

Global Issues 621 - Cults, Sects, Fringe Religions, and New Religious Movements - Mid-Term Case Studies

Type: Major

Due: November 13 at 12:30 pm

Church:

a conventional religious organization

Cult:

1. a religion or sect considered to be false, unorthodox, or extremist, with members often living outside of conventional society under the direction of a charismatic leader
2. a deviant religious organization with novel beliefs and practices

Sect:

1. a group regarded as heretical or as deviating from a generally accepted religious tradition
2. a deviant religious organization with traditional beliefs and practices

Religion:

a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a superhuman agency or agencies, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs

We all know about the mainstream religions and their belief systems. The purpose of this assignment is to do some research into cults, sects, and so-called 'fringe' religions and present your findings to your classmates. The possibilities are endless when choosing an alternative view. You may study any one you wish except for the following:

- **Christianity (including Catholicism, Protestantism, and Eastern Orthodoxy)**
- **Islam**
- **Judaism**
- **Buddhism**
- **Hinduism**

There are literally thousands of cults, sects, and alternative religions in the world. Do some research and find one which you think is interesting. The culmination of your research will be the creation of a multimedia slide show or a web page and a ten-minute presentation to the class. This presentation will require you and your partner to speak to your classmates to offer them some new information and answer their questions based on your findings. The guidelines:

- Students will work in pairs. The most suitable arrangement is for students to choose their own partners wisely.
- Choices of cults/sects/religions will be a first-come, first-served basis.
- We shall use our research time in the library to its full extent (or we won't get that time).
- Individual presentations must be between 4-5 minutes in length (no more or less).
- Presentations/web sites should include lots of pictures and a **minimum** of text. YOU are the living text.
- Each presentation shall be followed by a quick Q and A session. You better know the answers to the questions.
- The format of your presentation is up to you. However, it should include the following:
 - Name of Cult/Sect/Religion
 - Founder and When Founded
 - Sacred or Revered Texts
 - Leader
 - Size of Group
 - History (this will be the longest section and the one that will be marked most harshly)
 - Opposition
 - Beliefs of the Group
 - Personal Glimpse (opinion, what you learned, what you like/don't like about the movement, etc)
 - References

This website will be very helpful as you plan your show. Be careful, however, as plagiarism will result in a score of ZERO.

<http://www.adherents.com/>

Specifics:

- Slide shows/web pages will be submitted on or before **Friday, November 7**.
- All students are required to create a formal **Works Cited** page to verify research sources (as part of slide show/web site).
- Order of presentation shall be decided by lethal lottery on the day of our examination. For that reason, all groups must be prepared to present on **November 13**.
- Students are expected to present with a minimum reliance on prepared notes.
- If students are below or over the allotted time for each presentation, marks shall be deducted from their score.

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Each category below shall be graded on a sliding scale of 1 to 4, 1 to 6, or 1 to 8.

Categories & Criteria	① ---- x ---- ② ---- x ---- ③ ---- x ---- ④ ---- x ---- ⑤ ---- x ---- ⑥ ---- x ---- ⑦ ---- x ---- ⑧				Totals
Content Knowledge Research	Student doesn't have the grasp of information; lacks materials on the topic.	Student is at ease with content but fails to elaborate to his/her audience.	Student demonstrates full knowledge with explanations and elaboration.	Student demonstrates extraordinary knowledge with thought provoking discussion.	⑧
Organization & Quality of Presentation	Audience has difficulty following presentation; lacks a logical sequence.	Information is presented in a fairly logical sequence, although audience is confused at times.	Information is logical, follows an interesting sequence, and has audience wrapped.	Audience feels as though they were at the festival; it has been comprehensively presented.	⑥
Question and Answer	This section is worth 4 points of your total. This includes the answering of the questions during your own presentation, of course, but also the ASKING of questions to other presenters. You are required to ask at least 3 questions throughout the entire process. If you do not ask ANY questions, you will receive a very low score. If you DO NOT know the answers to your own questions, you will also score very low.				④
References	The references section is worth 4 points. However, if your presentation does not include a references slide or web link, you will be deducted 8 points . If your references are complete and formatted according to the MRHS guidelines, you can expect a 4. If you do not complete it using the proper format, you shall be deducted points. NO SHEETS OF PAPER! Include it with your presentation or web site.				④
Use of Visuals	Student did not use adequate visuals to enhance presentation. It is very text-heavy	Students used some visuals in order to enhance his/her presentation. Some confusion.	Students used outstanding visuals to reinforce presentation. Acceptable mix of text/pictures.	Visuals chosen by the student left the onlooker without question. Very appropriate and topical.	④
Voice Presentation Delivery	Student mumbles, and speaks too quietly for students at back to hear.	Student uses a fairly clear voice throughout presentation, although some parts are muddled.	Student uses a crystal clear voice throughout presentation, although delivery needs work.	Student uses the best elements of presenting, gesturing and showing genuine excitement.	④
Presentation Eye Contact (Not Reading)	Absolutely no attempt is made to make eye contact with audience throughout presentation.	Attempts are made at eye contact; student looks up once in a while but looks at notes more.	Attempts are made at eye contact and student needs little reference to notes/reading slides.	Makes constant eye contact and demonstrates self-confidence throughout entire presentation.	④
Coffin Caliber Grade	Presentation does not approach the high standards set by this instructor for this class.	Presentation shows flashes of the standards set by this instructor for this class.	Presentation shows many of the high standards set by this instructor for this class.	Presentation meets and exceeds the high standards set by this instructor for this class.	④
Satisfying Time Requirements	You do not receive extra points if you satisfy the time requirements. You will, however, lose points from your total if you are overly short or overly long (stick to the 5-6 minute guideline). Also, if you don't spend your time wisely when presenting (stalling, going too fast, etc), you will suffer a deduction in grades.				
Mechanics Spelling and Grammar	Again, no additional marks shall be awarded in this section since a grade 12 students shouldn't have to worry about his/her spelling and grammar in a formal presentation. If, however, your presentation suffers from mechanical errors, you shall suffer further deduction in your overall grade for the project. Keep this in mind as you plan and complete your presentation.				

Total: /38

Notes: