

**SRS 1191 Accommodation and Conflict:
Religion in Contemporary Canada**

Professor Emma Anderson

September-December 2012 (3 credits)

Tuesdays from 8:30-10:00 AM and Fridays from 10:00-11:30 AM
In Desmarais 1140

Professor:

Office Phone: 562-5800, x 1176

Email: eanderso@uottawa.ca

Office hours: Tuesdays, 1-3 pm, 10112 Desmarais Building

Course description:

Religion has always been critical in shaping the individual and collective identity of Canadians. This course briefly introduces nine religions and their specifically Canadian dimensions, history, and contemporary expressions. It will explore aboriginal spirituality, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Islam, Judaism, East Asian Religions, and Neo-Paganism/New Age spiritualities, as well as examining the rising popularity of atheism in contemporary Canada. Although, given our time constraints, our treatment of each tradition will necessarily be very brief, this course will nevertheless sketch in the main theological and ritual expressions of these faiths and delineate their advent, history, and contemporary expressions in Canada. Throughout, our emphasis will be upon the “lived,” personal experiences of ordinary believers in each of these traditions. Prominent themes of the course will include the impact of religious discrimination or exclusion upon religious communities, and the pivotal importance of sociological and demographic factors in shaping individual and collective religious identity. These themes will be explored multi-dimensionally, through lectures, readings, guest speakers, film clips, and optional site visits to local houses of worship (outside of class time) to meet with practitioners and leaders of different faith traditions, observe religious architecture and rituals, and ask questions.

Required texts:

Esposito et al. *World Religions Today: Canadian Edition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. This book is available for purchase at the Agora Bookstore (145 Besserer, www.agorabookstore.ca, 562-4672). Students are also required independently to borrow or to purchase, new or used, a copy of their preferred book for their Book Review (information below). In order to help defray the cost to students of taking this course, almost all other required readings for this course are e-books, available electronically to students on the Morisette Library website. When not available in an e-book edition, hard copies have been placed on reserve at Morisette Library for students to read or photocopy, saving you from buying a course pack in addition to the textbook.

Forms of Evaluation:

Class attendance, though not mandatory, is essential to student success in this course. Students are encouraged to come to class, to keep up to date on their readings, and to pose questions to the instructor as they arise from their readings and the course lectures.

Midterm Exam – 20%.

An in-class examination, **to be held in class on Friday, October 19, 2012**, will test student mastery of material and concepts from the first half of the course using a combination of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short and long essay questions. A comprehensive midterm study review session, using a pre-distributed list of review questions, will be held in class on **Tuesday, October 16, 2012**.

Final Examination – 30%.

Three hour final examination (which will be held on a date and time to be announced by the university, sometime between **December 7 and 20, 2012**) will test student facility with course material and challenge students to present their mature reflections on the traditions and themes examined in the course. The format of the final exam will be similar to that of the Midterm. As with the Midterm, an Exam Review Session, using a list of pre-distributed review questions, will be held during the last class meeting on **Tuesday, December 4, 2012**.

Please DO NOT make travel or work plans before your final examination schedule comes out, as the instructor is UNABLE to accommodate requests to take examinations outside the date, time, and place dictated by the University.

Book Review – 20%.

In addition to their examinations, students will write two essays. The shorter of these assignments is a 5-page Book Review which is due **in class on Friday, November 2, 2012**. Students are required to read one of the following listed books and to write a Review which describes, analyzes, and critiques its contents. The following selected works address, in much more detail than do the required readings, the dimensions of the various religions being studied. Many present a fascinating insider perspective. Please note that students are responsible for obtaining their own copy of their chosen book. None have been pre-ordered. Where noted, books are available on Morisette Library reserve, or are Morisette e-books. Another possible source for students wishing to purchase their book is “Abe Books,” a great online used bookstore.

