FEW EDUCATORS DISPUTE THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDY ABOUT religion in history. The New Consensus is strongest on this point. Consensus, however, does not necessarily mean commitment to change. Despite some improvement in textbooks and state frameworks, we see few signs that schools are taking religion seriously in history or elsewhere in the social studies. When religion appears, the treatment is usually superficial, sometimes inaccurate, and almost always inadequate.

The agreement to teach about religion in history is often more political than educational. When legislatures or boards of education in North Carolina or West Virginia call for more study of religion, little or nothing happens in the way of staff development to ensure that this actually occurs. Sometimes controversial topics not wanted in other parts of the curriculum—creationism, for example—are officially placed in the social studies. But, again, rarely do such actions translate into actual programs and resources that prepare teachers to teach the controversy.

How should schools treat religion in history and other social studies courses? In Chapter 3, we indicated how schools might treat study of religion in the social studies component of the elementary classroom. Here we focus on the middle and high school grades. Although we recognize that social studies on all levels is a field of study that includes many disciplines, in this and the following chapter we will discuss three areas—history, civics, and economics—widely studied in U.S. public schools.

Textbooks and Standards

In the mid-1980s, a series of textbook studies called attention to the poor treatment of religion in textbooks for world and United States history. These studies, combined with concerns raised by textbook trials in Alabama and Tennessee, helped create the New Consensus discussed in Chapter 2. All sides agreed: students must learn a good deal about religion if they are to understand history.

More than a decade has passed, but textbooks have yet to take religion seriously. Why is this important? Because the vast major-_ity of decisions about what to teach in the history classroom are based on the textbook. We are aware (and grateful) that a significant number of excellent classroom teachers go beyond the text and use supplemental resources. But constraints of time, pressure to cover a tremendous amount of material, and lack of access to quality supplemental materials push most teachers to rely heavily on the textbook. Even when teachers want to deal with religion, they often feel ill-prepared to do so and unsure about how it should be done. Confronted with these obstacles, if the textbook avoids religion, so will most teachers.

The news is not all bad. According to the American Textbook Council, there has been some improvement in the treatment of religion in the new generation of history texts (Sewall, 1995, pp. 15–16). Many of the changes involve brief mentions of religion, though some constitute substantive discussion of religious ideas and events, particularly in world history. Some of the credit for the changes that have occurred must be given to the *History-Social Science Framework for California Public Schools* (California Department of Education History-_Social Science Curriculum Framework and Criteria Committee, 1987, 1997). Not only does California call for more teaching about religion on all grade levels, state officials have let textbook publishers know that inclusion of religion will be an important criterion for adoption.

Despite this progress, textbooks are still woefully inadequate in their treatment of religion. World history texts do provide brief accounts of the basic teachings and practices of the major religions as they appear in history, but, in our view, the texts do not give enough space to the topics to enable students to make sense of these traditions. In the texts we examined, religion virtually disappears after 1750. The authors say nothing about the various religious ways of interpreting history and give no attention to the major theological developments in the last two centuries.[1]

United States history texts are no better. They mention religion occasionally, especially in relation to political and social developments. Beyond brief discussions of Native Americans and Puritans, however, they say little or nothing about the beliefs and practices of any other religious traditions. In accounts of American history after the Civil War, religion disappears almost entirely. If we exclude their treatment of the Holocaust, each of four texts we examined devotes more space to railroads than to religion for the entire post-Civil War history of the United States. Again, the texts discuss no religious interpretations of history, and with the exception of short accounts of what was at issue in the Scopes trial, the texts include no discussion of theology after the Civil War.[2]

The *National Standards for History,* published in 1996 (National Center for History in the Schools), are intended to raise the level of historical thinking and understanding in all grades and courses. In view of the controversy surrounding national standards in general and the history standards in particular, it remains to be seen how influential they will be in reshaping the teaching of history and improving the content of textbooks. Whatever the outcome of that debate, it is important to take note of how the standards treat religion because they reflect the current thinking of many educators within the discipline of history.

In some ways the standards are generous to religion. Almost 17 percent of the elaborated standards in world history include some reference to religion. Under these standards, students would learn about the basic beliefs and practices of the major religions as well as how these faiths influenced the development of civilization in successive historical periods. The U.S. history standards include religion less frequently—in just under 7 percent of the elaborated standards (and many of these are only brief mentions of religion). Nevertheless, if these standards guided curriculum leaders and textbook writers, study of religion in world and U.S. history would be expanded considerably.

In other more significant ways the standards fail to take religion seriously. Given the quantity of material to be covered, the time available to learn about the major religions is too limited for students to grasp what it means to understand the world or history religiously. Furthermore, like textbooks, the standards seriously understate the role of religion after 1750 in world history and after the Civil War in U.S. history. They make no mention of significant theological developments in the modern era, including the Second Vatican Council, one of the most important theological events of the last several hundred years. Of the 11 examples of "long-term changes and recurring patterns in world history," none deals with religious history. Finally, the standards assume that history should be interpreted only in secular categories. They do not ask students to consider how historical events and developments are interpreted by faith traditions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, each of which see a religious meaning and purpose in history, or by Eastern traditions that view the cycles of time in very different ways.

Religious Interpretations of History

Standards and textbooks notwithstanding, there is more than one way to conceptualize history. True, history has become a secular discipline and most contemporary historians use secular categories to construct their narratives. But surely a liberally educated person ought to know that there are claims for religious meaning in history that a secular approach cannot convey. For millennia, people in many faith traditions have understood history as the arena of divine action. Indeed, some contemporary historians, as well as millions of adherents to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, continue to interpret history in religious categories. Without exposure to religious conceptions of history, students will understand little about how history has been interpreted for much of the development of Western civilization; they will learn that all of history should be interpreted only in secular ways.

The Bible as History

The educational implications of ignoring religious views of history are considerable. We may illustrate our point by looking briefly at the Bible, a religious account of history of central importance to millions of people throughout the world.

We can, of course, learn a great deal about history from the Bible, but what we take to be historical in the Bible will depend on how we interpret it, and the criteria we use to assess the validity of historical claims—both of which are matters of much controversy.

Consider, for example, the following passage from a high school world history textbook:

> Because the Egyptians feared the Hebrews, they made them slaves. The Hebrew leader Moses led the Hebrews from Egypt to Palestine. Under the rule of their early kings—Saul, David, and Solomon—the Hebrew nation prospered. . . . King Solomon died about 900 B.C. Then Palestine split into two kingdoms. The kingdom of Israel was formed in the north. The Kingdom of Judah was formed in the south. The Kingdom of Israel lasted for 250 years. Then it was destroyed by the Assyrians. (Leinwand, 1986, p. 24)

Consider now the biblical account:

> When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not guide them by the road towards the Philistines. . . . God made them go round by way of the wilderness towards the Red Sea. . . . And all the time the Lord went before them, by day a pillar of cloud to guide them on their journey, by night a pillar of fire. (Exodus 13:17–18, 21, *The New English Bible*)

Moreover, according to the Scriptural account, it was God who made Israel a great nation, and it was God who raised up the Assyrians and Babylonians to punish Israel for its sins.

The Bible provides what is often called *sacred history.* It makes sense of history in terms of God's purposes and actions. The biblical authors saw the hand of God behind the exodus—and all the miracles, experiences, and events they wove into their historical narratives. For those who accept the Bible as Scripture, God is at work in history, and there is a religious meaning in the patterns of history.

Many religious conservatives believe that the Bible can be read *literally* as history—and, no doubt many of the historical claims made in the Bible are accepted by secular scholars. But using the methods of secular historical scholarship scholars are unable to discern miracles, divine causality, or religious meaning in history. At best, secular history must remain silent about the actions of God in history. Religious liberals offer a third alternative in claiming that many parts of the Bible must be read as *myth*—meaning not that they are false, but that they can't be taken to be *literally* true. There may not have been a *literal* pillar of fire, for example, but the purposes of God were fulfilled in the liberation of the Hebrews from oppression and in the religious life of Israel.

Sometimes, to make study of the Bible more "acceptable" in public schools, educators are willing to jettison the miracles and accounts of God's interventions in history. But this too is problematic, for it radically distorts the meaning of the Bible. And yet to include the miracles and religious interpretations of events inevitably opens the discussion to controversy and conflicting accounts of how to interpret them.

