

## SOCIAL /EXTRA-CURRICULAR DOMAIN

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### Domain Introduction

This section of the project is interested in examining how the religious lives of students manifests in the lives of students in general at Case Western Reserve University. Our questions in the larger survey were directed to see how students interacted with other students in social/ situations and how interaction is impacted by their beliefs and practices. Most of the research and information came from observing and engaging religious groups on campus to see how they were manifestations of religious life. Our guidance in choosing this particular direction came from Diana Eck and her book Religious on Campus.

By both observing religious and pseudo religious groups on campus, we saw how interaction within homogeneous religious groups guided student's social lives and how interaction in diverse groups with many different backgrounds acted in religious manners as well as how they dealt with religion. Our goal in this section of project was to map the way students lived religion in groups and through their interaction with others on campus. We did so in three sub sections, through a broad based survey administered as part of the larger Pluralism Project survey, and observations of religious groups and non-religious groups.

### Sub Section One: Analysis of Survey Results

#### Introduction

A number of questions included in the CWRU Pluralism Project survey provided useful information pertaining to the Social/Extracurricular domain. The results offer insight in how the social activities and choices of CWRU students interface with their religious traditions.

One of the first questions on the survey asked students about their personal involvement in religious organizations:

Are you involved in any religious groups on or off campus? (E.g., Muslim Student Assoc., Bible Study, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, a synagogue, church, mosque, temple, etc.) Please list:

Students responded with a wide variety of religious organizations both on and off campus, with 33% of respondents listing some type of religious activity. Many individuals reported involvement with three or more organizations. These statistics were surprising, as we had expected to see a smaller number of students involved in any type of religious organization.

### Religiously Impacted

The central goal of the Social/Extracurricular group was to ascertain to what degree religion affected students' lives and social behaviors. Several questions on the survey were designed to help answer this question. One question was intended to determine how students saw religion affecting their lives in general:

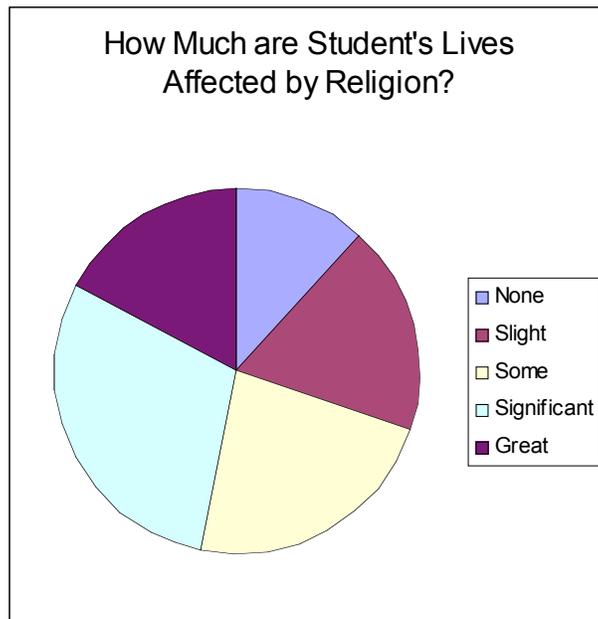


Fig. 1: How much effect does religion/spirituality have on your life? [1= none, 3= some, 5= great]

As shown in Figure 1, over two thirds of the students surveyed felt that religion had at least “some” effect on their lives. While this provides a general view of the level of impact religion has in students' lives, it was important to discover more specific ways in which this influence was felt.

### Religious Impact on Social Interaction

Religion often has a strong bearing on various relationships in a person's life. This observation holds true among CWRU students as shown in Figure 2.