Selections:

- * Anderson, Emma. *The Betrayal of Faith: The Tragic Journey of a Colonial Native Convert*. Harvard University Press, 2007 (aboriginal history, encounter with Christianity in Canada, Morisette reserve).
- * Arbella, Irving *None is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948*. University of Toronto Press, 2012 (Jewish history in Canada during and after WWII, Morisette reserve)
- * Dann, G. Elijah, ed. *Leaving Fundamentalism: Personal Stories*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2008 (Contemporary de-conversion/atheism in Canada, Morisette e-book).
- * Dempsey, Corinne. *The Goddess Lives in Upstate New York: Breaking Convention and Making Home at a North American Hindu Temple*. Oxford University Press, 2006 (Hinduism in North American, Morisette e-book).
- * Feldman, Deborah. *Unorthodox: The Scandalous Rejection of my Hasidic Roots*. Simon and Schuster, 2012 (Contemporary Judaism in North America/de-conversion/atheism).
- * Goulet, Jean-Guy. *Ways of Knowing: Experience, Knowledge, and Power among the Dene Tha*. University of Nebraska Press, 1998. (Contemporary aboriginal religions in Canada, Morisette e-book)
- * Hopman, Ellen Evert. *Being a Pagan: Druids, Wiccans and Witches Today*. Inner Traditions International, 2001 (Contemporary Neo-paganism in North America).
- * Johnston, Hugh. *Jewels of the Qila: The Remarkable Story of an Indo-Canadian Family*. UBC Press, 2012 (Contemporary Sikhism in North America, Morisette reserve)
- * Khan, Sheema, *Of Hijabs and Hockey: Reflections of a Canadian Muslim Woman*. Tsar Publications: 2009 (Contemporary Islam in Canada).
- * Loundon, Sumi, ed. *Blue Jean Buddha: Voices of Young Buddhists*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2001 (Contemporary Buddhism in Canada, Morisette reserve)
- * Manji, Irshad. *Allah, Liberty, and Love: The Courage to Reconcile Faith and Freedom*. Random House, 2011 (Contemporary Islam in Canada, Morisette reserve)
- * Pike, Sarah. *Earthly Bodies, Magical Selves: Contemporary Pagans and the Search for Community*. University of California Press, 2001 (contemporary North American Neo-paganism, Morisette e-book).

- * Sioui, Georges. *For an Amerindian Autohistory: an Essay on the Foundations of a Social Ethic*. McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992 (historical and contemporary aspects of aboriginal experience in Canada, Morisette e-book).
- * Tariq, Malik. *Chanting Denied Shores: The Komagatu Narratives* (a novel). Bayeux Press, 2010 (Sikh history in Canada, Morisette reserve).
- * Vosper, Gretta. *With or Without God: Why the Way we Live is more Important than What we Believe*. Harper Collins, 2008 (Contemporary Christianity in Canada).
- * Yuen-fong Woon, *The Excluded Wife* (a novel), Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998 (Chinese history in Canada, Morisette e-book)

Research Prospectus – 5%.

A one-page overview of the student's proposed research paper topic must be submitted in class on **Friday, September 28, 2012**. The overview should include the paper's proposed topic and thesis, and include a bibliography of at least five scholarly books and articles. Scholarly web resources can be added to this basic requirement, but MAY NOT replace it.

Research Paper – 25%.

Students must write a ten page research paper (exclusive of endnotes or bibliography) on some aspect of the Canadian experiences of one of the religious traditions covered in the course (or, with the instructor's permission, another religious tradition such as Jainism or the Baha'is, or some less examined facet of a tradition, such as the Mennonite presence in Western Canada, for example). The Research Paper is due in class on **Friday, November 16, 2012**. In order to be able to submit their paper, students must have previously submitted their one-page Research Prospectus, and had their paper topic approved by the professor.

All assignments are due on the dates indicated. Late papers (without certified evidence of ill health or other compassionate consideration, such as bereavement) will be penalized two points out of one hundred for each day they are late. Plagiarism (the unattributed use of the work of others) is absolutely unacceptable and, if engaged in, could result in failing the course and other academic penalties. For more information on plagiarism and its consequences, see <http://www.uottawa.ca/plagiarism.pdf>.

COURSE OUTLINE

September 7:

Introduction – Key Themes, Questions, and Goals of this Course

Introduction to the themes and content of the course. Delineation of expectations for student participation. Question and answer session. If time permits, we will commence our study of aboriginal religious traditions.

September 11, 14:

Aboriginal Life Worlds

Aboriginal religions are the original form of Canadian religious life. From the seventeenth-century to the present day, the aboriginal peoples of Canada have attempted to maintain their traditional religious beliefs and practices in the face of a maelstrom of religious, social, and political change. This week we will examine aboriginal spirituality in its historical and contemporary contexts.