Sorting out what is *historical* is complicated and controversial, and teachers who teach the Bible as history need to be sensitive to the differences between conventional secular history, and the varieties of sacred history. They should be prepared to include a number of different perspectives—religious and secular—on the historicity of the Bible.

Much of the recent conflict about teaching the Bible as history in public schools is rooted in the inability of some advocates of this approach to differentiate between secular and sacred history. Our position is that if students are to be *educated* about the Bible, and if it is to be studied *neutrally,* they must learn something about the contending ways of assessing the Bible as history. They cannot be uncritically taught to accept the Bible as literally true, as history. Nor should they be uncritically taught to accept as historical only what secular historians find true in the Bible.

We believe that in addition to including discussion of the Bible in history and literature courses, elective Bible courses can be a good idea if carefully conceived and properly taught. But, again, given the complexity of the debate about the historicity of the Bible, teachers who deal with the Bible as history need a great deal of sophistication. We suspect that a literary approach may be more manageable, though here too teachers need to be sensitive to the Bible as a sacred text, as Scripture (as we will argue in Chapter 6). Because the Bible is so important, and because its interpretation is so controversial, we will address how to teach about the Bible at considerably greater length in Chapter 8.

The Puritan View of History

Learning about the Bible as sacred history is also crucial in the study of American history. An obvious example is the Puritan conception of history as articulated by John Winthrop in his lay sermon "A Model of Christian Charity," delivered to his fellow Puritans aboard the *Arabella* just as they reached Massachusetts Bay in 1630:

> Thus stands the cause between God and us. We are entered into covenant with Him for this work; we have taken out a commission, the Lord hath given us leave to draw out our own articles. . . . For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us. (Winthrop, 1630/1956, p. 83–84)

Clearly this is a religious interpretation of history, a biblical view that sees all of history in terms of God's actions and purposes. But should teachers take the time to get inside the biblical worldview as understood by the Puritans? If a liberal education is the aim, then the answer must be yes.

Everyone agrees that learning *something* about Puritans is important. Indeed, Puritans generally get more space in U.S. history textbooks than any other religious group. Unfortunately, most of these accounts of Puritans are superficial, largely negative, and, in many cases, simply wrong. They emphasize the intolerance and persecution perpetuated by Puritans (though they do not examine the roots of the conflicts). We would agree that the narrative should include the flaws of Puritanism (or of any religious movement), but educators must make the picture more complete and coherent by also presenting how the Puritans themselves viewed their mission. Few texts attempt to explain theological issues important to Puritans, and none deal fully with the Puritans' conception of history. By most accounts, therefore, Puritans are important for how they influenced (mostly negatively) early colonial history, but what they actually believed and how they viewed the world are largely irrelevant. The text could put the same space to much better use.

The solution is not simply to add more information about how Puritans and other religious groups shaped social and political developments in American history. Religion is not just important for its influence on events; religion seeks to answer fundamental questions about human existence and history. If we want students to struggle with these questions and to think critically about history, then it _is important that they study how various faith traditions *conceive* history.

In the case of the Puritans, Winthrop's lay sermon is a good place to begin. In his address, Winthrop locates the great migration of Puritans at the center of the world's history. Reminding his hearers of why they had traveled so far at such great sacrifice, he describes their mission in New England as nothing less than an agreement with God to fulfill the divine plan for humanity. Their covenant would require them to establish a "holy commonwealth" and Christ's true church in anticipation of the Second Coming. Modeling themselves on ancient Israel, the founders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony saw themselves as called by God to change the course of history.

Without exposure to this conception of history, much in the rest of the American story is difficult to comprehend. How else would students make sense of the similarity and differences between ideas of covenant in the 17th century and ideas of constitution in the 18th? How would they comprehend the many U.S. foreign policy debates that reflect ongoing arguments about America's special mission as "a city upon a hill?" What will California students understand about the foundations of their public schools, libraries, and

state universities—all of which were founded by missionaries from New England attempting to realize the Puritan ideal? These are but a few of many examples of the Puritan sources, for better and for worse, of much in the American nation and spirit.

