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Mike Altman:

Welcome to Study Religion, the official podcast of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Alabama. I am Professor Mike Altman coming to you not from the friendly confines of Manly Hall on the campus of the University of Alabama, but about three and a half miles to the west on the west side of Tuscaloosa from my house. So the echoes, the noises, I think there's a lawnmower outside right now, that's what you're hearing in the background.

Mike Altman:

But I'm coming to you here in the middle of summer with a new episode, with an interview that has been sitting on my hard drive for far too long, and we need to get it out into the world. This past spring, my colleague here in the department, Professor Richard Newton, sat down with two wonderful scholars of religion in America. Emily Clark, who is associate professor of religious studies at Gonzaga University, and Brad Stoddard, who is assistant professor of religious studies at McDaniel College.

Mike Altman:

The two of them together edited a new documentary reader, *Race and New Religious Movements in the USA*, that was published in August of 2019. And Doctor Newton has this lovely conversation with them, not just about the book, which is a great book and a great resource, but also the process of collaborating together on a project like this. And it's an interesting conversation about how they work together, about how they put the book together, and I think it's something that you'll all enjoy.

Mike Altman:

So without further ado, let's turn it over to Richard Newton with Emily Clark and Brad Stoddard.

Richard Newton:

So let's begin with talking about, what is a documentary reader?

Emily Clark:

So a documentary reader, one of the ways I think about it is it's a really useful pedagogical test. A documentary reader is a collection of primary sources, usually text-based primary sources, that are organized in a way that introduce the reader to the context surrounding the documents, but then allows the reader to do some of the work of unpacking what that document means, what it's trying to articulate, what kind of argument is there in the document.

Emily Clark:

So one of the ways to think about it is a documentary reader was put together by an editor or, in our case, two editors, who are trying to craft a particular story using primary sources to bring readers into that story.

Richard Newton:

So beyond just getting a whole bunch of documents, a whole bunch of PDFs that you can download, you're really putting these things together in a thoughtful manner that creates a story and an argument for the readers to work through?

Emily Clark:

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Yeah. I think one of the words I think about using for a documentary reader is, it's been curated. In the way that we think about how a museum exhibit has been curated by somebody who is trying to tell a particular story, who is trying to make a particular argument, and there's thought going into it. It's not just a grab bag of things that you can get your hands on, but it's meant to come together in an intentional way.

Brad Stoddard:

I think any collection of works, whether it's in a documentary reader or not, especially with documentary readers, there's an implied argument that you're making just by including the text that you're including and the sources that you're including. So our implied argument, at a very broad level, was simply that configurations of religious and racial identities are more common in the country, throughout US history, than we tend to think. And this topic has been overlooked, specifically as it relates to what we normally call new religious movements, but even more broadly.

Brad Stoddard:

So in that sense we're really building off Judith Weisenfeld's work, trying to highlight that, as Judith has pointed out, that configurations of religion and racial identities are common in African-American communities, but by no means limited to African-American communities.

Brad Stoddard:

So in this one, we wanted to focus, we have one group's Asian, Native American, and of course different African-American groups, again, with the implied argument that religio-racial identities are overlooked and deserve more academic attention.

Richard Newton:

So how do you go about creating the volume? Going from that idea of, you see a gap, to getting this thing published? What did that look like?

Brad Stoddard:

Do you want to tell that story, Emily?

Emily Clark:

Do we begin with that Oxford Research Encyclopedia piece?

Brad Stoddard:

Sure.

Emily Clark:

Shall we consider that part of the prehistory?

Brad Stoddard:

Well, without that, this book would not exist. So I think we should.

Emily Clark:

It's true. It's true. So I was asked by John Corrigan, when he was putting together the Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion of America, to write the entry on alternative religious movements and race. It's an 8,000 to 10,000 word research encyclopedia entry, and when Oxford asked me who would be good potential reviewers, Brad was one of the first names that came to mind, in part because I knew this was an area he was interested in. We had gone to grad school together.

Emily Clark:

The piece went to him, and one of the things that I [inaudible 00:06:14] in the Research Encyclopedia piece, because we were specifically asked to talk about collections of primary sources, is I sent you, there's oddly no reader on this. And the next thing I knew I got an email from Brad which confirmed that he had been asked to review the piece and he was like, "Hey, do you want to do a reader?" And I was like, "Hell yeah, let's do it."

Brad Stoddard:

Yeah. I mean, it really came down to that one line, where she says there are different anthologies on race and religion but there isn't one that specifically relates to race in new religious movements, and I thought, "She's right." So I sat on that for a couple months and finally said, "No, we should totally do this." And so I emailed her, and she was on board with it from the get-go.

Brad Stoddard:

From there, we had to start figuring out, of course, what the focus was going to be. We ultimately narrowed it down to only focusing on groups that have explicitly racial components to the identity of the group. The proposal went out to seven different peer reviewers, and yeah, that was interesting.

Brad Stoddard:

We had a lot of suggestions. Some people said, for example, "You should include the Shakers because they talked about race a lot. You should include this group because they talked about race a lot." And that helped it narrow it down to where we didn't want to just talk about groups, or include groups, that talked about race, we wanted to focus on groups that made racial identities essential to the group.

Brad Stoddard:

So the peer reviewers helped us narrow that down, but I think from the beginning, we had a pretty similar vision for the volume.

Richard Newton:

Did you work out the volume, and the details of the volume proposal, via email? Did you talk to each other face-to-face? Has it happened on the phone? Some combination? What does that exchange look like today as you put together a volume?

Brad Stoddard:

It was all of the above. Yeah.

Emily Clark:

Yeah. It was a combination of all of those things. I mean, one of the things that was great from having gone to grad school together, and be friends, it's really easy for Brad and I to talk to one another, and

throw in our real lives and our academic lives together in one conversation. So it was, I think, a combo of Skype, phone, chatting at conferences, email.

Brad Stoddard:

Text.

Emily Clark:

And just bits and pieces, figuring out what groups made the most sense, what groups had rich primary sources that would work, which didn't.

Brad Stoddard:

Which groups had accessible primary sources.

Emily Clark:

Yes. Oh, my God.

Brad Stoddard:

Yep.

Richard Newton:

So yeah, I assume you can't just download documents and say, "Hey, I'm going to slap a cover on this now and, thanks open source/bootleg material, we got it from here." How do you go about securing rights for the documents that you included in the reader?

Emily Clark:

It varied group to group. Those groups that we were using documents that are old, and thus in the public domain, those were a lot easier to get our hands on. But once you get into the 20th century, you're working with religious groups and documents that are not in the public domain. So that's where things could get a little complicated at times.

Emily Clark:

One of the things I really wanted to include in the chapter on the Moorish Science Temple was a lot more from the Circle Seven Quran, but a phone call with the person who picked up the phone for the current number that's listed for the Moorish Science Temple told me very tersely, multiple times, "You get nothing. You can publish nothing." But then would keep asking follow up questions about what it was for, and then would be like, "No, you can't do that. Well, what is this for again? No, no, no, you can't." It was like, "Dude, just make a decision."

Emily Clark:

So we were able to use for that group the amount that you're legally allowed to use for fair use, for educational purposes, and then pulled from things like the FBI files which are naturally in the public domain because they were created by the federal government. So it varied group to group.

Emily Clark:

I know Brad also had to have some conversations with people to secure publication rights. We had to pay for a couple of things, which Bloomsbury was really great for ponying up those small amounts. But I don't think anyone charged much at all.

Brad Stoddard:

No. I don't think so. Yeah. You're part detective with some of this. I mean, we were chasing around sources in all kinds of locations. I exchanged emails with Louis Farrakhan's assistant, emailed Malcolm X's widow. We had some cases we... Well, in one case with Odinst, I wanted to use one of the main Odinsts... Emily's laughing. One of the main Odinsts that is active and publishing today, I went searching for him everywhere, and I finally found him on Facebook, right?

Brad Stoddard:

So I just messaged him and I explained what we're doing, and asked if I could use some of his writings. And he responded with, "No," and that was it.

Emily Clark:

Oh, no, that wasn't it.

Brad Stoddard:

No, that was it for his response. That was his response. I mean, there was no greater explanation. But then on a whim, later that day, I looked at his Facebook account, and he wrote, "Just a heads up," Facebook messaged this to his group, to all his followers, that is, "Some ass clown named Brad Stoddard PhD wants to use our stuff. Keep an eye on him and his research." And then other Odinsts... They're not retweeting, what is it? Sharing that on Facebook. So for the next couple days, that post was circulating among white power Odinsts, telling people to keep an eye on me and my research to make sure I don't plagiarize them. So that was interesting.

Brad Stoddard:

But none of the others were like that. Like Emily said, there's really no formula for doing this. You find the document and you just try to figure out who owns it. And in the event that you can't, you talk to your publisher and the publisher tells you whether or not you can use it.

Richard Newton:

Yeah. What sort of skills, talents, competencies came out as you were working on this project? Because, I mean it sounds like you had to tap into some things that maybe you didn't get in your formal training in American religious history, or history of religion in the United States. What sort of things have you learned that you can pull out from your tool box or latent training?

Brad Stoddard:

I think my background as an ethnographer helped with this, because with ethnography, you're taught to ask the question and to make the phone call. So I was used to that. I mean, I did take a class on advanced ethnography as a graduate student, but they don't teach you the nitty-gritty of just having the courage just to ask, and asking the person that you're talking to for references, for referrals, right? Because you want people to refer you up, so to speak.

Brad Stoddard:

So having had that experience, I was used to it. And does graduate training prepare you for that? Not really. But the experiences in graduate school as an ethnographer helped train for that.

Emily Clark:

Where I was actually going to go with that question was working with librarians, which was not something that my graduate training encouraged me to do. To work with librarians and work with archivists and build partnerships with them. But they were incredibly helpful with a lot of these in terms of what does copyright law mean? What does all the weird legalese of copyright law mean? How do you track down provenance for various documents and artifacts?

Emily Clark:

One person who was really helpful for me was a librarian at North Idaho College who, they ended up with some of the physical property and intellectual property of the Aryan Nations, after the Aryan Nations were sued and went bankrupt. So some of the flyers that I had from them that had been given to a colleague of mine back in the '90s by people just on the streets, I was like, "How do I even try to find permission to publish things that were publicly handed out in the '90s? Richard Butler's dead. I don't really want to go tracking down the white supremacists who believe that they're following his message in Idaho. What do I do?"

Emily Clark:

And this one librarian was just so incredibly helpful with mapping out, okay, so this is who we need to ask. This person has passed away. This is who we need to ask. This person is completely out of the spotlight, because she's ashamed of her father's message. And so I found that the relationships that I've built through teaching projects with librarians and archivists, those were some of the most helpful people in this process. And the editorial assistant at Bloomsbury who I think, they've done some documentary readers, and Lucy was a godsend with helping Brad and I with a lot of these questions too.

Emily Clark:

So, yeah, just asking questions. As Brad put it, the courage to ask questions. And then just figuring out who do you ask? Who knows these things?

Richard Newton:

And you both published numerous works before. People are probably aware, Emily, of your book, *A Luminous Brotherhood: Afro-Creole Spirituality in Nineteenth Century New Orleans*. Brad, of course you co-edited *Stereotyping Religion: Critiquing Cliches*, which is a super popular book, of course, around these parts in the University of Alabama. What made this project different than those that you'd worked on before?

Emily Clark:

For me, this was the first time I had collaborated with somebody on a project. So that was different. It was nice having someone to easily bounce ideas off of and troubleshoot questions with. Often, so much of academic research work, you feel pretty isolated. You're in a library archive by yourself. You're in your office by yourself. So having someone to closely collaborate with was different for me, and I really liked it.

Brad Stoddard:

Well, I mean, your co-editor is your first round of peer review, right? You have to work together toward the project. I would think the two things that anyone who's thinking about collaborating with someone else, as a co-editor, I think the two things you have to ask first are, do you share the same work ethic? Because that can be a problem, if one has a stronger work ethic than the other. I think my work ethic is pretty solid, but Emily's is next level. And working with her in that regard was, I never had to worry that something wasn't going to be done on time. If anything, even though I like to hit deadlines, I knew that Emily... Emily, a deadline is a challenge to get it done in half the time, before the deadline.

Brad Stoddard:

So you have to have the same work ethic, or at least very close. No two scholars' ideas are going to match completely, but you have to have an honest conversation with yourself and say, "Does this other person mesh with me enough to where we can argue a point that we both agree on?" The book that was published probably wouldn't have appeared that way if I had done it by myself. I doubt it would have appeared that way if Emily had done it by herself. But we had a shared enough vision. And you have to establish that at the outset. So I think those two things really very important if you're trying to get at what makes as successful collaboration. I would think those two points are the starting points.

Richard Newton:

In your collaboration, did you work on single elements together? Like for instance the introductory essay to primary sources to come? Were you both working on those pieces together? Were some of those lines that end up in print are one person's and the others come from the other person? Or did you divvy up who gets to write which chapters?

