

DIANA L. ECK



ON COMMON GROUND
WORLD RELIGIONS IN AMERICA

A Guide for Teachers and Students

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS NEW YORK

Guide for Teachers and Students Using

ON COMMON GROUND

WORLD RELIGIONS IN AMERICA

Diana L. Eck

Columbia University Press

Publishers Since 1893

New York Chichester, West Sussex

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Printed in the United States of America

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PREFACE

This multimedia CD-ROM contains more than three thousand pages of text, two thousand photographs and images, one hundred sound files and movies, and one hundred primary documents, all of which can be used for teaching and learning, for individual and in-class study, and for research and fieldwork. This booklet is a guide to the wealth of information in the CD-ROM, to help you decide how best to use it in your educational setting. Because this CD-ROM is multimedia, it is also multilevel; it can be explored and used in different but equally educational ways by high school students, college students, graduate students, professors, journalists, clergy, public officials, and health care workers. *ON COMMON GROUND* can be used in high school social studies and American history courses and in college religion, American studies, and ethnic studies courses.

The best education is inquiry punctuated by questions, guided by resources, and driven by curiosity. *ON COMMON GROUND* began as an educational project—the Pluralism Project—in which Harvard students, from freshmen to graduate students, examined the growing religious diversity of America. Between 1991 and 1994, the Pluralism Project supported the “hometown” summer research and travel of more than fifty students, each motivated by his or her own interpretation of the following three questions:

1. How is the religious landscape of American cities and towns changing with the presence of new mosques, temples, gurdwaras, and interfaith councils?
2. How are these religious traditions changing and adapting as they take root in America and begin to develop religious and educational institutions, religious networks, summer camps, and national organizations?
3. How is America changing with this broader, more complex religious pluralism?

This CD-ROM is only a beginning in the exploration of these questions, with much that remains to be done—in every city and town, religious community, and school and college. *ON COMMON GROUND* is thus not a completed project but an invitation to look again at the religious multiplicity and diversity of your own community, state, and region of the United States.

I

GETTING ORIENTED

Contents

Introduction

- “We the People . . .”: an introductory essay, printed out in this guide
- *Voices of America*: an introductory movie offering Jewish, Native American, Christian, and Muslim interpretations of America

A New Religious Landscape

- “New Neighbors”: an introductory essay, printed out in this guide
- *A Visible Difference*: an introductory movie surveying the increasing visibility of new forms of religious architecture in America and pointing out the new presence of many religious traditions
- Introductions to eighteen cities and regions in the United States and portraits of four hundred places of worship. The eighteen areas are

Boston
Central Valley (California)
Chicago
Denver
Houston
Iowa
Los Angeles
Minneapolis/St. Paul
New York City
Oklahoma City
Pennsylvania
Phoenix
Portland
San Francisco
Seattle
South Florida
Washington, D.C.
Western Massachusetts

America's Many Religions

- “Rivers of Faith”: an introductory essay, printed out in this guide
- *The Search for Meaning*: an introductory movie with Buddhist, Sikh, Muslim, Christian, Hindu, and Jewish people speaking about what religion means in their lives

- Sections on fifteen religious traditions, each with both a general introduction and an introduction to the tradition as it is practiced in the United States today. These traditions are treated in varying detail. Those treated most extensively:

Buddhist
 Christian
 Hindu
 Jain
 Jewish
 Muslim
 Native peoples
 Sikh

Those treated least extensively:

Afro-Caribbean
 Baha'i
 Confucian
 Pagan
 Shinto
 Tao
 Zoroastrian

Encountering Religious Diversity

- “The Public Square”: an introductory essay, printed out in this guide
- *Building Bridges*: An introductory movie with Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, and Jews speaking about the range of relationships they have begun to develop with one another as neighbors

Historical Perspectives: Thirteen short essays on encountering religious diversity as viewed through the lens of American history. Each essay is accompanied by a set of documents, all of which are listed in the bibliography of the CD-ROM.

Native Americans and Christians
 Establishment or Tolerance?
 The Free Exercise of Religion
 African Religion in America
 Alternative Altars
 Catholic and Jewish Immigrants
 Asians and Asian Exclusion
 Parliament of Religions, 1893
 God's Melting Pot?
 The Right to Be Different
 Xenophobia: Closing the Door
 A Three-Religion Country? Protestant, Catholic, Jew
 A New Multireligious America

Today's Challenges: Twelve short essays on the challenges of religious diversity today in a more pluralistic, multireligious America. Each essay is accompanied by a set of documents, all of which are listed in the bibliography of the CD-ROM.

From Diversity to Pluralism
Parliament of Religions, 1993
Stereotypes and Prejudice
Not in My Neighborhood! Zoning Battles
Violence and Vandalism
Cooperation at the Grassroots
Encounter in the Courts
Encounter in the Public Schools
Encounter over the Curriculum
School Holidays, Prayers?
Encounter in the Public Square
The Interfaith Movement
Common Cause in Social Action
Worship and Spirituality
Hospitals in a New Era

Programwide CD-ROM Resources

Glossary: Each word printed in red in the text also appears in the glossary. Clicking on a word brings up a small window containing its definition, which you can put away by clicking on the next word. The glossary box will remain on the screen until you have finished reading it and have put it away. In addition, the box is movable. The entire glossary can be accessed under Resources on the menu bar. You can scroll through the text by going through the alphabet to the section you wish to examine.

Bibliography: The bibliography is accessed under Resources on the menu bar. You can scroll through the text by clicking on the section of the CD-ROM for which you would like bibliographic references. Because the emphasis in the Bibliography is on the American context, it is a valuable resource for further work on Buddhism, Sikhism, or Judaism in America.

Connections: On the majority of essay screens, you can connect to other related screens in the program by clicking on the Connections button in the lower right corner of the screen. Doing so displays a small window containing a list of related materials in the CD-ROM. Clicking on one of the items in this list takes you to that screen. For example, from the Cambridge Zen Center in the Boston Landscape section, you can jump to "One Hand Clapping," an essay about Zen in the Buddhist Religion section, or to the profile of the Kwan Um School of Zen, also in the Buddhist Religion section. Clicking on the next item in the Connections window puts the first screen away and brings up the next. The Connections menu will remain on your screen and is movable.

Index: The Comparative Thematic Index enables you to access the material in ON COMMON GROUND across the fifteen religious traditions and the other sections of the program. Use the Index, for example, to find out about holidays in many different traditions or to find all the essays in the CD-ROM that focus on conversion or church–state relations. From each screen accessed through the Index, you can press Retrace to take you back to your place in the Index. You can access the Index by pressing the Index button on the right-hand navigation strip or by selecting the Resources item on the menu bar.

Directory: The Pluralism Project Directory may be accessed under the Resources menu. This is not a comprehensive directory, as it contains only the databases of the Buddhist, Hindu, Jain, Muslim, Sikh, Zoroastrian centers, and Interfaith councils in the United States. These may be accessed by either tradition or state. Because more detailed information about Christian and Jewish congregations can be found in the Yellow Pages of telephone directories, we have made no effort to include it here. For resources on the other religious traditions treated here, see the Info section of each tradition. The Native American Info section, for example, lists several comprehensive directories of Native American tribal centers and cultural museums.

Navigational Tools

Menus: By using the menu bar, you can jump quickly to a specific screen in the program. No matter what section you are in, the four menus—File, Resources, Bookmark, and Contents—are always present. As you move from section to section and from topic to topic within each section, the remaining menus change to reflect the availability of new information. For example, the sequence of menus File, Resources, Bookmark, Contents, Landscape, Seattle indicates that you are in the Seattle section of A New Religious Landscape. Clicking on the Landscape menu brings up a list of the other cities and regions in this section, and clicking on the Seattle menu displays a list of the many religious centers in Seattle. For more detailed instructions, click on the Help button on the right side of the screen, or release on Help under the File menu above.

Buttons: You may also navigate through the CD-ROM by clicking on the various buttons located on the screen itself, to the right of the screen, or in the lower right-hand portion of the screen. You can move forward or backward through the series of essays by clicking on the yellow and red forward or backward arrow buttons in the lower right portion of the screen. On-screen buttons also indicate the presence of movies, audio files, or documents. For more detailed instructions on using these buttons, click on the Help button on the right side of the screen, or release on Help under the File menu above.

Retrace: The Retrace button, located on the right side of the screen, is an invaluable navigational aid. Clicking on it allows you to “retrace” your steps back through the program, revisiting in reverse sequence the screens you have already seen. If you lose track of your location, you may retrace your steps back to more familiar territory. Quitting ON COMMON GROUND clears your retrace path from memory.

Home: At any time, you can return to the first, or Home, screen of the program by clicking on the Home button in the top right portion of the screen.

Bookmarks: The Bookmark item on the menu bar enables you to select particular screens to which you want to return. Adding a screen to the Bookmark window keeps it there for later reference. Be sure to “save” any Bookmark lists relevant to your projects. This feature is helpful for students using ON COMMON GROUND for research projects or presentations.

Help: The internal structure of ON COMMON GROUND is consistent from section to section, from religion to religion, from city to city, and so on. From any screen, clicking on the Help button, located in middle of the tool bar on the right of the screen and available under File on the menu bar on top of the screen, displays a sample screen, similar to the one the user is on, with overlying instructions.

II

INTRODUCTION

About This Screen: Home

The Home screen gives you an orientation to the whole CD-ROM and asks some general questions about the growing religious diversity of America and what “America” means to the many people who have found a home here. Watch *Voices of America* and review the text of the essay “We the People . . .” printed in this guide.

The three sections of the Home screen invite you to investigate America's new multireligious reality in three different but interrelated ways:

1. A New Religious Landscape helps you see what the new diversity looks like “on the ground” in the cities and regions of the United States. In each case, only a sample of religious centers—churches, synagogues, mosques, temples—is presented. More are listed in the Directory. ON COMMON GROUND is clearly a work in progress and it comes to you as an invitation to become more fully aware of your own neighborhood. Please let us know what you discover.
2. America's Many Religions enables you to learn about the various religious traditions and their histories, including their histories in the United States. What is their experience as communities of faith: their songs and devotions, forms of meditation, education, and social action? What are the issues they care about, argue about? What are their forms of organization? You will meet some of the people who belong to these traditions and hear their voices as they talk about their faith and their concerns. You can also find bibliographies and information about publications and web sites.
3. Encountering Religious Diversity asks you to think about people of different religions meeting on American soil. In the section called Historical Perspectives, you can explore the history of America's continuing argument over just how wide our “we” ought to be. Through text, images, and excerpts from documents, you can study the first encounters between Native Americans and Christian settlers; the prejudice permeating Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish relations; the first encounters on the American frontier between Euro-Americans and Chinese and Japanese immigrants. In the section called Today's Challenges, you can look at the questions this new religious diversity poses today for our public schools, courts, zoning boards, hospitals, and neighborhoods. You will learn about some of the tensions and divisions and also some of the bridges that have been built along with the creation of a new interfaith infrastructure.

Introductory Essay: “We the People . . .”

The religious landscape of America is changing as immigrants from all over the world take the oath of citizenship and claim the United States as their home. From the beginning this has been a nation of religious diversity, but today it is probably the most religiously diverse nation on earth, despite its overwhelming Christian majority. The deepest reason for our

religious diversity is America's fundamental commitment to religious freedom: matters of religious conscience cannot be legislated or decided by majority rule.

The more immediate reason for this new diversity, however, is the 1965 Immigration Act which changed American immigration policy, opening the door once again to immigration from many parts of the world for the first time since the 1920s. Restrictive immigration laws going back to the first Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and culminating in the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 had severely limited immigration from many parts of the world, particularly Asia. With the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, however, America began to address the issues of discrimination in immigration policy. Robert Kennedy, supporting the new immigration act before the U.S. Congress said, "Everywhere else in our national life, we have eliminated discrimination based on national origins. Yet this system is still the foundation of our immigration law." The 1965 act eliminated national origins quotas and opened the door again for immigration. The new post-1965 immigration has made clear for all Americans that the United States is a nation based not on race, ethnicity, or religion, but on common commitment to the democratic ideals of its Constitution.

In the past thirty years, the ethnic composition of the United States has gradually changed, with new immigrants from Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. The term "multicultural" has come to common use to describe the new cultural reality of the American people. But what are the religious dimensions of America's new cultural mix? What changes have taken place in the religious landscape of America's cities and neighborhoods? How have new religious traditions changed as they have taken root in American soil? And how is America changing as the freedom of religion cherished by America's founders is now cherished by Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Hindus who have come to America as immigrants? These are the questions the Pluralism Project set out to investigate, and these are the questions you are invited to explore in this CD-ROM, *On Common Ground*.

The American Constitution begins with words, "We the People of the United States of America. . . ." The thirty-nine people who framed and signed the Constitution in 1787 were almost all white, Protestant, Anglo-Saxon men. The "we" of which they spoke referred to the citizens of the new America, who were mostly English Protestants, joined by a few Catholics, and still fewer Jews. At that time, "we" did not include the Native peoples of America, or the considerable number of African slaves who accounted for approximately one-fifth of the non-indigenous population.

Over the past two centuries, the "we" has expanded and become considerably more complex. Through years of struggle, America's "we" has come to include African Americans and Native Americans, and has come explicitly to include both women and men among its voting members. It has also come to include immigrants from all parts of Europe, from Asia and the Pacific, from Africa and Latin America. Coming to know who "we" now are is one of America's most challenging tasks.

In many parts of the world today, the "we" is being defined in ever narrower terms—the "we" of ethnic, religious, or national chauvinism. But America's "we" has become ever broader. Today it includes Buddhist Americans, like the Hawaiian-born Buddhist astronaut who died on the Challenger. It includes Muslim Americans, like the Muslim mayor elected to office in Kuntz, Texas and the first Muslim commissioned as a chaplain in the U.S. Navy. Our "we" includes Hindu and Jain engineers and surgeons, Zoroastrian social workers, and Sikh political advisers. It includes Native American legislators, activists, and educators. It includes Christians of all races and denominations—Hispanic pentecostalists, Southern Baptists, United Methodists, Vietnamese Catholics, Korean Presbyterians. It includes Jews from black-coat Lubavitchers to Reform women rabbis. It includes Baha'is and Unitarians, Wiccans and Earth Spirit communities, and Afro-Caribbean practitioners of Santeria and Vodou. And it includes a wide range of people who cherish the freedom to stand outside all

of these religious traditions—as ardent secularists, as ethical humanists, or as committed atheists.

Since the U.S. Census Bureau does not ask about religious affiliation, there is a sense in which we do not know who “we” are religiously. At last count the Encyclopedia Britannica yearbook (1996) noted 5.5 million Muslims, which means there are more Muslims than Episcopalians, more Muslims than members of the Presbyterian Church USA, and almost as many Muslims as Jews, estimated at 5.9 million. Hindus were estimated to be 1.3 million and continued immigration from South Asia will certainly see this rise. For Buddhists, the matter is more complex. It was estimated that there nearly 600,000 Buddhists, but one suspects this includes largely Buddhists with roots in the many cultures of Asia. What about all the first-generation Buddhists, native born Americans who have come to identify themselves as Buddhist through years of meditation practice with Americas growing numbers of Buddhist communities? These numbers may easily be one or two million, perhaps more. Baha’is are said to be 379,000; Sikhs are 363,000; and Jains about 4,000. The difficulty of being certain about any of these statistics is perhaps best revealed by the Jains, who have a computerized database of every Jain family in America and number themselves at not 4,000, but 25,000.