At the end of the 20th century, something very close to the Puritan reading of sacred history continues to shape debates about the meaning of the United States. Millions of Americans view the movement of history and the American destiny through the lens of convictions that echo the Puritan covenant. Many conservative Christians continue to resonate deeply to a vision of the United States that is "divinely blessed" with a special mission in the world. In this view, we were founded as a "Christian nation," and our future prosperity and freedom depend upon acknowledging the divine source of our blessings and our liberties. The clash between this conception of the United States and other views, religious and secular, has fueled the debate about school prayer and other culture-war issues for nearly 40 years. To understand these competing positions, students must know that there are alternative ways to think about this nation and its destiny. Some of these alternatives are religious.

U.S. and world history courses are replete with opportunities to alert students to religious conceptions of historical events. In the painful history of the Middle East—to cite one obvious example in world history—Jews, Muslims, and Christians have long had competing convictions about God's purposes in that region of the world. For much of American history, religious interpretations of events have shaped our self-understanding as a nation. During the Civil War, for instance, many on both sides saw the conflict as a religious war, involving divine judgment on our nation. Whatever the illustration, our point is the same: If students are to be liberally educated about the meaning of history, they must learn that traditional religious and modern secular ways of understanding history are fundamentally different.

Religion in History

Beyond attention to religious ways of interpreting history, what should the teaching of history include about religion? The answer is not merely to mention religion more often—a common tactic in the textbook world. Coverage, though significant, is not sufficient. *How* religion is discussed is as important as the number of pages devoted to it.

Getting Inside Religion

To begin with, it is not enough for textbooks and teachers to briefly summarize major beliefs and practices. Students need to explore the religious experiences and convictions at the heart of the major world religions. In the study of Islam, to take one significant example, students need to know something about key theological conceptions such as the meaning of the word *Islam,* the strong emphasis on the absolute transcendence and oneness of Allah, and the way in which the Qur'an is understood as immediate revelation. The teacher should also say something about the religious core of Muslim life, especially as exemplified during the early community under the prophet Muhammad and the "rightly guided" caliphs—a period that becomes paradigmatic for Muslims in subsequent eras. Teachers can best accomplish this if they employ strategies and resources that allow Muslims to speak for themselves. Exposing students to Scriptures and primary source documents and literature, as well as using film and qualified guest speakers, provides students with the opportunity to encounter religion as directly as possible.

The aim should be to help students see the Islamic worldview from the inside. They should have the conceptual tools with which to grasp core concepts such as the religious meaning of the *umma*—the Muslim community—beyond the many national, ethnic, and political differences in Islamic societies. They should be able to discuss such crucial topics as the spread of Islam, then and now, as a religious phenomenon of profound importance in world history and in our own time—a topic that most texts explain solely in political or sociological terms. Of course, they must learn about the political and sociological impact of Islam through the centuries, and, yes, they must learn about the cultural differences within Islam. But understanding Islam, or

any faith group studied in world history, requires first understanding the theological claims and religious experiences that have shaped how believers make sense of the world. This is what we described earlier as *informed empathy.*

Multiculturalism

Our suggestion that the study of history include efforts to "get in-side" religious perspectives parallels the call for a more multicultural curriculum. Many advocates of multicultural education advance argu- ments similar to ours about the need for an empathetic understanding of the many cultures and ethnic groups that have shaped both world and U.S. history. And, much like our position, their stance pleads for a curriculum that is both fair and reflective of a truly liberal education.

In light of these parallel arguments, it is striking that most _proposals for multicultural education virtually ignore religion.[3] Enriching the world history curriculum with the voices of ethnic and cultural groups neglected in the past is essential. But for a great many people (Hindus are a good example), the depth of tribal, ethnic, or cultural identity has been historically and inseparably tied to religious conviction and practice. To teach about world cultures and to minimize or gloss over religion would result in a superficial and mistaken multicultural education.

Much the same can be said in U.S. history. Teaching about African Americans, Native Americans, Latino cultures, and others without significant discussion of religion would be an impoverished and distorted discussion. There is another consideration as well. For millions of Americans throughout our history, the most profound definition of their identity is in terms of religion—not ethnicity or nationality. Just as it is essential that women, African Americans, and others be included in the curriculum, it is vital that the religious voices now absent in the study of U.S. history be heard. American religious history is more than the history of Puritans, Protestants, or even Christians. And as we noted in Chapter 2, whether or not we are religious, we are shaped by the religious past of our many cultures.

