using a source from the internet or world wide web, be sure to find out what information you need to include in the bibliographic entry before accessing it. Unlike more traditional resources, it is often difficult to go back and find the necessary information.

*"I write because I don't know what I think
until I read what I say."
~ Flannery O'Connor ~*

Reminder on Academic Integrity

Note: While this is not relevant for an Explore Big Ideas course, it is helpful to see the expectations for an actual college course.

Academic integrity is an absolute expectation of this course. The most simple definition of academic cheating is trying to get credit for something without learning the material. Violations of academic integrity will be punished to the highest degree allowed, both within this course and within the institution. Remember the following about journals:

1. To avoid even the appearance of cheating, students are not permitted to refer to, consult, or read journal entries from any previous semester.
2. Suppose one or more journal entries indicate either that the work is not the student's own OR that the student has in any way referred to journal assignments or entries from previous semesters. In that case, the entire journal grade will be a "0" (zero).

Remember—it is better to ask for an extension or help than get caught cheating!



Journal Entry 1:

The Nature of the Sacred

Something is sacred when it is distinctive from the profane or ordinary.

Journal Entry 1:

The Nature of the Sacred

One of the keys to understanding the nature of the Sacred in the world's religious traditions is to know that the Sacred "orders various aspects of human existence." As was said in the content session, what this means is that religious traditions understand that belief in the existence of the sacred is not enough but that the sacred requires human beings as individuals and human societies to order or arrange their lives in specific ways. In some religious traditions, everything is ordered/arranged by the sacred, from when one rises from bed to how one arranges one's belongings. In other religious traditions, some things are ordered by the Sacred, while others are ordered/arranged for different reasons. In this journal entry, you are to evaluate to what extent Black Elk's existence is ordered by the Sacred and reflect on whether the religious tradition you are most familiar with has a similar or different understanding.

Suggested Structure:

1. Please spend some time brainstorming and thinking about the extent to which in *Black Elk Speaks*, Black Elk's life and the lives of others in his tribe are ordered by the Sacred. What aspects of his life (what he does, thinks, and lives) are ordered/arranged by the Sacred? What aspects of his life are not? Identify the main events in his life—were they ordered by the Sacred or some other source? What about his day-to-day life? Is his life entirely ordered by the Sacred? Mostly? Somewhat? Slightly? Not at all?
2. Start writing your journal entry by writing an introductory paragraph to the entry, which introduces the topic of your entry and ends with the conclusion you reached in Step 1 above. This "conclusion" is the thesis or argument of your journal entry. (1 paragraph)
3. Select two to three events or examples in the autobiography supporting this claim above. For each example, in one paragraph, describe the example, and in the next paragraph, explain how that proves your thesis/argument. (4-6 paragraphs)
4. Complete your analysis by comparing how the Sacred is portrayed in *Black Elk Speaks* with the religion you are most familiar with. Identify that religion and then explain what it teaches and the extent to which it teaches that the Sacred orders various aspects of human existence.

Then I was standing on the highest mountain of them all, and round about beneath me was the whole hoop of the world.

~ Black Elk ~



Journal Entry 2:

News Article

Religion in the true, broad sense underlies, controls, permeates at least half the stories in the news, probably a lot more.

~ Jeff Sharlott ~



Religion and beliefs impact every aspect of the world around us but are rarely covered in media.

~ Religion News Service ~

Journal Entry 2: Article

News

1. Find a news article that has appeared in a daily newspaper within the last twelve months AND is primarily about some aspect of one religious tradition other than Christianity.

When selecting your news article, make sure NOT to choose an opinion piece/editorial, advertisement, or one- to two-paragraph announcement of an upcoming religious event. Also, be sure that the article is about something other than Christianity. Be sure to get an article that focuses on one religion. It won't be easy to complete the assignment well if you select something other than a news article or an article about different religions, political happenings in a country identified with one religion, or religion or spirituality in general.