Of course America’s population is still predominantly Christian—with Catholics, Southern Baptists, and United Methodists forming the largest denominations. But the news of the 1990s is that our religious minorities are not followers of the passing gurus of the 1970s, but new Americans who have brought their faith with them to this land and are in the process of creating the educational and religious institutions to pass it on to succeeding generations. Large or small, America’s growing religious minorities have reshaped the religious landscape for us all.

For Teachers and Students: Questions and Projects

As we begin our exploration of ON COMMON GROUND, let us use the Home page to take stock of any questions we might have and our own assumptions of what our “common ground” might be as Americans. Reflecting on our own experience—what we already know or think we know—can be helpful as we begin expanding our awareness of our new multireligious surroundings.

1. *Voices of America*

In the movie *Voices of America*, we see many striking images of Americans—Jewish, Native American, Christian, Buddhist, Sikh, and Muslim. We hear Americans of different religious backgrounds talk about what America means to them. Listen carefully to the various voices: an Orthodox Jew, a Muskogee Creek Indian, the dean of religious life at Wellesley College, a Christian theologian, and a Muslim law professor. What are some of the things they have to say about America and its traditions of religious freedom? What are the things you agree with? Which ones surprise you? Which ones do you disagree with?

2. *What America Means to . . .*

The opening sentence of the movie *Voices of America* begins, “What America means to an Orthodox Jew is. . . .” Put yourself or one of your relatives in that sentence, using the same words, “What America means to a Catholic immigrant from Mexico, a Russian Jewish

immigrant, a third-generation Japanese American Buddhist, a third-generation Swedish Lutheran, an African American Muslim, a secular person with no religious affiliation, and so forth.

- What would you say?
- How would you describe your own family background in ethnic or religious terms?
- What do the members of your family, the people in your community, have to say about “what America means?”
- What does America mean to you?

3. Noticing a New Diversity

The essay “We the People . . .” describes the changes in America’s religious landscape since the 1965 immigration act.

- Do you have friends or family who came to America during these years?
- What evidence have you seen in your community or your school of this wider “we” of a more diverse America?

4. Questions to Begin With

By yourself, in a small group, or in a class discussion, list the questions you have about America’s new religious landscape and its various new religious traditions. Write them on the board or in your notebook. Let these questions determine your approach to ON COMMON GROUND.

- What are you most interested in?
- Which cities or regions covered here do you want to know more about?
- Which religious traditions do you know nothing about?
- Which religions do you know something about or a lot about? What are the things you know? Write down the important points. What stereotypes do you think you might hold?
- What do you know about the encounters of people of different religions?
- Do you think religious diversity is important? Why or why not?
- Do you think the United States can have religious freedom or religious equality given the strong numerical dominance of Christians?
- What do you suppose is the “common ground” of all religious traditions in America? Is it just the American soil, coast to coast, or is it important ideas and ideals?

III

A NEW RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE

About This Screen: The Landscape Page

The Landscape page presents a map of the contiguous states of the United States, with buttons for eighteen cities and regions. The movie *A Visible Difference* gives us a glimpse of the various places of worship in the United States: churches; synagogues; Buddhist, Jain, and Hindu temples; Sikh gurdwaras; Muslim mosques; Pagan sites; and so forth. The introductory essay, “New Neighbors,” printed in this guide, describes some of the new religious neighbors in the cities and towns of the United States.

Start anywhere—with the button nearest your own town or with the places you or your students are most curious about. This section contains the “grassroots” documentation and research of the Pluralism Project: about four hundred portraits of religious communities and institutions. No one will want to read all of these! Rather, they are a resource, the brick-by-brick foundation on which much of our work rests.

You or your students might want to ask us some of the following questions about the Landscape section:

- *Is it comprehensive?* No, this mapping of the United States begins where we began—with six religious traditions: Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, Jain, Sikh, and Zoroastrian. It has expanded to include other traditions of faith. Especially for the Christian, Jewish, and Native American traditions, it was impossible in this project's frame to provide the full range of churches, synagogues, and tribal centers throughout the United States. But this is work that has been exhaustively done by others and does not need duplication here. In addition, there are hundreds of Baha'i “firesides,” Afro-Caribbean “houses,” and Pagan “circles,” “nests,” and “covens.” Rather than attempt to be comprehensive, we have tried to provide a sample of what is new, setting it alongside a sample of what, to many, is the more familiar and dominant pattern of America's religious life.
- *What about Christianity?* Every city contains virtually the whole spectrum of Christian churches. A look at your city's Yellow Pages will give you a sense of the range. We have described two churches in each city and invite you to use the Christian Centers button on the Christianity router page to see the whole range of Christian churches profiled. We believe that this group of churches, taken together, portrays American Christianity today. Now, imagine this whole group of churches profiled in each of our eighteen sections, and you will have an idea of the scope and diversity of Christianity in each place.
- *Is it complete?* Even with the six traditions we researched, what we have presented for each city is only a fraction of what we found. For example, we

profiled only five mosques or Islamic centers in the Chicago section, but the Regional Directory (on the Chicago router page) shows more than seventy mosques or Islamic centers in the greater Chicago area. Each city or regional map offers only a sample of that place's religious diversity, not the complete picture.

- *What about the places with no red buttons?* This is a challenge for you and for students and teachers in every part of the United States. Will teachers and students in Hawaii and Alaska, in Mississippi and Michigan, begin documenting our changing religious landscape? Expanding our essays and profiles to include every part of the United States requires the help of Pluralism Project affiliates like you.
- *What about smaller communities and new religious movements?* We have not been able to include the many sects and new religious movements that have long proliferated in the United States. This is the subject of the extensive research project of J. Gordon Melton at the Institute for the Study of American Religion in Santa Barbara, California. The publications and directories of Melton's research are available in libraries.

Introductory Essay: "New Neighbors"

The religious landscape of America is changing. A mosque rises from the cornfields along the interstate outside Toledo, Ohio. A new Hindu temple is consecrated in a suburb of Houston, on a hillside in Nashville, or a hilltop in Lemont, Illinois. Vietnamese Buddhist temples have opened in Salt Lake City and Denver; Thai Buddhist temples in Oklahoma City and Bolivia, North Carolina; Cambodian temples in Lowell, Massachusetts and Minneapolis, Minnesota. "Hillside Terrace" in Fremont, California is renamed "Gurdwara Terrace" as a spacious new Sikh gurdwara is built in the neighborhood.

In every state and major city in the U.S. there are new religious neighbors today. People of other faiths are not just metaphorical neighbors around the world, but often next-door neighbors. A Lutheran church and a Buddhist temple are right across the street from one another in Garden Grove, California. A Muslim Community Center, a Ukrainian Orthodox church, a Disciples of Christ church and a Gujarati Hindu temple are virtually next-door neighbors on New Hampshire Avenue in Silver Spring, Maryland.

In the eighteen cities and regions shown on this gateway-map of the U.S., there is a remarkable new religious diversity. In each city you will find portraits of temples and churches, mosques and gurdwaras, synagogues and interfaith councils. They are a but a sample of the wide range of religious communities that are present in these cities and regions. A more complete directory of Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain temples, Islamic centers, Sikh gurdwaras, and Zoroastrian centers is available from the menu bar—not only for these eighteen cities and regions, but for every state in the U.S.

The mapping of America's new religious landscape is just beginning, as people from every state in the U.S. begin to realize just how religiously diverse we now are. In the introductions to each city, you will discover some remarkable things: that Los Angeles is the most diverse and complex Buddhist city in the world, with well over two hundred Buddhist temples; that there are nearly two dozen mosques in Houston and almost as many Hindu

temples; that Chicago mirrors the diversity of the world, with a multitude of churches and synagogues, about seventy mosques, fourteen Hindu temples, dozens of Buddhist communities, a brand new Jain temple, a Zoroastrian temple, and a Baha'i temple.

Of course our church and synagogue portraits cannot begin to do justice to the magnitude and diversity of the Christian and Jewish traditions in each city or region. There are many other more extensive resources for learning about Christianity and Judaism in America: a glance at the appropriate section of the yellow pages will get you started. But taken as a whole, we believe that the group of church and synagogue portraits presented here from across the United States will give you a sense of the range and variety of America's Christian and Jewish communities. American Christianity is also more diverse today as a result of the new immigration. St. James the Greater, a Catholic church in Boston, is largely Chinese, while Primera Iglesia Bautista in Miami serves a growing Hispanic Baptist congregation. There are other dynamic currents too: Second Baptist Church in Houston witnesses to a growing mega-church movement, while Calvary Chapel in Los Angeles is part of a spirited Pentecostal revival. American Judaism is also changing with new Jewish immigrants from Russia and other parts of Eastern Europe, with the ultra-orthodoxy of the Hasidim and the new spirituality of Jewish Renewal communities.

For the past few decades, many of the changes in America's religious landscape have been relatively invisible. There was no new architecture to catch the eye of a passerby. The first generation of new mosques and Islamic centers have been housed in a former U-Haul dealership in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, in a former mattress showroom in Northridge, California, or in a huge urban movie theater in Chicago. In Denver, ranch-style suburban homes have become Vietnamese Buddhist temples, with a few monks residing in each. In central Los Angeles, the Kwan Um Sah Korean Buddhist temple is located in what was formerly a Masonic lodge, complete with its straight-backed plush red chairs and, now, a large golden image of the Buddha. Across America, Hindus have worshiped at tens of thousands of home-altars, or rented a Knights of Columbus Hall for weekend worship, or transformed a New Jersey YMCA into a permanent temple. Sikhs have converted a former church in the Queens section of New York into a gurdwara, while Jains have converted a suburban church in Norwood, Massachusetts into a temple.

By the 1990s, however, the visible architectural evidence of America's new religious diversity is unmistakable. The Hsi Lai Temple built on a hillside in Hacienda Heights, California is the largest Buddhist temple in the Western hemisphere, and but one of several spectacular Chinese Buddhist temples. There are new mosques that have changed the visible skyline of American cities, such as the mosque in Toledo, or the Islamic Cultural Center in New York City, or the Islamic Center of Seattle. There are spectacular new Hindu temples in Atlanta or Houston, with ornately carved temple-towers rising over the doorways. All over America, construction is underway: the ceremonial ground-breaking, the pouring of foundations, the skeleton of two-by-fours framing a new religious center, the dedication ceremonies, and the plans on the wall for the next phase of construction.

The dynamic changes in America's religious landscape mean that the information here is changing too and is necessarily incomplete. The story of a new multireligious America is being written and revised every year. Please use this section of ON COMMON GROUND as a starting point for your own explorations. Print out these community portraits or a section of our Directory, which you will find under Resources. And let us know what you have discovered in your own neighborhood.

For Teachers and Students: Questions and Projects

1. *Exploring America's Landscape*

The map of the United States has eighteen buttons, enabling you to visit cities and towns throughout the country. Choose a city or region you would like to visit in ON COMMON GROUND. Divide into teams to visit a city or region or to investigate a place that interests you. Read the introductory essay for each place, and use the maps to explore regions or neighborhoods. Be sure to use the Regional Directory to get the “big picture” of each city or region, and report to the class or group what you find.

- What is the religious history of the city or region you visited?
- How different is the city's religious landscape today from what it might have been fifty years ago? One hundred years ago? Two hundred years ago?
- What surprised you most about the city or region you explored?
- Which of the religious communities you visited would you like to know more about? Use the Index to see other screens in the CD-ROM to find out more about Muslims, Vietnamese Buddhists, Catholics, and so on.

2. *Places of Worship*

When you watch the movie *A Visible Difference*, write down which religious centers interest you most. Which ones would you like to visit? Select one of the religious traditions, and look at its places of worship in the United States. Either explore the cities and regions one by one, or use the Index to look for Architecture, Places of Worship, and the like. You can also use the Centers button on the main router screen of each religious tradition. Clicking on Buddhist Centers brings up a box listing all the Buddhist centers profiled in the CD-ROM.

- Do you find examples of “invisible” religious centers—in warehouses, storefronts, or homes?
- Do you find examples of new architecture that is making a “visible difference” in the landscape of a particular city or region?
- Describe the features of a church, synagogue, mosque, Hindu temple.
- What takes place in these houses of worship?
- What can we learn about a religious tradition by looking at the places in which the community gathers?
- When reading the essays on each religious center, be sure to look up in the glossary any terms that are unfamiliar to you.

3. *From Center to Tradition*

Select one religious center you find interesting, and use the Connections to discover more about the religious tradition with which it is associated. Because the Centers essays are short, also use the Resources of the Tradition section and your own imagination to construct a portrait of the community and the kinds of weekly activities, holidays, rites, and rituals that might take place there. You might begin with one of the following:

- Hsi Lai Temple in Hacienda Heights, California (Los Angeles)
- The Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago
- Glide Memorial Church (San Francisco)
- Oregon Buddhist Church (Portland)
- Stockton Gurdwara (Central Valley, California)
- Jain Center of Metropolitan Chicago
- Teen How Temple (Houston)
- Islamic Center of Cedar Rapids (Iowa)
- Temple Aaron (Minneapolis)
- Washington Baha'i Center (Washington, D.C.)
- Cambridge Zen Center (Boston)

4. Neighbors and Zoning

Some religious centers encounter zoning difficulties when they try to settle in a new neighborhood, difficulties that may be compounded by fears and misunderstandings. Begin with the essay on Chua Lien Hoa, a Vietnamese temple in Garden Grove, California (Los Angeles area). Then, using Connections, read the section entitled “Not in This Neighborhood!” and open the accompanying case study, Garden Grove Buddhist Temple. You might also want to read about other Vietnamese Buddhist temples, using the Index or the Buddhist Centers button on the Buddhism router page.

- Summarize the story of Chua Lien Hoa.
- Pass out copies of the essay “Garden Grove Buddhist Temple” for group discussion. What were the concerns of the city of Garden Grove? What were the concerns of the Vietnamese Buddhist community?
- Look at other instances of zoning problems, using the Index.
- What concerns, fears, and misunderstandings seem to fuel conflicts over zoning?

5. Your State? Your Hometown?

What is the religious history of your state? Your city? Your hometown? What tribes of Native Americans lived in your area? What kinds of religious communities did the first settlers have? How has this area become more complex religiously? Use the resources of your local library, city hall, or historical society to find out as much as you can about the people of your community.

Use the Directory to print out a list of the religious centers of the six traditions in your state. Use the Yellow Pages to get a sense of the range of Christian churches and Jewish communities in your area. Access the Native American Info and Bibliography to find the locations of Native peoples in your area today. If you can't find much in our Directory, help us by doing your own research and let us know what you find.

Organize a group project to map the religious landscape of your hometown or region. Schedule an interview with leaders or laypeople in your town's religious traditions. After reading about and preparing for them, take field trips to representative places of worship. Divide into teams to visit a wider range of religious centers, and report back to the group.

6. Visiting a Religious Center

Each religious center featured in the Landscape section of ON COMMON GROUND is accompanied by a short profile of the community—its history, makeup, and schedule of worship and celebration. Most of these centers and those for which you will find addresses in the Directory are open to visitors either in small groups or individually.

Call well ahead of time to indicate your interest in visiting the center or attending a religious service. Be sure to ask how visitors should dress, as this varies with the religious tradition. For example, in most Islamic centers, Hindu temples, Jain temples, and Sikh gurdwaras, it is customary to remove your shoes before entering the sanctuary or prayer room. In Islamic centers, women should wear a scarf covering their head, and in most gurdwaras, both women and men cover their head. For details, you may want to consult the recent two-volume work *How to Be a Perfect Stranger: A Guide to Etiquette in Other People's Religious Ceremonies*, edited by Stuart M. Matlins and Arthur J. Magida (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1997).

Use the CD-ROM to explore the religious tradition of the place of worship you will be visiting. Write down your own expectations before you go, and make a list of the questions you have. From what you know now, what impressions do you have of the people you are going to meet? What impressions do you imagine they have of people like you? While you are there, observe carefully (but don't take notes during the religious service). If there is an opportunity to ask questions, don't hesitate to do so. And when you return from your visit, sit down as soon as you can to write a description of the most interesting things you saw and learned. Visit the Pluralism Project web site for more fieldwork information on visiting a religious community (<http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~pluralism>).

IV

AMERICA'S MANY RELIGIONS

About This Screen: The Religions Page

In America's Many Religions, you are invited to explore the religious traditions of America. The movie *The Search for Meaning* allows you to hear Buddhist, Hindu, Mormon, Muslim, and Jain Americans talk about their religious faith. The introductory essay, "Rivers of Faith," talks about what a religious tradition is, using the analogy of a river: vibrant, dynamic, with many tributaries and often several forks and branches.

This section does not look at religion city by city but, rather, through the experience of the people of each religious tradition. Each red button leads you to an introductory screen for a particular religious tradition, where you will find some or all of the following options. The case of Buddhism is an example:

- **Introduction to Buddhism:** The menu item Introduction shows the topics that introduce the Buddhist religious tradition. This is intended especially for people who have no background in Buddhism.
- **Buddhism in America:** The menu item In America shows the topics that introduce the history and characteristics of Buddhism in the United States.
- **The Buddhist Experience:** The menu item Experience invites you to learn something about the lived religious experience of Buddhists: their places of worship, songs and devotions, and festivals and forms of social action.
- **Issues for Buddhists in America:** The menu item Issues gives you a sense of what things Buddhists care about and even argue about in America today.
- **Buddhism in the World: Timeline:** This timeline can be clicked on for an overview of Buddhist history.
- **Buddhism in America: Timeline:** This timeline can be clicked on for an overview of Buddhist history in the United States.
- **Multimedia:** The Multimedia box has two buttons. The Movie button launches the Introductory QuickTime movie *American Buddhists*, and the Buddhist Voices button takes you to a screen on which all five Buddhist movies and all six Buddhist audio files are listed. All the audio visuals can be accessed from this one screen, although they also appear with their icons on selected screens throughout the section. The Featured Voices button tells you the names of the people who are speaking in the movies and audio files.
- **Profiles:** The Profiles button takes you to the section of individual and organizational profiles. Under the menu item Profiles, you can meet people in each faith tradition and find out about the organizations that serve each community of faith.
- **Info:** Look for Info at the bottom of the Profiles list—or as the last menu item in the traditions treated more briefly. This valuable resource provides information about publications, magazines, and on-line resources for each tradition.

- **Buddhist Centers:** The Buddhist Centers button brings up a box containing the names of all the Buddhist centers profiled in the CD-ROM and gives you access to all these centers in one place.

Introductory Essay: “Rivers of Faith”

The religious traditions of humankind are shown here as circles, each containing a commonly used symbol of that tradition. But this visual image of separate boundaried circles—graphically convenient as it is—is highly misleading, for every religious tradition has grown through the ages in dialogue and historical interaction with others. Christians, Jews, and Muslims have been part of one another’s histories, have shared not only villages and cities, but ideas of God and of divine revelation. Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Muslims, and Sikhs have shared a common cultural milieu in India, while in East Asia the Buddhist, Taoist, and Confucian traditions are not only part of common cultures, but are also part of the complex religious inheritance of families and individuals whose lives are shaped by all three religions.

And there is a second caution: each tradition represented so neatly by a circle and a symbol has its own internal complexity which you will discover as you click one of those circles and begin to explore the tradition. The Native Peoples of America are not one, but many, each with its distinctive life-ways. The Hindu tradition is a rich tapestry of many streams of thought and devotion, many gods, and many regional cultures. The Christian, Buddhist, and Islamic traditions have spanned the world and speak in hundreds of languages and cultural contexts. Many traditions have their own complex internal disagreements and sectarian movements: Sunni and Shi’i Muslims; Orthodox and Reform Jews; Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Christians. And each tradition has many voices—women and men, traditionalists and reformers, clergy and laity.

And there is a third caution here as well: religious traditions are dynamic. Though they carry continuities through the centuries, they also have changed through the centuries and continue to change today. Religions are far more like rivers than like boundaried circles or even complex structures. Nourished by mountain springs, they gather tributaries, flow in full flood through the plains, divide into multiple branches, merge in confluence with other streams, and spread into vast deltas. Some eventually spend themselves and dry up, leaving behind the traces of an ancient riverbed. Others become so extensive and complex they constitute an entire river system. It is important to remember, then, that living religious traditions are in motion as each new generation makes that tradition its own—in its own time, and in its own ways. Religions are not simply sets of ideas or practices passed in a box from generation to generation, but living traditions of faith that must be appropriated anew.

Today all these rivers of faith are flowing through the landscape of America. Some have been here for centuries, and some are finding their way through a landscape that is relatively new for them. All of these religious traditions will continue to change in the new context of multireligious America. The history of religions is not over, but is an ongoing history, taking place today before our very eyes as new religious traditions begin to grow and flourish in the context of the United States. As a Vietnamese Buddhist monk told a Pluralism Project researcher in Phoenix, “We must take the plant of Buddhism out of the pot and plant it now in the soil of Arizona.” What is Buddhism becoming as it grows in the soil of Arizona? What is India’s Sikh tradition becoming as American Sikhs build a gurdwara, sing out their devotions, and celebrate their holidays in Oklahoma City? How are American Muslims passing on their most cherished values in Houston or Seattle? How are American Hindus reshaping the complex religious and regional traditions of India in Nashville? And how are America’s

Christians and Jews changing as they encounter new neighbors of other faiths and learn to work together in school boards and interfaith councils?

For Teachers and Students: Questions and Projects

The Religions section of ON COMMON GROUND may be used in many ways. It provides a format in which to explore the world's religious traditions, looking especially at their presence in the United States. It also provides an opportunity to get a more complex picture of America, by examining America's many religious traditions and taking into account, for example, its Buddhist, Sikh, or Muslim history. This section can also be used for more focused class use: a study unit on Islam, an exploration of Jewish or Hindu holidays, an investigation of women and religion. This section also raises the question of what a "religion" is. In fact, this section contains so much that here, above all, the teaching use of this CD-ROM should be driven by the interests of the students and the curricular needs of the class or study group.

1. Group Symposium: What Is Religion?

Read the introductory pages of "Rivers of Faith" and watch the movie *The Search for Meaning*, all the while keeping in mind the question "What is religion?"

- In *The Search for Meaning*, how do people express their faith? What do they say about the role of religion in their lives?
- Think about the question "What is religion?" for yourself, and try to define religion in a way that takes into account the many ways in which people are religious. Keep your definition in mind as you explore this section. How do you have to revise it as you learn more about each tradition?
- "Rivers of Faith" suggests that religious traditions, unlike these red buttons, do not have entirely separate histories and practices. Rather, traditions interact with one another, influence one another, and interpret one another. As you explore this section, can you find ways in which this is so?
- "Rivers of Faith" suggests that religious traditions are not monolithic but, instead, are internally complex. As you go through this section, think about this internal complexity. What are some of the different streams in these "rivers of faith"? Use the Bookmark to identify screens that express this internal diversity.
- "Rivers of Faith" shows that religions traditions are dynamic, always changing. As you read this section, think about some of the changes under way in the religions you are studying. Why are they changing?

After everyone in your group has had a chance to go through America's Many Religions, organize a symposium to discuss your "definitions" in light of what you have learned.

2. Exploring a Religious Tradition

Which religious tradition do you know the least about? The most about? What do you know about this religious tradition, and how do you know it? Which tradition would you like to know

more about? Do you have friends or relatives who are part of a religious tradition other than your own? Guided by these questions, choose a religious tradition that you would like to know more about as a place to begin looking at America's Many Religions.

- What are the central teachings, practices, or values in this tradition? Use the Bookmark to identify one or two screens that you believe are important.
- Study the experience of people in your tradition, using the Experience menu where it appears. Select two or three screens you would like to share with the people in your group or class.
- Look at the issues that concern people in your tradition today, using the Issues menu where it appears. Is there one that seems especially important to you?
- Find some of the places of worship of this tradition in the Landscape section, and note one or two that you find particularly interesting.
- If your tradition is listed in the Directory, find out whether it has many places of worship in the United States
- In the Profiles section, meet some of the people who are adherents of this tradition, and note one or two people you would like to introduce to the group.

Remember to use the Connections menu to make links within the tradition. Use the Bookmark to keep track of the pages to which you would like to refer later, and save your Bookmark list to use when preparing for your presentation to the others in your class or group.

Prepare a written or oral report highlighting the CD-ROM screens you found most interesting, and discuss what you found out, aiming your remarks at people who may know very little about this religious tradition.

For class or group discussion, delegate the responsibility for presenting each tradition to members of the group. This, of course, will take several sessions.

3. Exploring a Theme

Use the Comparative Thematic Index to investigate a theme across several traditions. Scroll down the list of topics in the left column of the Index. Are you interested in Altars? Chanting and Recitation? Ethics and Morality? Holidays, Holy Days, and Festivals? Icons, Images, and Symbols? Music? New Year Observances? Places of Worship and Contemplation? Prayer? Scripture and Sacred Texts? Women's Leadership and Roles? Click on a topic that interests you to find the materials in the CD-ROM that relate to it.

- In what ways are the materials you find in the Index comparable?
- What new words and religious categories have you learned in this exploration? What is puja? What is Vu-lan? What is a masjid?
- What differences and similarities have you noticed most while examining themes across traditions?

Take notes on your comparative thematic work, and share your discoveries and reflections with a small group of four or six participants.

4. *A Fresh Look at American Religious History*

Using the timelines, the In America section, and connecting links to other pages, look at the history of America's many religious traditions and at the historical essays of those traditions that do not have timelines (such as the Baha'i or Zoroastrian traditions). What can you find out about the history and range of America's Native peoples? What about the Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, and Sikh communities in the United States?

- When did people from these traditions of faith first come to this country?
- Why did they come? What were their expectations?
- When and where did they build their first religious institutions?
- What difficulties did they have in settling here? Did they face discrimination? If so, from whom and why?
- Does the CD-ROM contain photographs from the early days of this tradition in the United States?
- What are some of the most interesting or important landmark dates for each tradition?

As a group project, divide up the responsibility for surveying the history of various religious traditions in America. In your presentation, use the timeline or the historical essays to highlight important historical moments in each tradition, and show the others in your group some of the photos that bring the history to life.

5. *New Experiences of Immigration*

Many screens address immigration to the United States after 1965 and its role in shaping or reshaping American religious traditions. Most of the screens can be found in the sections under the In America menu. See, for example, "New Immigrant Christianity," "New Hindu Immigrants," "New Asian Immigration" (Buddhist section), and "New Immigration" (Islam).

- What changes have taken place in the United States as a result of immigration after 1965?
- How has the "new immigration" made people in each tradition more conscious of their own diversity?
- How do religious traditions define themselves anew as they find themselves on new soil and "On Common Ground" with people of other religions?

Use the Index to look for discussions of Immigration, Old and New.

6. *Chanting, Recitation, and Song*

Use some of the following screens and sound files to hear a sample of the chanting, recitation, or song in ON COMMON GROUND.

The Heart Sutra (Buddhist Experience: "Chanting the Sutras")
Psalm 23 (Christian Experience: "Songs and Psalms of Praise")

Ganesha Sharanam (Hindu Experience: “Ganesha, Lord of Beginnings”)
The Call to Prayer (Muslim Experience: “The Call to Prayer”)
Namaskara Mantra (Jain Experience: “Beginning with Praise”)
Shabbat Shalom (Jewish Experience: “Keeping Shabbat”)
Ek Onkar (Sikh Experience: “The Guru Granth Sahib”)

Find out as much as you can about the context and meaning of these chants, recitations, or songs. Using the text document, try out singing, chanting, or reciting them yourself.

7. Passing on the Tradition: The Next Generation

Look at the video segment from *Becoming the Buddha in L.A.*, in the Buddhist Experience section under “Becoming a Monk” and “From Street Gangs to Temple.” Here a young high school graduate becomes a Buddhist monk for the summer before heading to college. The parents of this young man and the initiating monk—like people in every religious tradition—are concerned with passing on their faith to the next generation.

- What do you think becoming a monk might mean to a young man undertaking this life for a summer or a short time?
- What are some of the other rites of passage or rites of initiation that enable a young person to come of religious age?
- What is the purpose of religious education programs and summer camps?

Use the Comparative Thematic Index (for example: Initiation, Summer Camps, Education) and the Issues menus to start your investigation. How do religious traditions pass on their faith and values to the next generation? How important are rites of initiation to signifying adulthood? What are the challenges and problems for young people claiming their religious tradition as adults? When do young people become “adults” in our society? Think about your own experience or that of people you know.

8. Contemporary Issues Forum

What are the issues that religious people are concerned about, discuss, and struggle with in each religious tradition today? In many of the religious traditions in the CD-ROM, you will find an Issues menu. Choose one of these religious traditions and study the issues, also using the Connections and the Comparative Thematic Index. Prepare a brief report on one or more of the issues you find interesting in the tradition you have chosen.

Present your report to your group, and discuss some of the similarities and differences in the concerns of people of different religious traditions. Are these concerns or issues distinctive to the American context? Or are they more global? Do smaller minority religious traditions seem to have concerns or issues different from those of the Christian majority?

V ENCOUNTERING RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

About This Screen: The Diversity Page

Encountering Religious Diversity opens the third section of the CD-ROM, with the invitation to explore the question of religious diversity as Americans have wrestled with it in the past and as we are challenged by it today. How have people dealt with religious difference, from the first encounters between Native Americans and Christian settlers and missionaries to the many encounters today in multireligious America?

In the movie *Building Bridges*, we hear Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, and Jews talking about their own experience of interreligious encounter. The introductory essay, “The Public Square,” printed in this guide, gives an overview of the entire section and asks about the public space in which we all meet as citizens.

Historical Perspectives makes thirteen stops along the path of encountering religious diversity, from the 1500s to the 1990s. At each stop are historical documents and excerpts from documents to enable you to read and study what people have said along the way. These documents reveal the debates, prejudices, struggles, and visions that have accompanied America's encounter with diversity. The on-screen Document button gives you access to the documents of each section. (A complete list of the documents in this section can be found in the Encountering Religious Diversity section of the Bibliography, under the menu item Resources.)

Today's Challenges looks at the situation in the United States in the 1990s. What are the new ways in which we encounter religious diversity, especially in our public life? What are some of the ways in which people of various religious traditions and communities view today's challenges? This section is also accompanied by a group of documents, case studies, and newspaper articles, including the Presbyterian “Guidelines on Interfaith Dialogue,” the PTA “Parents' Guide to Religion in the Public Schools,” a Buddhist statement on school prayer, the text of the first Muslim prayers in the U.S. Congress, and an Islamic pamphlet entitled “Needs of a Muslim Patient.” These documents, case studies, and news clippings provide important information as well as material to print out for study and discussion. The on-screen Document button gives you access to the documents of each section. (A complete list of the materials in this section can be found in the Encountering Religious Diversity section of the Bibliography, under the menu item Resources.)

Introductory Essay: “The Public Square”

The public square is a place of meeting. America has long had many kinds of meeting places—the town greens, meeting houses, and commons of New England, the gracious plazas at the heart of the Spanish towns like Santa Fe, the great green malls of Washington D.C. that have seen so many demonstrations and celebrations. Legislative halls and courthouses, zoning boards and city council meetings, schools and sports facilities may also be considered part of the public square. Whatever the public square may mean as a physical space, it is space that symbolizes the free encounter of peoples and ideas that is at the heart of civil society. It is the space—wherever that may be—in which people gather together for the work, the ceremony, the celebration of the whole, leaving for a moment the privacy of their homes and churches,

synagogues and mosques. This section of ON COMMON GROUND explores the debates of the American public square over the issue of religious difference.

In *Historical Perspectives* we take an historical look at the expanding religious diversity of America. The peoples of America have long encountered religious difference—from the variety of Native American tribal traditions which existed before Europeans arrived on American shores to the presence today of every major religious tradition of the world in the United States. We look at key moments in American history when the question of religious difference was discussed or debated.

Of course, the history of America's encounter with religious difference is closely related to the history of what came to be its dominant religious tradition, Christianity. But it is a distinct history, a history with at least two sides, usually many sides, and many perspectives. In the New World, Christians and Native Americans encountered each other, not only in the first decades of settlement, but in every decade since. Here in America Christians have also encountered other Christians—Puritans, Anglicans, and Catholics in colonial America, and Russian Orthodox, Samoan Methodists, Filipino Catholics, Korean Presbyterians, and Ghanaian Anglicans today.

Christians and Jews took measure of each other in eighteenth century New Amsterdam, Boston, and Savannah and have continued to discover new dimensions of Jewish-Christian relations for two centuries now. America's Muslim tradition goes back to at least the eighteenth century and the captives brought from Africa as slaves, at least ten percent of whom were Muslims. In the late nineteenth century Muslims came to the U.S. as immigrants from Lebanon and Syria, and in the late twentieth century from India and Pakistan. Chinese and Japanese workers first brought Buddhist, Taoist, and Confucian traditions to American shores in the nineteenth century. The last thirty years have seen the growth of new Asian immigration, both Buddhist and Christian—from Taiwan, China, Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, the Philippines, and Thailand.

For the past two hundred years, immigration has brought both dynamic growth and controversy to the American public square. The free exercise of religion enshrined in the Constitution's Bill of Rights has proven a sturdy foundation, making space for people of differing religious convictions. As America's ethnic and cultural diversity grew, the "melting pot" and the "symphony" became images for shaping the "pluribus" of diversity into the "unum" of American society.

Today's Challenges enables you to consider the American public square today. Here we define the term "pluralism" as meaning more than mere diversity, but the engagement with diversity that comes only from real encounter and dialogue. Where and in what ways is this engagement, this encounter taking place? There have been initiatives toward interreligious dialogue from Catholic and Protestant churches; there have been a multitude of new interreligious councils in cities and towns throughout the nation; and the 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions held in Chicago brought together in one place a new multireligious America that has never been witnessed before. Stereotyping, prejudice, and hate crimes are not a thing of the past, as some of our case-studies here demonstrate, but initiatives for local cooperation between Muslims and Methodists, Jews, Buddhists, and Catholics are providing new models for community life together.

What are some of the contexts in which Americans are challenged to think in new ways about our religious diversity and enter into dialogue with one another, different as we are? What are the issues? We look here at the interreligious encounter in zoning boards as new temples and mosques become part of American neighborhoods. We look at encounters in the courts as Native peoples, Afro-Caribbeans, or Sikhs raise important new questions in a nation committed to religious freedom. We look at the public schools as school boards, principals, and teachers deal with the contested issues of religious holidays, classroom prayer, and the

curriculum in a multireligious America. And what about hospitals? How are these important institutions beginning to address medical care for a widely diverse patient population?

For Teachers and Students: Questions and Projects

1. Encountering Religious Diversity

When you watch the movie *Building Bridges*, listen carefully to what each person has to say about religious differences and interreligious encounters.

- How do they suggest that people of one faith might view the diversity of faiths?
- What are their attitudes toward religious differences in U.S. society?
- What experiences of interfaith dialogue do they describe? Where do these dialogues take place?

Having thought about these questions and taken some notes, watch the movie again and discuss it in class or in a small group.

Make your own contribution to the movie by writing a one-page essay on the most important encounter you have had with someone of another faith. If you do not belong to a religious tradition, write about the most important encounter you have had with a person who is deeply religious.

- What was important about the encounter?
- What attitudes toward religion or religious differences were expressed in that encounter?
- Did you learn anything about the other person? About yourself?

2. Perspectives on Religious Differences

What attitudes toward religious difference have shaped the United States? What historical encounters of religions, cultures, races, and ethnicities does America bring to the multireligious challenges of today?

Use the Historical Perspectives section to think about these questions and to investigate the historical encounter of Americans of different religious traditions. Choose one of the selections under Historical Perspectives, study the essay, and read the documents. If the documents are long, divide them up among a group of three or four. Try to place them in their historical context. What perspectives do these documents offer on the encounters of people of different religious traditions?

For example, the “Native Americans and Christians” section contains letters and reports by early Christian missionaries, letters from Roger Williams and William Penn on the treatment of Native peoples, statements by Red Jacket and Chief Joseph about their experience with the newcomers to America, and two late-twentieth-century documents—the Native American Religious Freedom Act and “A Public Declaration and Apology” made by church leaders to the Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest.

- Have each person in the group read one or two of these documents. What interesting information do the documents reveal?
- What attitudes and experiences have shaped the encounters between Native Americans and Christians?
- What issues are still at stake in that encounter today?

Refer to the Native Peoples section and the Christian section of the CD-ROM. Use the Connections to read Profiles of Native Americans today, some of whom identify themselves as both Native and Christian. And look at “Encounter in the Courts” in the Today's Challenges section.

3. *Freedom of Religion, Then and Now*

Freedom of religion is promised in the United States Constitution. What was included in this important document? In what ways has the principle of religious freedom been tested as America has become more religiously diverse? What are the new challenges in making good on the promise of religious freedom now?

Read the sections “Establishment or Tolerance” and “The ‘Free Exercise’ of Religion,” and divide into groups to study the documents. Follow the Connections to the court cases, the public schools, and the other public issues of religious freedom in America today.