Although we agree with an approach to multicultural education that seeks to diversify the curriculum, we should note at least two ways in which our proposals for including religion differ from some of the more ideological and controversial versions of multiculturalism. First, we have already made the case for a civic framework, grounded in First Amendment principles, as the ground rule for addressing our differences in a public school classroom (and in our life together as Americans). Some multiculturalists disparage these and other principles and values of the American republic and Western civilization _as "Eurocentric" and oppressive. Although we agree that teachers should discuss both virtues *and* vices of the West and the United States, we would argue that public schools have an obligation to teach and uphold the democratic first principles of the U.S. Constitution with its Bill of Rights. Yes, many of these principles are derived from European sources and from the biblical traditions. (And these roots should be taught.) And, yes, they have yet to be fully and fairly applied in American society. But however imperfect the realization of the ideal, our constitutional arrangement embodies the shared principles and ideals that define us as a nation—and undergird what we do in the public schools. We must distinguish between the principles and their application. In many ways the story of American history is the story of the ongoing struggle to expand the application of these principles more fairly and justly to all citizens.

Second, we are concerned about versions of multiculturalism that fail to take religious differences seriously. Religions and cultures differ in ways that are deep and abiding; their values and convictions often collide with one another. Students need to learn that although people share many core human values, religions make very different claims about what is ultimately true. This is not to suggest that there is no absolute truth; only that we differ about the nature of truth. Students should not get the impression that all claims are equally valid (or equally false)—many of these claims are mutually exclusive. Nor should we push them to accept cultures or religions that are antithetical to their own convictions. But we should expect them to respect the *rights* of all, even those with whom they disagree. Beyond that, they need to learn how to engage differences thoughtfully and to think critically about what they are learning concerning themselves and others.

Some of the cultural and religious claims or practices studied may not only be in conflict with one another, but also with the civic principles and agreements of our society. This too should be discussed so that students are prepared to address questions that have been long debated in our history: What are the limits of religious liberty? Where do we, as a nation, draw the line when religious or cultural practices come into conflict with societal norms or American law? For a nation as religiously diverse and free as the United States, these are central questions that every generation must reconsider.

Dissent and debate are crucial for the survival of liberty. The First Amendment framework itself protects our right to be different and encourages us to engage one another in honest and open debate. Students should learn early on that the public square of America is often a messy and contentious place. What is fortunate and admirable about the American project is that our civic agreement as embodied in the Constitution provides the guiding principles that enable us to negotiate our conflicts with civility and respect. Schools are where citizens learn how this arrangement ought to work. We should simultaneously learn that we are deeply different *and* that we have the civic principles that enable us to live with even our deepest differences.

Coverage

If students are to have the opportunity both to empathize—to see religious traditions from the inside—and to think critically about differences, then history textbooks will need to devote more space, and teachers more time, to religion. The immediate response of many educators and textbook publishers is that there is not enough room in the curriculum to give more coverage to religion. If that is the case, then we would argue that different choices may need to be made.

To cite a particularly egregious example, when one text gives Jesus less than half the space devoted to Eleanor of Aquitaine or, in another, to Joseph Stalin, then someone is making poor educational decisions about what is important for students to learn. In the space Jesus *is* given, most texts say something about love and forgiveness, but little or nothing about the fact that Christians see Jesus as God incarnate. There is little discussion of the nature of sin and salvation, the coming of the Kingdom, the significance of the Resurrection story, or other key Christian teachings and experiences contained in the New Testament. Without some understanding of these concepts, many subsequent developments in Western civilization make little sense.

Beyond reordering priorities, educators need to rethink the approach to key themes and topics. Students cannot adequately understand the American Revolution, for example, without studying the First Great Awakening, part of what John Adams characterized as the change in "religious sentiments" that was the "real American revolution."[4] The story of immigration is incomplete and distorted without study of the centrality of religion in the immigrant subcultures formed in America between 1880 and 1910. Study of the founding and development of the African-American churches provides the best foundation for understanding much about American history, including Reconstruction and the civil rights movement. As these examples suggest, taking religion seriously is not always a matter of "adding on" to what the curriculum already covers. It may mean teaching required key topics and themes in a different way.