To find this news article, do one of the following

- ☞ physically look through a paper copy of a daily newspaper (such as *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Washington Post*, your local newspaper, etc.)
 - ☞ find an article on a newspaper site online.
 - ☞ go to your local library and use their newspaper physical copies or an electronic newspaper index such as ProQuest (ask a librarian for help).
2. Read the news article and identify the general religion it belongs to and if possible any subdivision of it. You will find the Content Session "Worlds Religious Traditions" helpful. For example if you find an article on Islam, does it indicate whether it is talking about the Sunni or Shi'ite or some other tradition within Islam? See what other clues or information you can find out about the tradition (its origins, where they worship, what holidays are important to them etc.).
 3. Now using an encyclopedia, look up information about the religious tradition--focusing primarily on information that helps you understand material dealt with in the article.

You may use either general encyclopedias (such as the Encyclopedia Britannica) or encyclopedias specifically about religion using your local library. You may also use an on-line encyclopedia, such as the Britannica version or even Wikipedia.

Whichever encyclopedia you use, you should read the equivalent of 1 to 4 pages (10 to 40 paragraphs) of a traditional print encyclopedia. Since a good encyclopedia will have far more than 4 pages on the religion, you should skim the encyclopedia entry and focus on what is somehow related to the material in the article. It

would be a good idea to copy or print out the relevant portions of the article(s) you read.

4. From your photocopy/printout, read the encyclopedia material you selected. Highlight or underline any information you find important, interesting, or especially relevant to the news article you found.
5. Having done this research, you are now ready to write your journal entry. Do this by:
 - a. Write a one-paragraph summary of the news article you selected.
 - b. Write three to four paragraphs in which you relate (identify similarities and differences between) the news article and the material from the encyclopedia.

For example, suppose you found an article on how local Reformed Jewish families celebrate Passover. In that case, you might focus your reading in the encyclopedia on the Reformed tradition in Judaism AND the holiday of Passover. When you write your report, you could explain the parallels between what the encyclopedia said about the Reformed tradition and the news article. You could also discuss the similarities and differences you saw in how the encyclopedia described how the holiday was celebrated and how the holiday was celebrated by the families.

6. In the concluding one to two paragraphs, do one of the following:
 - a. Describe something new you learned through the article or the encyclopedia that surprised you or caught your interest in the tradition. What was surprising or "interesting" about it.

OR

- b. Describe what you would like to learn more about this religious tradition. These may be questions raised by the article, encyclopedia entry, or questions you brought into this course.
7. If you have not done so, write a complete bibliographic entry according to a recognized style manual for each resource you consulted. You will need a completed entry for the summarized news article and each encyclopedia you read.



Journal Entry 3:

Belief

Basic or core beliefs are not merely statements that one intellectually agrees with but are evidenced in one's life.

Journal Entry 3:

Belief

The characteristic of Creed/Belief refers to the statements or propositions that adherents of a religious tradition hold to be true. Basic or core beliefs are not merely statements that one intellectually agrees with but are evidenced in one's life. For example, most people in the United States believe financial wealth signals success. Such a belief is evidenced in different ways. For instance, one's salary is seen as an indicator of how successful someone is; a person promoted in a company expects a better title and a higher salary, and employers provide financial bonuses to reward successful employees.

In the first content session on Hinduism, it was stated that the religions originating in India share three common understandings or beliefs about reality: 1) the world is a place of suffering; 2) the purpose of the religious quest is to escape that suffering; and 3) the purpose of life is duty. Importantly, these three beliefs are not merely statements that Hindus would agree intellectually with but are statements that become evidenced in the lives and world of Hindus. In this journal entry, you will explore how some of these foundational beliefs are evidenced in the autobiographies of Gopi Krishna and Shudha Mazumdar.

1. Select one of the beliefs listed above that you find in both of the autobiographies.
2. In one paragraph or less, identify and explain the selected belief.
3. What are some of the different ways this belief is evidenced in the autobiography of Gopi Krishna? (2 to 3 paragraphs)
4. What are some of the different ways this belief is evidenced in the autobiography of Shudha Mazumdar? (2 to 3 paragraphs)
5. What similarities or differences do you see in the role of this belief in the lives of Gopi Krishna and Shudha Mazumdar? (1 to 2 paragraphs)
6. Reflect on how this belief is similar or different from your understanding of reality. (1 to 2 paragraphs).



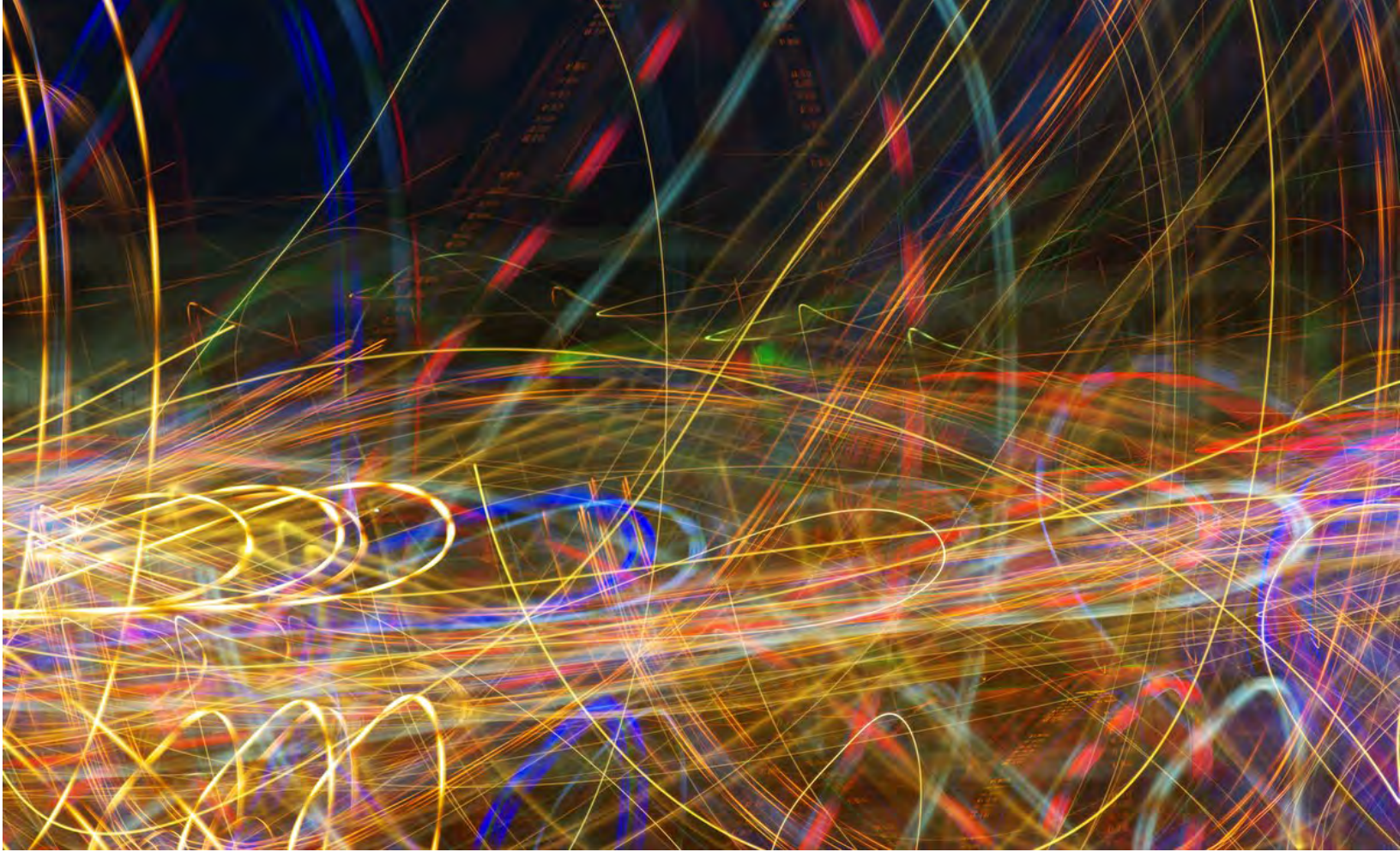


Journal Entry 4:

Resources from the World Wide Web

*Getting information off the Internet
is like taking a drink from a fire hydrant.*

~ Mitchell Kapor ~



Journal Entry 4:

Resources from the World Wide Web

When trying to learn about a religious tradition, chances are you can find a significant amount and variety of information about a religious tradition on the world wide web. Because just about anyone can produce a web page, you need to approach the information you find on the web skeptically. When reading websites, it is essential to remember that not all information you see on the world wide web is accurate and reliable. In this journal assignment, you will spend some time looking on the web for resources about Hinduism and then critically evaluating the website and the material about the religious tradition.

1. Using whatever means you prefer, find a website whose central focus is Hinduism. Spend some time looking through various sites on Hinduism before deciding which one you will focus on. To do this assignment satisfactorily, you must select a website that provides a good amount of information about Hinduism. At a minimum, the website should have at least 4 "screens" of information about something related to Hinduism. Do not select a website that merely links to other websites about Hinduism. If you find one of these, you should use it to find the site you will evaluate.
2. Explore the website you have selected to evaluate. Please spend some time on the website and follow its links. Take notes on what you see

and/or print out copies of the pages you look at. Be sure to note when it has links to other websites (that is, a website written/maintained by another group or individual). While you may want to explore these links, be sure you know what is on the original website and what is on a link.

3. Be sure that you record the complete address for the home page. You will need this for your bibliography.
4. While you can still access the website, answer the following questions in your journal entry. The answer for each lettered section (A, B, C, etc.) should be at least a paragraph long and should be answered in complete sentences. In your journal, clearly indicate which question you are answering by writing the question out or giving the question number in the margin.
 - A. Who writes and maintains this website? Besides the name of the individual/group, what else can you find out about them from the website?
 - B. Does the site deal with Hinduism in general or a specific kind of Hinduism?
 - C. Is the site written for group members or for outsiders seeking information? What leads you to conclude this?
 - D. Is the information presented in a neutral manner or a biased manner? Is the tone trying to convince or convert you, or is it merely trying to inform you? Why do you think this?
 - E. How easy/difficult is the material to understand?
 - F. What about or on the site leads you to doubt it is reliable?
 - G. What about or on the site leads you to believe it is reliable?
 - H. Describe the unique features of the site that you find helpful/interesting? (i.e., pictures, music, diagrams).
 - I. Does it provide references to other sources about Hinduism? (i.e., books, articles, magazines, links to other websites, etc.)
5. Reflect on the questions you answered above. Think about the material you read on the website. Now, answer these questions in your journal.
 - A. What similarities or differences do you see between the material provided in class (lectures, videos, etc.) about Hinduism and the material on this website? (2-3 paragraphs)
 - B. What on this website did you find about Hinduism that was particularly interesting? (1-2 paragraphs)
 - C. Would you recommend this website to someone trying to learn about Hinduism? Why or Why not? (1-2 paragraphs).
6. Complete your journal entry by adding a complete bibliographic entry, properly formatted for each outside source you used to write this journal entry.



Journal Entry 5:

A Night at the Movies

I think empathy is a beautiful thing. I think that's the power of film though. We have one of the most powerful, one of the greatest communicative tools.

~ Michelle Rodriguez ~

*Share your
knowledge.
It is a way to
achieve
immortality.*
~ Dalai Lama ~



Journal Entry 5:

A Night at the Movies

Religion can appear in the strangest places—even at the movie theater. Indeed, over the last few years, more and more films have been made that deal with religious themes or depict specific aspects of religion. For this entry, you will view one of three feature-length films and analyze religion's role in the movie.