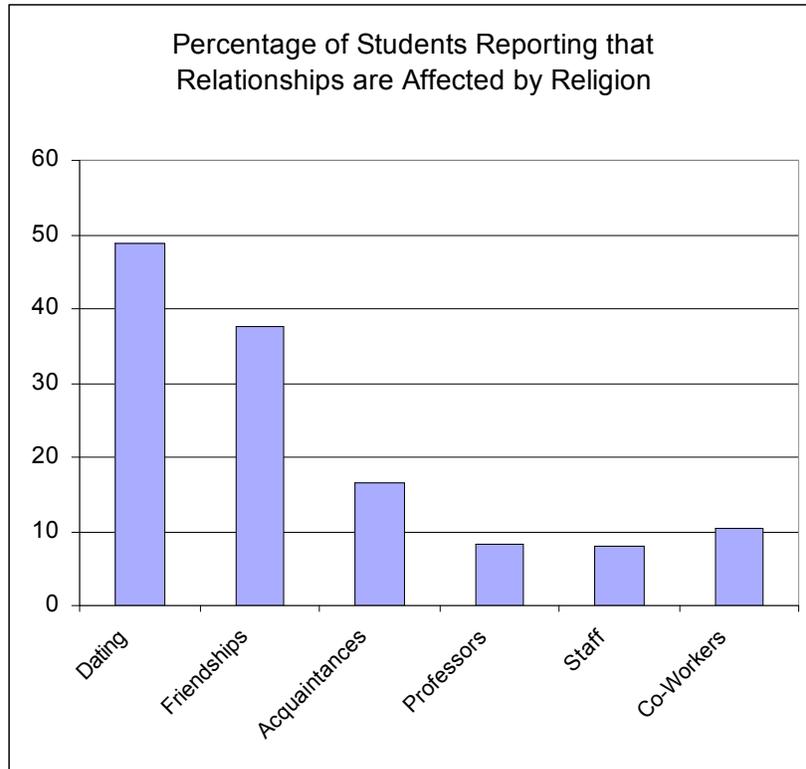


Fig. 2: Which relationships, if any, are affected by your religious perspectives and/or perspectives about religion (circle all that apply): dating, close friendships, acquaintances, professors, staff, coworkers

An interesting aspect of the results shown in Figure 2 is that the level of importance of religion in students' various relationships seems to be directly proportional to the level of intimacy in the relationship. Hence, religion has the strongest affect on dating relationships and close friendships and the weakest affect on relationships between students and university faculty and staff.

### Comfort and Judgment on Campus

Religious traditions often exert strong influence on the choices made by individuals in various social circumstances. The pressure exerted by religion on students' social decisions can often create feelings of detachment or "otherness" among students of various religious traditions. We asked students if they have ever felt alienated due to their religious beliefs regarding several activities commonly encountered in the college experience. The results are shown in Figure 3.

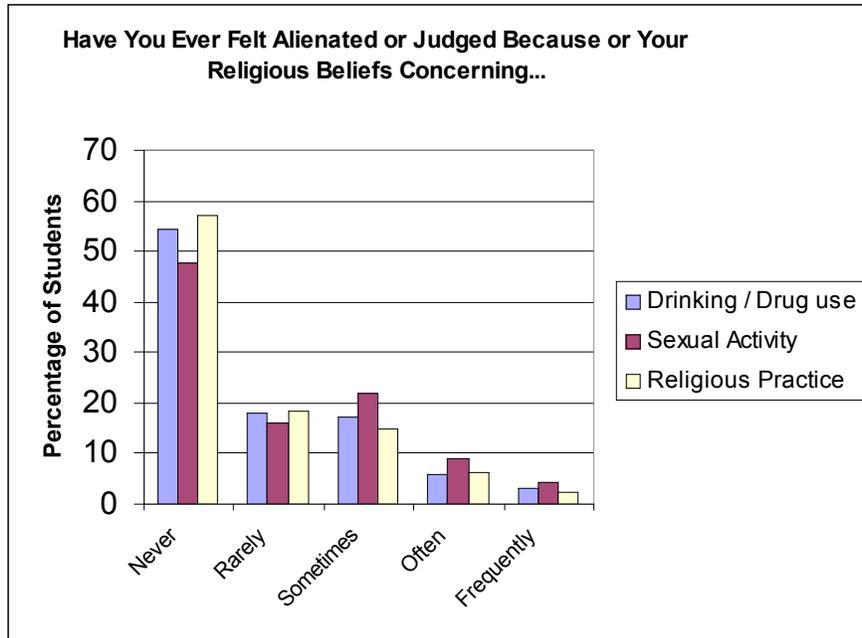


Fig. 3: Have you ever felt alienated or negatively judged in any of the following areas because of your religious perspectives, or lack thereof, concerning ...  
 drinking and drug use or abstinence [1=never, 3=sometimes, 5=frequently]  
 sexual practice or abstinence  
 observance of religious holidays and/or other religious practices

As shown in Figure 3, CWRU students felt alienated least often regarding religious practices and most alienated due to their religious perspectives on sexual activity. The fact that for each of the three subcategories listed in this question nearly half of all students responding reported never having felt estranged due to their religious tradition may reflect the relatively high level of religious tolerance prevalent on campus.

#### Impact of College on Religious Life

While religion often affects an individual's social choices and behavior, the opposite is often also true. Changing social environments, such as leaving home to attend college at CWRU, can have a serious impact on a student's religious identity. Figure 4 shows how students characterized the effect of attending college on their own spirituality.

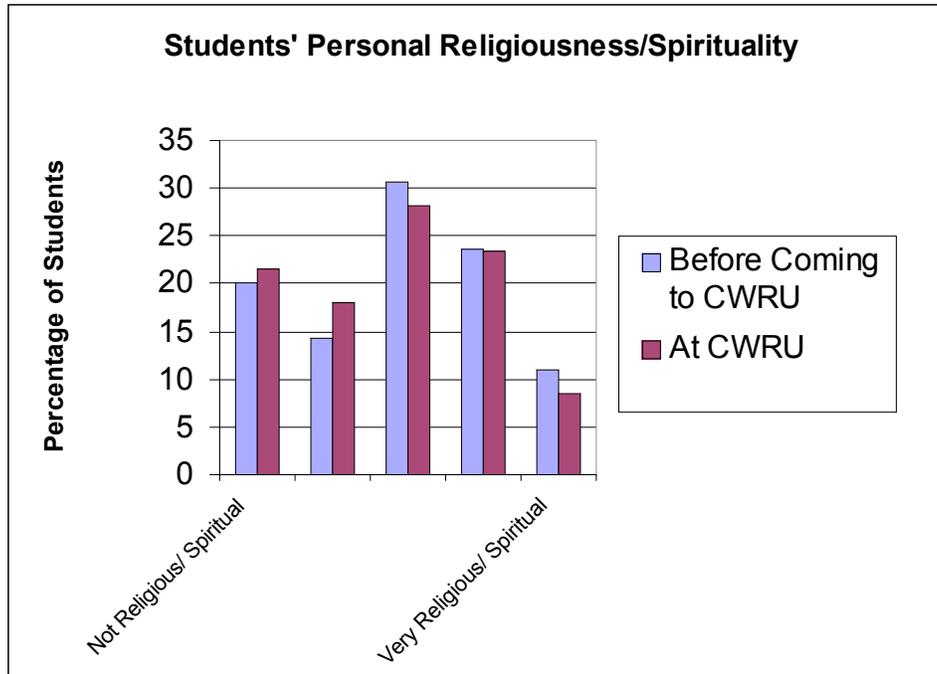


Fig. 4: How would you describe your personal religion/spirituality prior to coming to CWRU?

How would you describe you personal religion/spirituality now?

As can be seen in Figure 4, students generally considered themselves to be slightly more spiritual/religious before coming to CWRU. This data is consistent with nationwide data suggesting that individuals break away from their own religious tradition to a certain extent during college years.

## Sub Section Two: Religious Groups on Campus

### Introduction

In order to try to understand what the religious groups on campus do- the activities available to students, the purposes they serve, and the nature of their meetings, the Social group attended several group meetings. We divided all extra-curricular groups into two sections: those that are explicitly religious, and those that do not consider themselves to be religious. Below we will discuss what we observed and the conclusions we have drawn from those observations.

### InterVarsity

An InterVarsity large group meeting was observed. There were about 15 attendees at the meeting. The meeting began with small talk among the group members;

they chatted amongst themselves until about 15 minutes after the meeting was supposed to start. During that time several students approached the researcher to find what the purpose of the visit was. At that time, the researcher became more of a participant than an observer and began to ask questions about their group. This questioning revealed the following:

- Their mission statement reads “IV at CWRU is dedicated to adding people to our family who seek, know, and show Jesus.”
- They also gave reports about their evangelistic activities for that week and encouraged each other to continue.
- They have large group meetings, small bible studies, retreats, fellowship activities, and evangelistic activities.
- They do “prayer evangelism” on campus
- The meeting was structured much like a church service after the initial chatting. The students started with a prayer and then sang worship songs and then moved to a message given by a guest speaker.
- Most students go to different churches but they do go in small groups together

This group was the most openly evangelistic group encountered. It is a big focus of their meetings, although they also focus on personal worship and fellowship. As stated earlier, they do “prayer evangelism”, which means that they approach students during designated times at the student center (Thwing Center) and ask if they are in need of prayers. They then invite the student to pray along with them. They report back to each other on the results of this evangelistic effort each week in their large meeting. As one student said, “This is the best way we have found to reach other students and let them know that there are caring Christian people on CWRU campus.”

## Chi Alpha

At the Chi Alpha meeting that was attended, it was a special “testimonial” night. There was a guest there to give his testimonial about how he became a Christian and the Chi Alpha members were asked to bring friends (non-Christians) to the meeting. The researcher asked the leaders several questions about their regular meetings since it would not be possible to observe an actual meeting.

- Chi Alpha usually has about 20 people at their large meetings. They also hold bible studies, retreats, and fellowship activities.
- Their missions statement is: "A group of Christians seeking to grow in our relationship with God and to reach out to our campus"
- They do not consider themselves to be evangelistic in focus.
- Their meetings follow the schedule of a traditional church service with singing, prayer, and teaching.

There was a disconnect between the group's perceived purpose and its actual purpose. The leaders of the group did not consider their purpose to be evangelistic, but the meeting attended clearly had that specific purpose. One of the student leaders that volunteered the following information, "We are more interested in serving our members' needs than in evangelizing. We do that some, but not too much." However, the large meeting that night seemed to serve no other purpose than to evangelize. The students seemed very excited about the prospect of converting people to Christianity.

### United Protestant Campus Ministries (UPCaM)

When this group was visited, the researcher was there only for the end of the meeting so an interview with the leaders was conducted. The end of the meeting included discussion around the table and finishing dinner. The atmosphere was very relaxed and informal. It was a good setting to get an understanding of UPCaM's focus.

- There are usually between 8-20 students at meetings.
- The mission statement: "UPCaM provides opportunities for community service, study, worship, fellowship, and pastoral care, as well as an open and respectful forum in which to explore questions about religion, individual beliefs, and personal values. UPCaM works to produce Christian leaders who will strive to create caring and inclusive communities and to use their faith and love to deal effectively with personal, social and world issues."
- They focus on discussions not only of religious issues, but of current events and political issues.
- They stress that they are open to inviting people to their group no matter where they are on their personal faith journey.
- UPCaM's activities include Sunday night group suppers, activist causes, community service
- They stress that they are a non-proselytizing group

This group was unique. Instead of focusing only on worship at their meetings, they talk about issues that students are concerned about and try to foster an open forum for thought and discussion. They are the most liberal group on campus and take an active part in many of the campaigns on campus.

### Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)

When the meeting was scheduled to start, only about half of the students had arrived and had the chairs arranged in a circle. Most of the students seemed to know each other, and seemed curious about why their meeting was under observation. The CWRU Pluralism Project was briefly explained to them, and they reciprocated with positive feedback regarding our efforts to map the undergraduate religious landscape of CWRU.

Once it seemed like most students had arrived, everyone went around the circle giving their names and then participated in a few icebreaker activities.

The lesson largely centered on the virtue of patience, with the discussion leader reading and commenting on verses from the New and Old Testaments, specifically James, chapter 5, and the Book of Job. After the meeting, people stuck around to eat snacks and chat with each other.

- Meetings generally attract 15 - 25 people.
- FCA's mission statement reads: "To present to athletes and coaches and all whom they influence the challenge and adventure of receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, serving him in their relationships and in the fellowship of the church."
- Their meetings are weekly, non-denominational Bible studies that incorporate prayer, teaching, and discussion.
- Other activities include: women's group meetings, men's group meetings, and retreats.

FCA seems like a pretty moderate group. Most people seemed to know each other, but there were at least 4 or 5 new people present at the meeting. The participants seem to represent a wide spectrum of familiarity with the Bible. For example, many of the students knew exactly where to find the sections of the Bible that were being read from, and others either did not have Bibles at all or didn't know where in their Bibles to turn to. Additionally, the group leaders stressed that the meetings were open to everyone, not just to athletes.

#### Hindu Student Association (HSA)

Two HSA meetings were observed. At the first one, only one student showed up so it was cancelled. However, the student that did show was one of the group's organizers and she was able to provide some general information about HSA. She said that meetings usually begin with the chanting of "Om," and prayers to the sun god. This part usually lasts about 30 minutes, and then they engage in text study.

At the second meeting, 3 students showed up (1 male and 2 females) and participated in text study. Everyone took off their shoes before entering the room, but they did not do the "Om" chanting until the end of the meeting, and there were no prayers made to the sun god. They read from one set of Hindu sacred texts, the Upanishads, discussed any questions they had, and gave personal interpretations of the text.

The group claimed that this turnout was unusually low, and that they usually have 5 - 10 people at Sunday meetings. They had a short discussion at the end of the meeting to discuss why their turnout has been so low lately, and what they can do to improve the situation. One reason given for the poor attendance was based on the fact that HSA had very recently held an event where they invited a speaker and provided dinner for 50 - 60 people, and thus HSA members were simply taking a break from all the activity and skipping a few meetings. They agreed to hold a meditation session at the

next meeting in order to help boost attendance.

- This is HSA's fifth semester at CWRU, and weekly meetings supposedly attract 5 – 10 people. However, the attendance figures were lower during observations.
- In March 2003, HSA held a dinner with a speaker and authentic food, with approximately 50 – 60 people in attendance.
- There are about 60 people on the HSA email list.
- Mission statement: "To help students share understandings in their quests to understand Hinduism."
- Activities include: prayer, recitations, text studies, discussion, community service (in collaboration with Alpha Phi Omega and the Asian American Alliance), and cultural dinners.
- Meetings are held every Sunday afternoon and are usually text studies. This year, they are focusing on the Upanishads. Last year, they read and discussed the Bhagavad Gita.

HSA's stated purpose does not seem to encompass everything that the group attempts to accomplish. Not only does HSA attempt to help Hindu students understand their own tradition, but it also serves to foster fellowship among Hindu students and raise awareness about Hinduism on campus.

JewCWRU (formerly the Jewish Student Activities Board, or JSAB)

JewCWRU, during the period of meeting observations, was no longer holding organizational meetings. However, an interview was conducted with its president. He stressed that JewCWRU is first and foremost a cultural organization, but is also a religious group because it does promote a religious identity. He also spoke about how important it is for JewCWRU to foster a sense of community among Jewish students on campus: "Many view Judaism as a religion, but it really started out as a community. Religious laws came later. Community is the most important thing in Judaism, and it is also the focus of our group."

- Organizational meetings, held in preparation for upcoming JewCWRU events, attract about 10 students. Smaller events draw 15 – 20, larger events attract 25 – 35, and the annual Matzah Ball draws over a hundred. There are 200+ undergraduate students on the email list.
- Mission statement: "To build a stronger Jewish community on campus and to promote religious understanding of what Judaism is."
- Activities include: cultural dinners, community service, text study, iceskating, retreats, trips to kosher restaurants, and shabbatons (shabbat dinners with other Jewish student organizations from the area).

MSA (Muslim Students Association) and JewCWRU have in the past done joint community service events, and JewCWRU is planning to hold events in the future with the Newman Catholic Center. A regular number of non-Jewish students, interested in the cultural aspects of Judaism, attend JewCWRU meetings.

Although JewCWRU does not have ties to a particular synagogue in Cleveland, some JewCWRU students participate in weekly PTA (Pizza & Torah Association) nights, where students can eat kosher pizza and study the Torah with two Hasidic rabbis. Additionally, there are also informal Monday and Wednesday text study meetings held in Hillel but, although most participants are JewCWRU members, these meetings are not officially held by JewCWRU.

During the interview, the president also spoke about the Jewish fraternity on campus, Alpha Epsilon Pi. CWRU's chapter has about 30 undergraduate members, all male. It uses Hillel's facilities, and attempts to create a Jewish community on campus. Although it does some Jewish programming, it is primarily a social group. However, it does help educate members about Judaism and religious practices. Additionally, there is an unofficial, political group on campus called the Israeli Programming Committee (IPC). IPC does not purport to be a specifically Jewish group, and JewCWRU voted to not be associated with IPC because JewCWRU does not want to involve itself in politics.

#### Muslim Student Association (MSA)

Like JewCWRU, MSA, at the time of our observations, was no longer holding meetings. However, its president was able to provide some information about the group and its activities on campus.

- There are about 30 active members in MSA who attend meetings. Approximately 80 students are on the mailing list.
- MSA is a religious organization that has been on campus since the 1980's. Its mission statement reads: "To promote Islam and increase awareness of Islamic issues with Muslims and non-Muslims alike through programs and events open to all students."
- Activities include: Friday prayers at the Uqbah Mosque Foundation, weekly study circles in prayer rooms in Yost Hall, Islamic Awareness week, speakers, dinners, community service, and social gatherings such as ice skating and picnics. Recently, MSA has co-sponsored numerous forums on peace and the war in Iraq.
- MSA students attend Friday Prayers at the Uqbah Mosque Foundation located off Stokes Boulevard. On campus some students attend a weekly study circle in the Yost Hall prayer rooms.
- MSA works with several local mosques, including Uqbah Mosque Foundation located off Stokes Boulevard, the Islamic Center of Greater Cleveland, and the Muslim Association of Cleveland East.

Seemingly, MSA primarily serves to be an Islamic resource on campus. Not only does the organization provide support for Muslim students, but also education about Islamic values for non-Muslim students. In addition, MSA tries to be involved in community service and other campus events to help display these principles.