We are acutely aware that finding more room in the curriculum for *anything,* however worthy and relevant, is an enormous challenge. Including more about religion, as we noted earlier, is particularly challenging in view of the importance and complexity of religious studies. Of course, the problem isn't just that textbooks don't *mention* religion enough; it is that they don't say enough to *make sense* of religions—and they make no effort to convey any sense of what it means to interpret history religiously. As we have argued, it may very well be that only by requiring students to take a course in religious studies can we address these concerns adequately. Nevertheless, history courses can at least strive for what we have called minimal fairness by giving much more attention to the key religious ideas and _developments that have shaped the great world civilizations.

Theological Developments

Most textbooks leave the reader with the false impression that religion is something that used to matter a long time ago but no longer makes much difference in the lives of modern people. This is untrue, of course. Religion remains a powerful force in the lives of most people in the United States and across the globe.

Students can make better sense of the last two centuries of world history if they have some understanding of such theological developments as the rise of literary and historical biblical criticism, debates within Roman Catholicism since the Second Vatican Council, the fundamentalist response in various traditions to religious liberalism and modernity, and the impact of science and psychology on religious thinking. Theology matters in the modern world.

This is true in recent U.S. history as well. A few examples: The rise of Christian fundamentalism in the late 19th century continues to have a profound impact on American life and politics. Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, and Reconstructionist Jews in the United States have reasserted their Jewish identity in bold new ways. Theological debates about the role of women in various traditions have been an important dimension of the larger debate about the role of women in American society. The list is long: theological ideas and differences continue to shape many of our most controversial public policy debates—including those over abortion, justice, war and peace, and, of course, education, as we shall see in upcoming chapters.

A number of American theologians have had an impact on our history. The Catholic theologian John Courtney Murray played a _major role in redefining religious freedom in America and in the deliberations of the Second Vatican Council. One of the towering public intellectuals of our century, Reinhold Niebuhr deeply influenced debates over social justice and foreign policy, in part by arguing for a “Christian Realism” that took sinfulness more seriously than was commonly done. Martin Luther King Jr. was a theologian—a point typically ignored in the textbooks. His theology of social justice was drawn, in large measure, from the Bible and his understanding of the Social Gospel.

True, religion has lost its preeminence in the modern era, particularly in the West. But for many people in the United States and throughout the world, profound theological issues are at the core of their encounter with modernity. (Even the fact that the world has become increasingly secular cannot itself be comprehended without study of various religious responses to secularization.) In the rest of this book, we move beyond history and make the case for the relevance of religion and study about religion to other dimensions of our life in contemporary society.

Innovative Resources for _the Study of Religion in History

The vast majority of the hundreds of history teachers with whom we have worked want to include more study of religion in their courses. But how are they to get the necessary resources and support? For the teacher, the challenge of achieving even minimal fairness in the treatment of religion when teaching world and U.S. history is daunting to say the least. Few teachers have much background in religious studies. Few state frameworks encourage in-depth study of religion. And the new generation of textbooks is only marginally better than the old. Until these larger changes occur, what can teachers do to take religion seriously in history? Fortunately, some innovative resources and strategies are available now.

The 3 Rs Projects

The First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University supports initiatives in several regions of the country designed to address religious liberty issues in public schools. Based on the principles of “rights, responsibilities, and respect” discussed in Chapter 1, these programs help communities find common ground on a wide range of conflicts and concerns involving religion and public education. In addition to policy development, one of the primary goals of the projects is to prepare teachers to teach about religion in ways that are constitutionally permissible and educationally sound.

The most extensive of these programs is the California 3 Rs Project, begun in 1991. Co-sponsored by the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association, the project has an extensive network of resource leaders and scholars throughout the state providing support for classroom teachers.

Teachers trained by the project give workshops for their colleagues on the constitutional and educational guidelines for teaching about religion. Religious studies scholars from local colleges and universities are linked with school districts to provide ongoing expertise and periodic seminars on the religious traditions that teachers are discussing in the curriculum.

Utah has a similar statewide project that anticipates building a network of resource leaders in all of Utah's school districts by the year 2001. In Georgia, the state Humanities Council runs an ongoing 3 Rs program that works with teachers in each region of the state. Texas, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania have 3 Rs Projects in various stages of development.