- How were the principles of the First Amendment formulated?
- What does it mean, in practical terms, to speak of the “free exercise” of religion and the “nonestablishment” of religion?
- What do you think Tocqueville meant when he said that in America, religion and democracy march in the same direction, rather than being at odds with each other?

In Today's Challenges, one of the documents associated with the essay “From Diversity to Pluralism” is a statement made by American Catholics and Muslims in 1976, affirming the importance of America's commitment to freedom of religion.

- What distinctive perspectives do Catholics and Muslims bring to the question of religious freedom?
- Do you think majority and minority groups have different perspectives on this question?

If you are willing to tackle the language of the Supreme Court, look at “Encounter in the Courts” in the Today's Challenges section. Divide into teams to study and discuss the peyote case and the Santeria case and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

- What do you think are the issues in each case?
- What parts of the judges' statements impressed you the most?
- What was the purpose of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act? This Act was overturned by the Supreme Court in 1997. Look up the text of this decision on the Supreme Court's web page and find out why [*City of Boerne v. Flores* No. 95–2074 (1997)].

4. *Melting Pot or Symphony?*

The melting pot image has been used to convey the unifying force of American culture, making unity out of diversity. Investigate “God’s Melting Pot!” and read the two related documents.

- Where did we get this image of a melting pot?
- Do you think this image is a good one? An accurate one?

Explore Horace Kallen’s idea of the symphony, looking at “The Right to Be Different.”

- What are the challenges to the melting pot idea?
- What does “cultural pluralism” mean?
- What are the advantages of the symphony image of making unity out of diversity?
- How does Horace Kallen think that differences and oneness should be negotiated in a democracy?

What is the “triple melting pot”? Examine “A Three Religion Country,” and read the excerpt from Will Herberg’s *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*.

- Why does Herberg call America a “three religion country”?
- What does he see as the dynamics of the melting pot?
- Using Herberg’s arguments, do you think we will now have multiple melting pots, for example, Muslim, Buddhist, Sikh, and Hindu?

5. *Being American: Voices and Perspectives*

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke of religious and ethnic diversity in his speech “The World House.” In the documents section of “A New Multireligious America,” read the excerpt from this speech. Read the Islamic contribution on being a Muslim American, and read the speech by the Buddhist on the occasion of the Bicentennial. Look back at the previous section and find what John F. Kennedy had to say about being a Catholic candidate for president.

- What do these voices contribute to the discussion of what it means to be an American today?
- What do they have to say about religious diversity in America?

6. *What Are Stereotypes?*

We often have fixed images of people of another religion, some of which may be distorted, partial, incorrect, or negative. Look at “Stereotypes and Prejudice,” with its related documents and various connections. You might also investigate “Violence and Vandalism.”

- What kinds of stereotypes and prejudice do these sections describe?
- What do you think is the cause of prejudice and negative stereotypes?
- Cite other examples of stereotypes or prejudice from your own experience.

- What are some of the ways in which negative stereotypes can be combated? Can you find examples of combating negative stereotypes in ON COMMON GROUND?

Use the web sites listed for such groups as the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the Council on American—Islamic Relations (CAIR), and the National Conference to find out what the situation is now and how these groups deal with problems of prejudice, stereotypes, and violence.

Stereotypes and prejudices are not new, as you will see when you go through the Historical Perspectives section. Use the Index and explore Connections. What other evidence of group stereotyping and prejudice do you find?

7. New Encounters: Where Do We Meet? How Is It Going?

Investigate some of the ways in which people of different faiths meet one another today. Using ON COMMON GROUND draw a hypothetical town map. Where do people of different faiths meet? At zoning boards? Neighborhoods? Law courts? Religious institutions? Interfaith councils? Schools? Colleges? Hospitals? Write down both the kinds of places and the kinds of encounters that might take place.

Using a map of your own town, explore and report on where and in what ways interreligious encounters are taking place.

- Does your town have an interfaith council? Who belongs to it? What sorts of things does it do?
- How many faiths are represented in your town's schools or colleges? What are the schools' policies regarding religion? What new problems and opportunities have arisen?
- Are any new holidays, festivals, fairs, or parades celebrated publicly in your town?
- Do any of the cases in the courts or zoning boards involve legal questions about the encounter of different cultures or religions?
- Did you find instances of neighborhood cooperation?
- Did you find instances of tensions, hostility, or vandalism?
- What is reported in the religion section of your local newspaper?

Please send the Pluralism Project a copy of your town map and report. Send a brief report to our web page (<http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~pluralism>).

8. A Forum on Religion in the Public Schools: What Are the Issues?

Three sections of ON COMMON GROUND concern religion and the public schools. What guidelines have been established regarding religion and the public schools? How should the school curriculum treat religion? How should the schools observe religious holidays and deal with the issue of prayer?

Form three groups to read the different sections and documents. Then hold a forum or a series of forums in which one member represents and explains the position of each of the following groups:

- The secretary of education, U.S. Department of Education

- The Interreligious Advisory Board of the Dallas Independent School District
- The cosigners of “Religion: Questions and Answers”
- The PTA’s “A Parent’s Guide to Religion in the Public Schools”
- The Muslims on the Council on Islamic Education
- The Freedom Forum on its curriculum, “Living with Our Deepest Differences”
- The California State Board of Education on its “Moral and Civic Education, and Teaching About Religion”
- The Buddhist Churches of America on the question of school prayer.
- The Islamic Society of North America, publishers of the pamphlet “You’ve Got a Muslim Child in Your School”
- The cosigners of “Religious Holidays in the Public Schools”

In preparing for the forum, you might interview several teachers, your school principal, or members of your local school board to get their perspectives on the problems or questions in your school system. You might also interview independent school administrators and faculty to get a sense of how these issues are treated outside the public school system.

When you have your forum, you might decide to invite your school administrators or principal or those of nearby public schools. Through the Internet, you might access the proposals to amend the Constitution to permit greater freedom of religious practice, and discuss whether or not they are needed.

9. Participation: The Key to the Public Square

Beginning with “Encounter in the Public Square” and using its documents and connections, examine some of the ways in which the “public square” is benefiting from the participation of people of various religious traditions.

- What does it mean to “participate” in American public life?
- How do Christians, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, and others participate?
- What are the markers or indicators of “participation”?
- In what ways do interfaith or interreligious groups participate? (See The Interfaith Movement.)

A Hindu festival procession in Queens or San Francisco, a Sikh parade, an official civic observance of a Muslim holiday—all are signs of a new configuration in the public square. Watch your local newspapers and contribute new stories and examples to the Pluralism Project web site. Explore Internet links to traditions (found in the Info sections) for news, events, and conferences.

10. E Pluribus Unum?

“Out of many, One” was the motto of the United States proposed by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. It probably meant “Out of many colonies, one nation,” but it has been interpreted more broadly to refer to the one people shaped by the many peoples from all over the world who have come to America.

- Can America really become one people from so many peoples?
- Is there too much *pluribus* and not enough *unum*?
- Or is there too much *unum* and not enough room for *pluribus*?

Explore Historical Perspectives with these questions in mind. You might, for example, look at the debate over Chinese exclusion, with some people contending that the “civilization of Christ” and the “civilization of Confucius” are like oil and water and cannot mix. Read the document excerpts from the Chinese exclusion debate.

- What other voices have insisted that America is threatened by various kinds of diversity? Look at the essay “Xenophobia: Closing the Door” and its related documents.
- What groups do these other voices fear? What fears do they have for America?
- What voices have taken a more positive and confident approach to America's diversity?
- What differences do you think matter most? Those of race, ethnic group, or religion?

Watch the movie *Voices of America*, and discuss it in light of the questions raised by the motto *E Pluribus Unum*.

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ISBN 0-231-11192-4



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