Required Readings:

- 1) Esposito textbook, *World Religions Today*, Chapter 2, “Indigenous Religions,” p. 35-59.
- 2) Sioui, Georges. *For an Amerindian Autohistory: an Essay on the Foundations of a Social Ethic*. McGill-Queen’s Univ. Press, 1992, Chap. 2, “The Sacred Circle of Life,” p. 8-19 (Morisette e-book).
- 3) Jean-Guy Goulet. “Powerful Beings and Being Powerful,” in *Ways of Knowing: Experience, Knowledge and Power among the Dene Tha*. UBC Press, 1998, p. 60-87 (Morisette e-book).

Suggestions for Further Reading:

- * Bruce Trigger. *The Children of Aatahensic: A History of the Huron People to 1660*. McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1987 (Morisette e-book).
- * Anderson, Emma. *The Betrayal of Faith: The Tragic Journey of a Colonial Native Convert*. Harvard University Press, 2007 (Morisette reserve).
- * Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian*. Yale University Press, 1998 (white appropriation of Native spirituality, Morisette e-book).

September 18, 21:

Canadian Christianity

Aboriginal religious traditions were the original Canadian form of spirituality. But, from its very advent on this continent, European Christianity has attempted to become the predominant expression of Canadian religious identity. In this brief introduction to the history of Christianity in Canada, we will explore 17th century Christian mentalities in Europe, early Catholic missionary encounters with native people and the foundation of the earliest residential schools, and Catholic notions of martyrdom in the New World. We will highlight tensions between Protestants and Catholics in the Grand Derangement and the Conquest of Quebec, outline the highly affective nature of nineteenth century religion, both Protestant and Catholic, and explore the rise of ecumenicalism in the post-WW II era, and the impact of Vatican II and la Revolution Tranquille. **I will be conducting a voluntary Church Architectural walking tour outside class time (date and time to be announced) in which students will visit Notre Dame Cathedral on Sussex and Eglise Sacre-Coeur on campus to illustrate the theological and political shifts within the Catholic Church in the 1960s and 70s.**

Required Readings:

- 1) Esposito textbook, Chapter 4, “Christian Diversity and the Road to Modernity,” p.118-173.
- 2) Emma Anderson, *The Death and Afterlife of the North American Martyrs* (Harvard University Press, forthcoming, 2013, Chapter 4, “Brébeuf and his Brethren: Popularization of the Martyrs’ Cult in Post-War Canada,” (on reserve at Morisette).
- 3) Michel Gauvreau. *The Catholic Origins of Quebec’s Quiet Revolution, 1931-1970*. McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2005. “Introduction: Recasting Catholicism’s Place in Modern Quebec,” p. 3-13 (Morisette e-book).

Suggestions for Further Reading:

- * Thwaites, Rueben Gold. *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*. Burrows, 1890-98 (primary documents on 17th century Canadian history).
- * Terrence Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics*. McGill-Queen’s UP, 2002 (Morisette e-book)
- * Vosper, Gretta. *With or Without God: Why the Way we Live is more Important than What we Believe*. Harper Collins, 2008 (Contemporary Christianity in Canada).

September 25, 28:

Hindu Experiences in Canada: Demography, Identity, and Intergenerational Tensions

This week marks a shift from our exploration of the deep historical roots in Canada of aboriginal spiritualities and Christianity to an examination of the arrival of Canada's predominant minority religious traditions, starting in the mid to late nineteenth century. This week's readings and lectures will explore the complex diversity of Hindu beliefs, explore how immigration to Canada has impacted how Hindus experience and express their faith, and examine generational and gender differences in Hindu adaptation to the Canadian context. **Reminder: Your Research Prospectus is due in class on Friday, September 28, 2012.**

Required Readings:

- 1) Esposito textbook, Chapter 1, "Introduction, Globalization: World Religions in a Multicultural Society," p. 3-33 and Chapter 6, "Hinduism: Myriad Paths to Salvation," p. 236-291.
- 2) Anne M. Pearson, "Mothers and Daughters: Transmission of Religious Practice and the Formation of Hindu Identity Among Hindu Immigrant Women in Ontario" in *Hindu Diaspora: Global Perspectives*. Concordia University, 1999, p. 427-442 (Morisette reserve, Web CT).
- 3) Radhika Sekhar, "Authenticity by Accident: Organizing, Decision making and the Construction of a Diasporic Temple in the Nation's Capital" in *Hindu Diaspora: Global Perspectives*. Concordia University, 1999, p. 307-328 (Morisette reserve, Web CT).

Suggestions for Further Readings:

* Corinne Dempsey. *The Goddess Lives in Upstate New York: Breaking Convention and Making Home at a North American Hindu Temple*. Oxford University Press, 2006 (Hinduism in North American, Morisette e-book).

* David Kinsley. *Hindu Goddesses: Visions of the Divine Feminine in the Hindu Religious Tradition*. University of California Press, 1986 (Morisette e-book)

* Philip Goldberg. *American Veda: From Emerson and the Beatles to Yoga and Meditation, How Indian Spirituality Changed the West*. Harmony Books, 2010 (Morisette reserve).

October 2, 5:

The Lotus and the Maple Leaf: Buddhist Experiences in Canada

This week will explore the genesis and diffusion of Buddhism, highlighting the ways in which this new religious tradition both reflected and challenged its parent, Hinduism. It will also sketch the history of Buddhism in Canada, focusing in particular upon how the internment and forced resettlement of Japanese-Canadian Buddhists during and after the Second World War dramatically affected expressions of Buddhist sacred space, worship, and identity in Canada. We will also examine the draw of Buddhism for non-Asian Canadians, which have led many to explore and convert to the tradition, considering the experiences of Montrealer Elijah Ary as an example. **During this section of our course, we are honoured and pleased to host Buddhist monk Kelsang Rabjar as a guest speaker in our classroom.**

Required Readings:

- 1) Esposito textbook, Chapter 7, "Buddhism: Ways to Nirvana," p. 292-353.
- 2) Janet McLellan. *Many Petals of the Lotus: Five Asian Buddhist Communities in Toronto*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999, "Introduction," p. 1-9, Chapter 2, "Japanese Canadians and Toronto Buddhist Church, section, p. 35-51 (Morisette e-book)
- 3) Omatsu, Maryka. "On Being an Alien" in *Bittersweet Passage: Redress and the Japanese Canadian Experience*. Toronto: Between the Lines, 1992, p. 33-44 (Morisette e-book)

4) Sumi Loundon, ed. *Blue Jean Buddha: Voices of Young Buddhists*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2001. "Elijah Ary, Bridging East and West." (Morisette reserve, Web CT).

Suggestions for Further Reading:

* John S. Harding et al., eds. *Wild Geese: Buddhism in Canada*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010. (Morisette reserve)

* Takeo Ujo Nakano. *Within the Barbed Wire Fence: A Japanese Man's Account of his Internment in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1980. (Morisette reserve)

October 9, 12:

Sikh Identity in Canada

This week we will examine the genesis of Sikhism in the Punjab and sketch in the contours of the Sikh experience in Canada. We will consider the infamous 1914 *Komagata Maru* incident, in which a boat containing 376 Sikhs was turned away from Vancouver's harbour, explore the formation of Sikh sacred space in the *gurdwaras* and homes of the diasporic Sikh community, and examine tensions within the Sikh community itself regarding issues of tradition, identity, and practice. **We will be delighted to have Jagjiven Dulku, a University of Ottawa student and practicing Sikh, visit our class to discuss growing up Sikh in Quebec and contemporary issues in Canadian Sikhism.**

Required Readings:

1) Esposito textbook, Chapter 8, "Sikhism: Becoming a World Religion," p. 354-391.

2) Kamala Elizabeth Nayar. "The Making of Sikh Space: The Role of the Gurdwara," in *Asian Religions in British Columbia*, Larry DeVries, ed. UBC Press, 2010, p. 43-63. (Morisette reserve, Web CT)

3) Verne A. Dusenbery, "Punjabi Sikhs and Gora Sikh: Conflicting Assertions of Sikh Identity in North America," in *Sikh History and Religion in the Twentieth Century*. Centre for South Asian Studies, 1988, p. 334-355 (Morisette reserve, Web CT).

4) Bains, T. S. *Four Quarters of the Night: The Life-Journey of an Emigrant Sikh*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995, "Keeping my Faith," p. 58-61 (Morisette e-book)

Suggestions for Further Reading:

* Narindar Singh. *Canadian Sikhs: History, Religion, and Culture of Sikhs in North America*. Canadian Sikhs' Studies Institute, 1994 (Morisette reserve)

* Hugh Johnston. *Jewels of the Qila: The Remarkable Story of an Indo-Canadian Family*. UBC Press, 2011 (Morisette reserve).

* Hugh Johnston. *The Voyage of the Komagata Maru: The Sikh Challenge to Canada's Colour Bar*. UBC Press, 1989 (Morisette e-book).