Oxford University Press

At long last, a series of scholarly works on religion written for young readers is being produced. Edited by Yale University professors Jon Butler and Harry Stout and published by Oxford University Press, *Religion in American Life* will be a 17-volume series authored by some of the nation's leading scholars in the field of religious studies. The first four volumes are scheduled to appear in the fall of 1998.

The series will be an invaluable resource for teachers of junior and senior high school students. Teachers of U.S. history will find all of the volumes most useful, but teachers of world history, government, and literature will also be able to use many of the volumes in a variety of ways. Three chronological volumes give the religious history of the United States from the colonial period to the present. Nine volumes cover significant religious groups in America, including Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Muslims, Native Americans, and followers _of Eastern faiths. Four volumes address specific topics—women, church-state issues, African American religion, and immigration—that are of special importance in understanding the role of religion in American life.

With the addition of these books to school and classroom libraries, students and teachers will have access to scholarly works that fill the gaps left by inadequate textbook treatment of religion. In fact, the chronological volumes would themselves be an excellent textbook for an elective course on religion in America or religion in U.S. history. A teacher's guide, prepared by the First Amendment Center, will suggest ways to use the volumes for supplemental reading and research projects in history and other courses.

On Common Ground CD-ROM

Another groundbreaking resource for students and teachers is a CD-ROM entitled *On Common Ground: World Religions in America,* published in 1997 by Columbia University Press. This multimedia resource uses text, primary sources, photographs, music, film, and the spoken word to bring alive the extraordinary religious diversity in the United States. Prepared by Harvard Divinity School professor Diana Eck, the CD-ROM draws on the Pluralism Project, a Harvard-based study that has documented America's religious landscape.

Using the CD-ROM, students can find out about the practices and beliefs of America's many faith traditions and explore the religious diversity of 18 cities and regions. Fifteen different religions are represented, from the long-established Native American, Christian, and Jewish traditions to more recent arrivals such as Hinduism and Buddhism.

What is especially impressive about this resource is how it uses documents, photographs, film, and music to evoke information directly from the practitioners of each faith, allowing students to have some experience of the religion from the inside. It is also noteworthy in its discussion of differences within various traditions (e.g., Orthodox and Reform Judaism). It even includes issues debated within various traditions—women and Islam, for example. In short, this is an essential resource for every secondary social studies and literature classroom.

The Ackland Art Museum Project

An educational model that has tremendous potential for introducing students to the world's major religions is the Five Faiths Project being developed by Ray Williams, Curator of Education at the Ackland Art Museum, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The project grew out of the Ackland's successful curriculum-based gallery lessons. For a number of years now, teachers have brought students—ranging from primary grades to college level—to the museum to learn more about the world's religions through art. The Ackland's collection now includes artworks from Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In their encounter with paintings, sculpture, and ritual objects, students engage these traditions in immediate and powerful ways.

The Five Faiths Project is planning to expand in a number of exciting directions. An interactive gallery computer station will enable students to learn more about a religious work of art in its cultural context. This is important. Religious objects in the Ackland's collection—a Russian icon, a statue of the Hindu deity Ganesha, and others—were created for sacred settings and practices quite unlike their present museum home. Through the interactive computer program, students will see and hear the ritual occasions, locations, and stories that give these objects their full meaning.

The Ackland has also made a commitment to provide North Carolina teachers with preservice and continuing education focused on the study of religion. Teachers will learn from outstanding scholars in religious studies, visit local places of worship, and meet religious leaders. Not only will they learn about the major religious traditions, but they also will discover how to enrich their courses with the study of religion and religious art.

For schools in other areas of the nation without access to the Ackland, the museum plans to produce a CD-ROM with accompanying curriculum guides. These materials will help teachers bring the study of religion to life through music, personal stories from practitioners of each faith, photographs, and videoclips placing the art in its original context. All of this will be available through the Ackland's home page on the World Wide Web.

The Ackland's Five Faiths Project will be a model that we hope local museums throughout the nation will replicate. Hundreds of community and university art museums have collections of religious art that have the potential to be an invaluable resource for teachers and students. If adopted by other museums, the Ackland model has the potential to fill a crucial gap in the curriculum, and perhaps to revolutionize the relationship between museums and schools.