### Latter-Day Saint Student Association (LDSSA)

The president of the Latter-Day Saint Student Association provided the CWRU Pluralism Project with some general information about its membership and activities. LDSSA is a very small group and thus does not hold official meetings on CWRU's campus. Instead, the CWRU LDSSA is incorporated into a local Latter-Day Saints branch named the "Wade Park Branch." It is a Young Single Adults branch of the church, which means that all the members are unmarried and between the ages of 18-30.

- LDSSA is an undergraduate organization with about 7 regular members.
- LDSSA's mission statement reads: "Recognizing the many choices that confront students attending CWRU, the LDSSA is established to help students have a balanced secular and spiritual education experience."
- LDSSA's first big event on campus, "Chastity Week," was held this semester and was co-sponsored with the Newman Catholic Student Association, the Muslim Student Association, and the Baha'i Club.
- Most members of the group attend services every Sunday. In addition to that, there are usually other church activities going on during the week that students can attend. LDSSA's president informed me that she is usually at church three times a week, and sees that as being "pretty average."

The observed purpose of LDSSA appears to be a combination of support on campus for LDS students and a link to the local LDS congregation in Cleveland.

## Sub Section Three: Religion and Non-religious Groups

### Introduction

The goal of this section of the Pluralism Project was to examine the religious life of CWRU undergraduate students from a wider perspective than what is traditionally viewed as religious. We saw that religion happens in a variety of shapes and forms and wanted to insure that all avenues for a student's religious life were explored to effectively map it onto the campus' religious beliefs, practices and diversity. Thus, we sought out non-religious groups to see in what ways religion influenced them and how these secular institutions generate religious experiences.

## Methods

We searched the social, political, cultural, and academic groups on campus and took a sampling of these groups upon which to focus further observations. We read most of the recognition forms on file with the Undergraduate Student Government and selected approximately 18 groups to focus on in the search for more information, which was conducted through two general avenues:

- Personal interaction with members and non-members in connection with the groups; and
- observations of each group's meetings, dynamic, interactions and content.

### Groups Targeted:

Thai Student Association  
Undergraduate Indian Student Association  
Middle Eastern Student Association  
African American Society  
Catalyst: Students for Social Justice  
Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance  
CWRU Libertarians  
CWRU Right to Life  
CWRU Swing Club  
Sierra Club-  
Aikido Club  
CWRU Medieval Society  
CWRU Battlebots Club  
Anime Society  
Magic the Gathering Club  
One CWRU fraternity  
Pakistani Student Association

It is essential to question what these groups can show us from the perspective of religion. In many ways religion plays the largest role in shaping the lives of individuals. The setting of a university is no different. These groups reflect a way for members to grow in the context of the group. Our section is broken up into three sections based on three issues relevant to secular groups: how the groups cope with religious diversity, ritual practices of the groups, and religious commitment to the group's substance and members.

### Coping with Religious Diversity: Dealing With Religious Content within Non-Religious/Quasi-religious Groups

This seemed to be a universal issue. All of the groups we observed had to deal with religious diversity and religious issues. From the information provided by the surveys, we can see that only about 30% of students are involved in one or more religious

groups. However, a large portion of people expressed how their lives are effected, in many cases significantly, by religion. This helps to prove (illustrate?) how religion plays a large role in students' lives and is carried in to groups that they participate in. A person's values and beliefs grow in the context of a group and we found religion as an element of almost all the groups we focused our attention on. Essentially, how do student groups deal with religion in their secular groups?

#### Case 1: Right to Life

The CWRU Right to Life is a non-religious group, but a great deal of its content with a religious perspective, and underlying religious issues. At one of their meetings, the group members, without once mentioning their own particular religious biases explicitly, had a long discussion about a talk they had attended where Supreme Court Judge Scalia, spoke on "Religion and Laws." Many of the members in the group have strong religious beliefs that act to guide them in their choices. Topics such as this are not unusual for a group which discusses personal issues such as abortion. Religious views are continually present in how the group members express their opinions even though the group is non-religious in nature. Religion is a large part of the subtext of this secular group.

#### Case 2: Middle Eastern Club

Diversity in cultural clubs brings about the issue, quite strongly, of how you deal with religious differences. In the Middle Eastern Students Association, a non-religious group, we did find that they occasionally have problems dealing with religiously- oriented issues. Sometimes simple things, for example scheduling events, become a problem because of religious holidays. Last year their dinner was scheduled on the Eve of Easter, which presented problems for some Christian members. With the range of diversity in the group, it is hard to accommodate everyone.