Tuesday, October 16, 2012: In-class Review Session

Friday, October 19, 2012: Midterm Examination

******October 20-28 Fall Study Break – NO CLASSES******

October 30, November 2, 6:

Islam in Contemporary Canada

This week we will examine the foundation and diffusion of Islam, and the history of this religious tradition in Canada. Highlighting the perceptions of Canadian Muslim women in particular, we will explore their perspectives on the hijab, traditional patterns of worship, and gender rights and relations within Canadian Islam, before turning to a more general consideration of the experiences of Canadian Muslims in the post-911 era. **We are delighted and honoured to have Sheema Khan, journalist**

and author of *Of Hijabs and Hockey: Reflections of a Canadian Muslim Woman* joining us as a guest lecturer during this section.

* We have been invited to visit the Ottawa Mosque at 251 Northwestern Ave on Tuesday, November 6, 2012, at 7 pm. We will tour the mosque, meet the Imam, and have the opportunity to ask questions. It will be an exciting and educational evening. Since this event is outside of regular class hours, it is optional rather than mandatory. But I do hope that many of you will attend because it will be a very enriching experience, and a great way to finish off our study of Islam.

Reminder: your Book Review is due Friday, Nov. 2, 2012.

Required Readings:

- 1) Esposito textbook, Chapter 5, "Islam: The Many Faces of the Muslim Experience," p. 174-234.
- 2) Homa Hoodfar, "More Than Clothing: Veiling as an Adaptive Strategy," in Alvi, et al. *The Muslim Veil in North America: Issues and Debates*. Women's Press, 2003, p. 11-40. (Morisette e-book)
- 3) Yousif, Ahmad. "The Impact of 9/11 on Muslim Identity in the Canadian National Capital Region : Institutional Response and Future Prospects." in *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* Vol. 34, #1, 2005, 49-68. (available on the Morisette library website)

Suggestions for Further Reading:

- * Sheema Khan, *Of Hijabs and Hockey: Reflections of a Canadian Muslim Woman*, Tsar Pubs, 2009.
- * Irshad Manji, *Allah, Liberty and Love: the Courage of Reconcile Faith and Freedom*. Free Press, 2011 (Morisette reserve)
- * Natasha Bakht, *Belonging and Banishment: Being Muslim in Canada*, TSAR Publications, 2008 (Morisette reserve).
- * Moghissi Haideh et al. *Diaspora by Design: Muslim Immigrants in Canada and Beyond*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009 (Moriette reserve).

November 9, 13:

Religion, Culture and Identity in Jewish Canada

Although the Jews are one of Canada's oldest religious minorities, having been resident in small numbers in Canada since the seventeenth century, they have always faced rejection and anti-Semitism. This week we will briefly outline Jewish theology and ritual, explore Canadian restrictions on Jewish immigration during the Second World War, and identify the varieties of contemporary Judaism: from Orthodox and Reform to more secular articulations of Canadian Jewish identity.

Required Readings:

- 1) Esposito textbook, Chapter 3, "The Many Stories of Judaism: Sacred and Secular," p. 61-117.
- 2) Joe King, "A Bas Les Juifs: No Dogs or Hebrews Allowed," and "None is Too Many: How Canada Denied Sanctuary to Endangered European Jews" in *From the Ghetto to the Main: The Story of the Jews of Montreal*. The Montreal Jewish Publication Society, 2001, p. 201-215 (Morisette reserve)
- 3) Morton Weinfeld. *Like Everyone Else...But Different: The Paradoxical Success of Canadian Jews*. McClelland & Stewart Ltd., 2001, 1-10, 36-41, 288-301 (Morisette reserve).

Suggestions for Further Reading:

- * Gerald Tulchinsky. *Canada's Jews: A People's Journey*. University of Toronto Press, 2008. (Morisette reserve).
- * Arbella, Irving *None is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948*. University of Toronto Press, 2012 (Morisette reserve).