Suggested Readings _and Resources

The First Amendment Center supports the 3 Rs Projects discussed in this chapter and will provide information about those programs and other opportunities for teacher education in religious studies. The center also disseminates *Living with Our Deepest Differences: Religious Liberty in a Pluralistic Society,* a series of lessons for inclusion in courses at the elementary, junior high, and senior high levels. For more information about these and other resources, contact the First Amendment Center by calling 703-284-2826 or visit the web site: www.freedomforum.org

For more information about the series *Religion in American Life,* contact Oxford University Press, 198 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016-4313. The CD-ROM *On Common Ground: World Religions in America* is available through Columbia University Press (telephone 800-944-8648). The World Religions Project may be contacted by writing to Ray Williams, Curator of Education at the Ackland Art Museum, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC 27599.

In 1990 an ASCD panel prepared a curriculum guide to significant developments in U.S. history in which religion was a key factor. It is published in *Religion in American History: What to Teach and How* by Charles Haynes (1990). The same volume includes a variety of primary source documents and strategies for using them to teach about religion in U.S. history. For an in-depth discussion of creative strategies for using primary sources in the classroom, see David Kobrin's excellent book *Beyond the Textbook: Teaching History Using Documents and Primary Sources* (1996).

The National Humanities Center provides TeacherServe, an online curriculum enrichment service for high school history and literature teachers. One of their instructional guides, *Divining America: Religion and the National Culture,* covers a range of topics important for teaching American history, from Puritanism to the civil rights movement.

Created by scholars and master teachers, this material will help teachers include substantive study of religion in American history courses. The interactive nature of the site gives teachers the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions about the content of the site (http://www.nhc._rtp.nc.us:8080/tserve/tserve.htm).

A number of other organizations offer resources appropriate for teaching about religion in public schools. The Religion and Public Education Resource Center offers a variety of curriculum guides, sample lessons, and other materials. The center is directed by Dr. Bruce Grelle, Department of Religious Studies, California State University–Chico, Chico, CA 95929-0740. The Council on Islamic Education (P.O. Box 20186, Fountain Valley, CA 92728-0186) draws on a network of university scholars to provide public school educators with resource materials and workshops for teaching about Islam. Education About South Asia—Vidya (P.O. Box 7788, Berkeley, CA 94707-0788) has resources for teaching about the religions of the Indian subcontinent. The World Religions Curriculum Development Center offers print and audiovisual curriculum materials on world religions (6425 West 33rd St., St. Louis Park, MN 55426).

An excellent short discussion of the many faith groups found in U.S. schools appears in *America's Religions: An Educator's Guide to Beliefs and Practices* by Benjamin J. Hubbard, John T. Hatfield, and James A. Santucci (1997). Included are concise descriptions of the basic beliefs and practices of some 22 religious groups. Especially helpful for teachers are the sections in each chapter on classroom concerns and common misunderstandings and stereotypes. The guide is available from Teacher Ideas Press (P.O. Box 6633, Englewood, CO 80155-6633).

Two of the best histories of religion in America are Sydney Ahlstrom's *A Religious History of the American People* (1972), a classic work of extraordinary scholarship, and Martin Marty's *Pilgrims in Their Own Land* (1984), a somewhat shorter, very readable general history of religion in America. For studies that focus on Catholicism and Judaism, see Jay Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience* (1987) and Arthur Hertzberg, *The Jews in America* (1989). Catherine Albenese's *America: Religions and Religion* (1981) is particularly good on religious pluralism. *Retelling U.S. Religious History,* edited by Thomas Tweed (1997), includes a good collection of essays that explore how the traditional narrative of American religious history needs to be expanded and rewritten to include neglected traditions.

For a superb collection of essays on religious ways of interpreting the meaning of history and the nature of historical study, see *God, History, and Historians* (1977), edited by C.T. McIntire. *Religious Advocacy and American History* (1997), edited by Bruce Kuklich and D.G. Hart, is a good collection of essays that explores the relationship of religious and secular assessments of American history.

For a lengthy guide to readings and resources for teaching about the world's religions, see Chapter 9 of *Finding Common Ground,* edited by Charles Haynes and Oliver Thomas. See also the "Suggested Readings and Resources" for teaching Bible and World Religions in Chapter 8 of this volume.