The group also has a devout orthodox Christian as its vice president and a Muslim treasurer. Their beliefs do play into how the group is run. As much as they might try to separate the two, it is nearly impossible to put beliefs and feelings aside when making decisions. The lives of its many members are guided by their religious beliefs and this gives them a forum to explore and share with others of similar and different faiths. They do have religious speakers that talk to the group who sometimes share extreme views. Although they attempt to maintain continuity in the group by limiting extremism, sometimes views that are very strong come out. This is a social group that in many ways has strong ties to several faiths and cultures. They share in and try to respect each other's religious beliefs, which are constantly and issue for all that participate.

#### Conclusions

Religion is a part of students' lives and they bring their religious views with them in every situation they encounter. Groups have to deal with these issues and the nature of

the group depends on how important and sensitive these issues will be. RTL is a fairly homogeneous group regarding religious beliefs. While it is not a religious group, it deals with religious content on a frequent basis. On the other hand, the Middle Eastern Student's Association is a diverse group with many different traditions and the potential for even more diversity than it presently has. Its members need to be conscious about the religious differences and sensitive to individuals' needs. Even within secular groups, members have to deal with religious issues. The way they deal with them and reveal the tensions around religion in people's social life and the importance of including it in an open dialogue

### Ritual Practices- Evidence of Religious Traditions in Secular Groups

One aspect of a religion is the way in which practice is institutionalized. That practice takes on significance and meaning and becomes a religious experience, a ritual. Rituals are not only found in sacred places of worship. They are present also in our daily lives. Groups that are non-religious had ritual practices within the group. This symbolized the importance of and the respect to be had for what was going on and the interactions taking place. In the same way that religious rituals have a deep meaning for those involved, these rituals provided a similar feeling.

#### Case 1: Fraternity

In the fraternity observed, it was evident that its members placed importance on secrecy and pride. Each fraternity has different rituals that are part of their traditions. These stem from the values and goals set forth by the founders of each specific fraternity. The rituals are secret and only known and participated in by brothers of that chapter. These are very special events. Many people who are involved have their lives shaped in and around the ideals and social events with the fraternity. In some ways this becomes a lifestyle just as a religion can become a lifestyle for a person.

The misconception is that these groups are merely social. To the contrary, quite often they are. close-knit groups very similar to families. The rituals and beliefs in the fraternity act as a form of religion away from home. In a tradition reminiscent of many monastic cultures, members of fraternities refer to one another as brothers. Their membership in these groups has transformed their relations to one another. They have entered into a new bond with a familial bond, a blood bond, a religious bond of commitment and sacred meaning.

#### Case 2: Aikido

This group takes the culture of another and in a sense transforms it into its own. The group's activities are very physical in nature, but challenges the mind in terms of discipline. Like any sport, the practice of techniques is how you learn and grow. These group members embrace another culture and incorporate it into their own lives. Body and

mind are brought together in many rituals that are repeated religiously. They wear ceremonial clothes, which have special significance to them. The members of this group also bow and show respect in ways foreign to traditional American culture. These actions and practices mean something more to the members of this group and, while not being explicitly religious, can often appear religious to observers.

### Case 3: Anime

To the attendants of the Anime society, the event seemed less about social interaction and more about personal practice. Their weekly three hour meetings takes place much like church sermons; attendants arrive, some chat with each other, some sit alone, and sit with their constituents. The event can most definitely be social, but it can also be very personal since many people sit individually, hear the sermon of the particular film for the week, and leave with little to no interaction with others. They have a common bond with each other via the films and animation, but it seemed to be very personal to each individual member.

### Case 5: Sierra Club

Sierra Club meetings begin with a session of guided meditation referred to as “woo woo time.” It is a time when each person reflects and relaxes in order to clear their mind and body. This seemed to be a very enjoyable part of the meeting for those who took part in it. It was a time when they could escape from everyday life and enter a new place. Most significantly, it was a way to focus on the material and turn activism into a meaningful experience.

### Conclusions

Many groups have practices which make people feel special or part of a unique group. For example, many students who attend CWRU Film Society screenings often yell responses to the cheesy introduction, creating a scene reminiscent of Rocky Horror Picture Show screenings. The reality is that in these secular settings, people take on activities that comfort people, encourage people, and make a moment of little meaning to an outsider into a moment of true commitment to a group. These habitual practices make a group more than a group, they make the group into a life practice, and into a religious tradition. We as outsiders seeing these groups need to be sensitive about these groups and realize that their practices have meaning to them, respect them as we do other religions, and encourage them as we do other religions.