November 16, 20:

Chinese and other East Asian Religions in Canada

Chinese Canadians have often been seen as ethnically but not religiously distinctive: their beliefs and practices have often been classified by outsiders as “ethnic,” “linguistic,” or “cultural” rather than “religious.” This week we will examine the origin and syncretic nature of traditional Chinese and other East Asian religions, which tend creatively to combine a number of diverse spiritual elements and influences. We will explore how East Asian religions have been transformed through immigration to Canada, when Chinese immigrants were often forced to live in ethnic ghettos, ghettos which have become today’s vibrant Chinatowns. Tracing the biases of Canadian immigration policy, we will explore the effects on Chinese families and the practice of their faith in this new land. **Reminder: Your Research Paper is due in class on Friday, November 16, 2012.**

Required Readings:

- 1) Esposito textbook, Chapter 9, “East Asian Religions: Traditions of Human Cultivation and Natural Harmony,” p. 392-455.
- 2) Yuen-fong Woon, *The Excluded Wife* (novel), McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1998, p. 187-196 (Morisette e-book)
- 3) Arlene Chan. *The Chinese in Toronto from 1878: From Outside to Inside the Circle*. Toronto: Dundurn Natural Heritage, 2011, Chapter Two, “The Birth of Toronto’s Chinatown,” and Chapter Four, “The Bachelor Society and the War Years” (Morisette e-book)

November 23:

New Spiritualities in Canada

During our last three classes before our systematic review for the Final Exam on December 4th, we will explore new trends in Canadian spirituality (including the rejection of the spiritual!). These tendencies do not fit easily into either the “founding religions” (aboriginal spirituality and Christianity) we explored early in the term, or the major immigrant traditions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Islam, Judaism, and East Asian traditions) we have focused on since. Though still in their infancy, new spiritualities (or reinventions of archaic religions, such as Neo-Paganism) are some of the fastest-growing traditions in North America and often self-consciously oppose what they see as the deficits of more traditional faiths.

Required Readings:

- 1) Esposito textbook, Chapter 10, “Postmodern Fragments: From New to New Age Religions,” p. 457-485.
- 2) Sarah Pike, *Earthly Bodies, Magical Selves: Contemporary Pagans and the Search for Community*. University of California Press, 2001, “Introduction: We Cast our Circle where the Earth Mother meets the Sky Father,” p. 1-9 (Morisette e-book)

Suggestions for Further Reading:

- * Sarah M. Pike, *New Age and NeoPagan Religions in America*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004, particularly Chapter Two: Introduction to the Religious Worlds of Neopagans and New Agers,” p. 13-38 (Morisette reserve).
- * Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon: Witches, Druids, Goddess-Worshippers, and Other Pagans in America Today*. New York: Penguin, 1986. (Morisette reserve).
- * Ellen Evert Hopman. *Being a Pagan: Druids, Wiccans and Witches Today*. Inner Traditions International, 2001.

November 27, 30:

Losing My Religion: De-conversion and Atheism in Contemporary Canada

While Neo-paganism and New Spiritualities are a popular new spiritual alternative in contemporary Canada, another growing trend is the rejection of religion altogether. Powerful and touching personal narratives of leaving the religious community of one's childhood have helped to bring the phenomenon of "de-conversion" out of the closet, even as the widely distributed writings of the so called "four horsemen" of the New Atheism: Sam Harris, Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, and Christopher Hitchens have, for the last decade, attacked religious sensibilities as inherently divisive, hateful, irrational, and dangerous. Some of their arguments suggest not so much that God does not exist, but that, if he does, he does not deserve our worship. And yet some experts on grassroots atheism in Canada feel that homegrown atheism here lacks the "bite" of the Four Horsemen's writings. Canadian atheism, as they see it, is less disrespectful of institutionalized religion, and seeks to persuade rather than to confront. **We are delighted this week to host as our guest speaker Spencer Bullivant, a doctoral student who is studying the currents of popular atheism in Canada.**

Required Readings:

- 1) Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*. Houghton Mifflin, 2006, Chapter Two (section), "The God Hypothesis," p. 31-46 (Morisette reserve).
- 2) G. Elijah Dann, ed. *Leaving Fundamentalism: Personal Stories*. Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2008, "Fantastic Voyage: Surviving Charismatic Fundamentalism," p. 55-68, by David Rattigan, and "My Mother, My Church," p. 69-80, by Margaret Steel Farrell (Morisette e-book).

Suggestions for Further Reading:

- * Jennifer Hecht. *Doubt: A History*. Harper Collins, 2003. (Morisette reserve)
- * Shalom Auslander, *Foreskin's Lament: A Memoir*. Riverhead Books, 2007.
- * Deborah Feldman, *Unorthodox: The Scandalous Rejection of my Hasidic Roots*. Simon and Schuster, 2012.

December 4:

Comprehensive Review Session for the Final Examination