Emily Clark:

Yeah, both. So the introduction was written by both of us. I think it was the first thing that we finished, because it was part of the original proposal, was the introduction and six sample chapters. So the introduction's written by both of us. We divvied up the work and then shmooshed it together, and it came together pretty well. I don't think of myself as a... I think of my writing style as very... It's like a sledgehammer. It just gets the point across. I say that as a good thing. I appreciate clear writing. And I think Brad is also very clear with his writing. So it went together somewhat well.

Emily Clark:

I think if you know our voices, you can probably tell who wrote which section, but we divvied that up, put it together, loosely edited each person's part, and then for the chapters, for the most part, those were, he had a list, I had a list, we read each other's editorial introduction to help the other one out. But I think that's another part of collaboration, and not only do you have a similar work ethic, but do you approach the writing process somewhat similarly? Is helpful too.

Brad Stoddard:

Yeah. I think for the most part the person who was responsibility for finding the primary source also wrote that particular editorial introduction. Each chapter has a primary source, or at least one primary source, if not multiple. And then an introduction to the chapter. So I think for the most part, the person who got the primary sources wrote the introduction. The only exception I'm thinking of to that was the Klan, right?

Emily Clark:

Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Brad Stoddard:

I did that intro and you got the primaries.

Emily Clark:

Yeah.

Brad Stoddard:

Yeah.

Richard Newton:

The title is Race and New Religious Movements in the United States of America, and I think a lot of people would read that title and say, "Well, I don't teach a class on race," or, "I don't work in the area of race so why should I engage this." It seems to me the argument of the book, though, says, "Not so fast."

Emily Clark:

Yeah. To most people who say, "I don't work on race, so is this applicable?" I just shake my head at them, and I'm like, "Oh, neat. You don't work on race. So you're just one of those people who say, well, gender's not important to my analysis. Think again. Think again, buddy." But I think one of the things that Brad and I are trying to accomplish in the volume is to say, to those of you who think only certain communities have race, deal with race, no, you need to think about race more expansively. White people have it too. White people do it. White people do race. White people do race in ways that are different than other communities.

Emily Clark:

That's one of the things, is actually, we would love it for people who don't think of themselves as scholars of race and religion to engage with the volume.

Brad Stoddard:

Even if you don't do new religious movements, this book, it spans all of United States history. We even get into some pre-colonial stuff, a little bit. So if you're teaching US history, US religious history, nothing whatsoever to do with new religious movements. The book would still be applicable.

Richard Newton:

Yeah, and I noticed in the introduction you bring in Claude Lévi-Strauss's term of bricolage as a way of thinking about the complexities of identity. So how did you make that an entry point into this volume, or how does that term do work for you?

Emily Clark:

One of the people who has used the term bricolage in a really useful way is Jacob Dorman and his work, both Chosen People, but also an article that he wrote a few years before that where he was looking at,

for lack of a better term, the new religious movement, alternative religious movement, amongst African-American, and using "Orientalist" understandings of religion to build a new sense of identity.

Emily Clark:

He uses it in such a smart way that thinks about how identity is never a solid thing. A complete thing. A neatly-bounded-off thing, but rather, as communities, as individuals, think about their identity, they're crafting something. They're cultivating something. They're doing things. They're pulling from things. They're creating something. Identity is not given to them.

Emily Clark:

So that kind of idea of bricolage, of pulling from multiple places to do something a little bit new, a little bit different, was useful, I thought.

Richard Newton:

And Weisenfeld's term religio-racial identity also seems to dovetail quite nicely with that, in making space for people interested in the context of the United States, to see how this is playing out. So how does that term operate for you in your discussion of race here? What is that term, for those who aren't familiar?

Brad Stoddard:

I think the term religio-racial identity refers to a constructed identity that includes both of those elements, race and religion, as a core, essential component, or as core essential components of the group's identity. So to be a member of this group, one, it is a religion and you need to acknowledge it as a religion, and two, it is a message that is directed toward a specific race, as constructed as a race, and we do get into critical race theory in the introduction. We get into the history of the category of religion in the introduction.

Brad Stoddard:

Having said that, the notion of religio-racial identity is just that. This goes back to the bricolage, right? They're constructing identities based on a religious identity combined with a racial identity, and those are essential. So from that, that was the starting point for the study.

Richard Newton:

What sort of groups make an appearance in the volume?