This entry is like the previous entries, asking you to analyze a specific aspect of the autobiographies. Like these past entries, you will be given specific questions requiring careful thought before writing. Unlike the previous entries, no suggested structure will be provided. You should know what a good journal entry requires by this time in the course.

If you are unsure how to structure the essay, look back to previous journal entries to see how they are structured. Remember that one key to doing strong college-level writing is to make claims that require you to write multiple paragraphs to support them.

1. If you don't already own a copy, rent one of the following films and watch it.

Kundun

SevenYears in Tibet

Beyond Rangoon

2. For your analytic journal entry, answer the following questions:

- A. As depicted in the movie, was religion working to maintain the status quo (existing social order) or used as a means of social change? Clearly identify the film you watched and explain. The relationship between

religion and its surrounding culture is complex. Sometimes, a religion can work to keep things the way they are. In this case, they might reinforce specific ways of doing things or even inhibit society from changing. At other times, religion can be used to change society and culture. Often, both can be going on at the same time. For this question, you must consider the relationship between religion as depicted in the movie and culture/society. To help focus your thinking, you might want to consider how different aspects/characteristics (i.e., belief, ritual, etc.) of religion either maintain the status quo or are used as means of social change. (Suggested minimum 7 paragraphs)

- B. What similarities or differences do you see between how Buddhism was portrayed in the movie and what you learned about Buddhism in the class (content sessions, autobiographies, etc.) (Suggested minimum 2 paragraphs)
- C. As a result of watching this movie, what else did you learn about Buddhism? (Suggested minimum 2 paragraphs)
- D. Provide a brief review (evaluation) of the movie, including any specific audiences you might recommend seeing the movie and whether this film is a good source of knowledge about Buddhism. (Suggested minimum 1 paragraph)



Journal Entry 6:

What makes a Society Immoral?

Instead of teaching children to share things with others, to seek equality and brotherhood, to serve the community, they are taught to seek their own advancement.

~ Padre Carney ~

Journal Entry 6:

What makes a Society Immoral?

In U.S. culture, morality is often seen as evaluating individuals' specific acts and how they treat others in their personal relationships. Morality is not seen as having much to do with how society is ordered. Thus, for many in the U.S., lying, pre-marital sex, and divorce are moral issues. Policies about universal health care, affirmative action, and welfare reform are not ethical but "political" issues. In addition, because U.S. culture emphasizes the separation of church and state, there is also a tendency to insist that religious faith and "politics" should be separated.

Importantly, however, for the world's religious traditions and the academic study of religion, Code/Morality deals with how individuals treat others in personal relationships and how society is ordered. We see this in the autobiography of Elvia Alvarado. Through her work in the mothers' groups, Elvia Alvarado comes to believe that societies need to be organized in a moral or just way. She also concludes that the social arrangements in Honduran society are immoral/unjust.

In this journal entry, you are to carefully examine both the autobiography of Elvia Alvarado and then answer the following questions: **What does Elvia Alvarado find unjust/immoral about the way that Honduran society is ordered, and what does she believe needs to be changed to make the society more just? How are her views similar or different from what you believe makes a society moral or immoral?**

As with the previous journal entry, the structure of your entry is up to you to decide. However, careful thought is required before writing the entry to answer the question well. A good (B level) journal entry will include at least 7 paragraphs of analysis of the autobiography using specific examples and at least 1 paragraph reflecting on your view of what makes a society moral.

When you get these jobs you have been so brilliantly trained for, just remember that your real job is that if you are free, you need to free somebody else. If you have some power, then your job is to empower somebody else.

~ Toni Morrison ~



Journal Entry 7:

Scholarly Journals

A "hidden" job of college and university professors is to do original research in order to produce more knowledge about their field of study.



I will go wherever the truth leads me. It is secular scholarship, Rebbe; it is not the scholarship of tradition. In secular scholarship, there are no boundaries and no permanently fixed views.