### Religious Interactions within Non-religious Groups

Religion is not a bad thing or a good thing. We do not look at religious groups and their beliefs as less legitimate because they believe them whole-heartedly, yet often society attempts to demean a group, by calling it religious. In talking with students and

by the nature of their groups, some people feel that there is a religious zeal about certain non-religion groups. The dedication and righteousness of some groups have, as seen through their individual commitment to the group, its members and to their substance is religious because of the depth of the commitment.

#### Case 1: Political Advocacy Community

Republicans, Libertarians, FMLA, Catalyst, Sierra, RTL, CWRU DEMS, all dedicate massive amounts of time to a belief or vision they wish to make real for the world. One student in an interview said that Catalyst displayed an effort that other students on campus saw as self-righteous. These groups show a religious zeal towards their specific causes. The members of this group spend a great deal of time working very hard to make their groups successful. They are deeply commitment to group's agenda.

#### Case 2: Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance

Every year the FMLA on campus holds a Take Back the Night Week. It is a week of events to raise awareness about sexual assault and violence against women. The highlight of the event is a vigil in which students surround the Kelvin Smith Library oval and speak out about their interaction with sexual violence. The action is to create a safe space for people to speak their minds and reveal some very traumatizing and painful information. The act is cathartic for many people and develops a community where trust is so important. Many people start by saying, "I don't know why I am telling you this. . . ." or "I have never even told my family or best friends, but. . . ." In addition, proceed to share intimate information about who they are and what they have been through. The commitment, of these often strangers, to the moment and the space is like confessional. It is doing away with the pain inside and reclaiming it with freedom and a community of support.

#### Case 3: Swing club

This club meets very regularly with the function of learning and participating in dance with each other. This is clearly social but is also a way for individuals to express themselves with their bodies in the form of dancing. This can be seen as almost an orthopraxis, or a tradition not expressed in words, but rather in their actions and interactions.

#### Conclusions

Whether it be a deeply held belief in a particular perspective, or the practicing of commitment through the revelation of the moment, secular groups on campus are dedicated to something on a level of incredible depth and trust. The interaction of the group members depends on a basis of trust and bonds, sometimes the bonds are

monetary. But as in the case of FMLA's Take Back the Night Vigil the bonds are not just based on friendship, they are based on a belief in the community and the basic principle behind it. That Truth needs to be spoken and acted on, and we will be hear to carry out that Truth, even if we don't know you.

### Conclusions About Religion in Non-Religious Groups

I guess a good question is: so what? Who cares if non-religious groups act religiously? If we are interested in mapping religious diversity it should be diversity of what people truly believe, as seen through their action, as much as their words. These groups present a way for members to deeper explore their feelings and beliefs. It is clear from some survey questions that religion is an issue that holds meaning from a majority of people. We argue that these groups act as a partial reflection of those beliefs that students hold dear to them.

Can our practices and interactions reveal something about our deeply believed religions?

What is religion but practiced belief? It is faith as seen through the sacred rituals and other tangible realities that people make real. If this is true, or in some respects true, than we need to look for religion in our social and profane existence, and we need to examine what our religion really is, what people really believe as a function of their practice. That is to ask, how the way people interact reveals their belief, and values. People might say they believe in justice, for example, but the reality is that the way they interaction with others reveals something different.

So should we consider these non-religious groups religious, does it have something to offer our campus by dignifying all beliefs as equally beliefs, the belief in capitalism, or Medieval Culture, or science, being no less or more legitimate than the belief in Jesus, or Allah? The groups on this campus whether or not they are willing to admit it have a certain degree of faith and belief. They are committed, identify with a group, and have faith in that group's usefulness. These groups deal with religious issues and are in many ways religious themselves. That is not to demean them, but to respect them all equally admitting tat the groups are dedicated and driven, not just time killers and frivolous activates. Their identities and actions speak of their true beliefs and commitment. As mappers of diversity we need to recognize that one's true beliefs, what they truly worship is in their every action, not just in the actions they consider to be religious.

### Domain Conclusions

The way that students interact with one another, the groups they chose to join, and the relationships they develop all reveal how religion is lived in student's lives. The tensions that develop from students with different religious perspective interacting, and the way students deal, as well as ignore those tensions, have built our social community. As people interested in creating a community more respectful and inclusive of diversity

we all have a responsibility to recognize that religion is not just what someone believes in, but how someone lives their lives.