Brad Stoddard:

You have Handsome Lake, Conjure, LDS, Spiritualism, Ghost Dance Movement, KKK, Theosophy, Native American Church, Commandment Keepers, the Moorish Science Temple, International Peace Mission Movement, Nation of Islam, Peoples Temple, Aryan Nations, the Nation of Yahweh, and Odinism.

Richard Newton:

In the title of the book we get the phrase new religious movements, that these are all what in one space or another get classified as a new religious movement. And I know there's a lot of conversation about that in a variety of sub-fields, but in religious studies at large, how do you go about using that phrase,

especially versus the alternatives, whether it's alternative religious movements, or sects and cults? How do you end up using the phrase and what are you trying to do with that for your readers?

Brad Stoddard:

I actually started to struggle with that, because the more I read that's critical about that term, new religious movements the more frustrated I got with it. And starting the project, we're going to study new religious movements, I mean, obviously I was aware of these arguments.

Brad Stoddard:

So what we made clear in the introduction, and you can decide for yourself if you think this is too easy or an out, but we're saying, there's a point at which we actually say explicitly, "We're not saying these are new religious movements. These are just the groups that are commonly classified as new religious movements." I don't know if Emily would agree with this, but putting new religious movements on it, on the cover, might have just been marketing.

Brad Stoddard:

It does signify that we're talking about a certain set of groups, right? More or less academia knows what to expect when we talk about new religious movements, or emerging religious movements, or alternative religious movements. So we're not making any claim that they are new religious movements, it's just that these are the groups that are commonly discussed. And the label wasn't as important to me as the content of the theologies and the bigger argument we're making about the place of religio-racial identities in US history.

Emily Clark:

I think it's a loaded term. It means slightly different things for everybody. I thought it was interesting that when I got asked to write the piece for the Oxford Research Encyclopedia, they wanted to use alternative religious movements. There's the whole... I still remember Brad wrote his historiography paper in grad school on the idea of new religious movements, and I still remember very vividly at the seminar table with Dr. Porterfield and Brad going, "I don't think these are really new. Why do we call them new?" Really taking issue with the category and thinking about what each of those words mean on their own, and then what do they all mean together?

Emily Clark:

So it's a term that means different things to different people, but I think Brad put it really well there, that when you use the term, other scholars of religion have a good sense of what you're talking about, the kinds of groups that you're talking about, and so it becomes a useful term in that way, even as we might buck against it in other ways.

Brad Stoddard:

At the end of the day, I don't see us making a contribution to scholarship on new religious movements, the contribution that I imagine we're making is more on American religious history, and not even that, but just on American social identities.

Richard Newton:

What do you think someone who's interested in issues of social formation has to learn from this volume? What might be some of the big takeaways that this becomes a window into?

Emily Clark:

One thing that immediately comes to mind is, I know when I read things in American studies, I don't think they do enough to take religion seriously in American studies. And I think even the field of American history needs to take religion more seriously, and not just be like, "Oh, look, it's a church. It's a denomination. I'm talking about religion." No you're not.

Emily Clark:

So I think the volume makes a good contribution for making a case that religious identity is an important element of social formation. If you don't pay attention to it, you're missing a huge part of how people in the US have formed their social identities. Social identity is not one thing. Once you start tugging on one thread of a community's identity, you're tugging on all of these other threads too.

Emily Clark:

So I think one of the contributions it makes is that religion, when it comes to identity formation for American individuals and American communities, religion is a core thread getting woven in there.

Brad Stoddard:

I would just add to that the other side of that, the racial component. By studying the racial component that is, of course, incorporated with racial identities, we're learning how important race continues to be, even in the allegedly colorblind era, which, we all know better than that.

Richard Newton:

And what were some of your favorite parts to work on in this volume? Do you each have sections where you're like, "I'm looking forward to diving into this," or, "Curating this particular component"?

Emily Clark:

One of the threads that I think is really interesting in the volume is thinking about the Ku Klux Klan chapter, the Aryan Nations chapter and the Odinism chapter together. I think the volume, one of the arguments that it makes is that if you want to understand white supremacy and white nationalism in the US you need to understand religion. That that is a core component of it.

Emily Clark:

So, one of the elements of the volume that I really like is being able to include those Aryan Nations pamphlets that one of my colleagues was just handed on the streets of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho in the late '90s. That those are horrible documents, and they're reflective of a historical and contemporary significant movement in the US.