If the Torah cannot go out into your world of scholarship and return stronger, then we are all fools and charlatans. I have faith in the Torah. I am not afraid of truth.

***~ Chaim Potok~
In the Beginning***

Journal Entry 7: Scholarly Journals

Note: Completing this entry will require access to a college or university library with a religious studies department. If this is not possible, a workaround is below.

Scholarly journals in the field of religion publish original research done by college and university professors of religion. While most professors spend most of their time on teaching-related activities, another "hidden" job of college and university professors is to do original research to produce more knowledge about their field of study. For this journal assignment, you will explore another helpful resource for learning about religious traditions: scholarly journals. While articles in encyclopedias give readers general information and background about a topic, articles in academic journals provide in-depth information about a specific topic.

1. Your first task is browsing through one or more recent (2000 to present) professionally bound volumes of a scholarly journal that focuses on the academic study of religion. Go to a library area where back issues of journals and magazines are kept. Find where bound journals are kept. (While journals are published with paperback covers, professionally bound volumes will assemble one or more years of journals together and give them a hardback binding.) Find a professionally bound volume no earlier than 2000 of one of the following journals:
 - ◆ Journal of American Academy of Religion
 - ◆ Journal of Religion
 - ◆ Ecumenical Review
 - ◆ Church HistoryUsing other journal titles may mean that you do not actually have a "scholarly" journal.

Work Around: The Journal of American Adademy of Religion will allow you to see the Table of Contents of the journal and it **may** allow you to see the full text of articles from the most recent issue.

Go to: <https://academic.oup.com/jaar/issue>

2. Spend time exploring the volume(s) you have selected. Browse through the professionally bound journal--looking at the table of contents of each issue in the volume, and leafing through the different articles. Be on the outlook for an article that interests you.
3. Select an article which interests you and which has footnotes, endnotes OR a listing of works cited and in which the article is a minimum of 6 (six) pages long. When selecting an article be sure not to select a book review. Book reviews are usually clearly marked in a journal--especially in the table of contents. In addition, book reviews are rarely more than two pages long, and rarely have footnotes,

endnotes, or a listing of works cited. It is also best to avoid an article responding to another article.

4. While you can still access the bound volume, answer the following questions in your journal. The information you seek is usually printed at the beginning or end of the journal. Look on the inside covers of the journal, and the pages immediately before or after the table of contents.
 - A. What organization or university publishes the journal? (1-2 sentences)
 - B. How often is the journal published? (1 sentence)
 - C. Briefly describe what an author must do to get an article published in the journal? How does the journal select the articles it publishes? (1-2 paragraphs)
 - D. Most journals will list their editorial board. Look over the list of people on the board. What do you notice about the listing? (1-2 paragraphs)
5. Read through the selected article, and answer the following questions in your journal.
 - A. What religion(s) does the article cover? (1 sentence)
 - B. What precisely is the article covering? In general, what conclusions does the author reach about the subject? (1-2 paragraphs).
 - C. Who wrote the article? What information can you find out about the author? (In some journals, this information is found in the article itself; in other journals this information is found at the beginning or end of the issue. Check the table of contents if you have trouble finding the information). (1-2 paragraphs)
 - D. Is there an abstract (summary or condensation) of the article provided? (1 sentence)
 - E. As you read through the article and examine the footnotes, endnotes, or listing of works cited, describe the sources the author uses. (For example, field research, interviews, diaries or correspondence of persons from the past, other scholarly articles, books, etc.) (1-2 paragraphs)
6. Reflecting on the questions you answered above and the article you read, answer these questions in the journal.
 - A. Why did you select this particular article? (That is, what in particular caught your interest?) (1-2 paragraphs)
 - B. Which of the seven characteristics of religion we have studied in this course does this article deal with? (1-2 paragraphs).
 - C. What have you learned about scholarly journals and the articles that appear in them? (1-2 paragraphs).