Brad Stoddard:

I think the section I was most looking forward to was Jim Jones, Peoples Temple, Jonestown. Jim Jones does something with race that none of the other figures do, where he tells all of his followers, he's trying to convince all of his followers that they're black. And a lot of them are African-Americans, but a lot of them aren't, and he's using blackness to signify outsidership. So he's trying to invert the negative

associations in dominant America, right? Racist America, that people call you black, "Well, damn right you're all black, regardless of your color, because you're on society's margins. So we as black Marxists, or we as black socialists, need to band together."

Brad Stoddard:

His configuration and use of the religio-racial identity was unique, so in that way, it was more interesting than reading about, I don't know, white power religion.

Richard Newton:

For those who are on the lookout for your volume, what should they be looking for on the cover? What's on the cover of your book?

Emily Clark:

The cover is a photo of Father Divine and the second Mother Divine. I think this was one of the images that I suggested to the press, so I say this with a smile. I'm personally happy that this is what ended up on the cover, in part because it was in emails with the current curator of the International Peace Mission Movement's materials that, it was such an interesting email exchange that I had with him, in terms of how they wanted things worded in the editorial introduction. I was not allowed to call Father Divine black. I was not allowed to call the second Mother Divine white. I had to make very clear in the edit... So when you read that editorial introduction, you will notice the prose is slightly different because it was a requirement from them that I say things like, "He was in a body that society would have deemed black." Brad and I even thought at one point, "God, this email exchange should be in the volume."

Brad Stoddard:

That's the data.

Emily Clark:

So part of the reason why I love that it's the two of them on the cover is because that was just such an interesting moment in securing publication rights, that also, it was so international peace mission movement-y for them to want us to make those distinctions.

Emily Clark:

Then I think the fact that Judith Weisenfeld has said a number of times that when people think about religion and race, they automatically, typically think about African-Americans. There's this... The normalization of whiteness has gotten into the study of race itself. So the fact that it's a mixed race couple on the cover, I think that also says something about the content of the book itself.

Richard Newton:

What are you seeing as the possibilities for using this volume in the classroom?

Brad Stoddard:

I think there are multiple possibilities. You can use it as a primary textbook. You can use it as you would any primary source reader, where it's secondary to the main textbook that you're using. I'm using it actually in my class on new religious movements, and I'm using it as a model of scholarship compared to other models of scholarship on new religious movements. So in my class on new religious movements,

we're studying multiple things. One thing is, of course, we're studying the stuff that we commonly call new religious movements. We also start the semester off by talking about methodological concerns, and about the study of new religious movements, but then we also study the scholars who study the new religious movements.

Brad Stoddard:

So we're reading a book by Hugh Urban. We're reading a book by Wright and Palmer called *Storming Zion*, which has a very different take on what it means to be a scholar of new religious movements. So this book, it's going to be the first primary source reader that we're using the class, but I'm also using it to juxtapose our model of scholarship to Wright and Palmer, or Hugh Urban.

Brad Stoddard:

This is something that I'm sure that you guys at Alabama do all the time. You're teaching your students to study the scholar. They're part of the data. So that's another way that you can use it, as an object to juxtapose with other models of scholarship.

Emily Clark:

I'm a huge fan of documentary readers in the classroom. I think for the majority of my classes, if possible, okay, maybe not the majority. For a number of my classes, if possible, our main text is a primary source reader. In part because I want students getting into the documents themselves. I can fill in some of the context gaps, but I want them to start getting into the act of understanding a religious world that is often foreign to them, or taking a religious world that they think they know, and making it foreign to them.

Emily Clark:

But also pushing them to start making some arguments themselves, even if their arguments are just starting in. As I always tell them, if you're in this class, welcome to religious studies scholarship, you are now a scholar. I'm going to introduce you to the data and we're going to make arguments. And when it comes to the groups that we label new religious movements, it's harder to throw documents at students in the same way that you might be able to with a more straightforward topic.

Emily Clark:

We wrote longer editorial introductions than most documentary readers that I am familiar with do, in order to give more of that needed background to understand the movements. On their own terms, and as an outsider. So I think one of the things that I'm hoping it will be useful for teachers in that sense is that it gives enough of a foundation for understanding the document before it throws the students into the documents.

Richard Newton:

And I think if anyone were to just pick up the volume and read through, the way that it curates multiple documents, but also these different movements and the people behind these movements, and the theories that help you do the curating itself, I think they're going to see that really the opportunities abound in terms of what can be done in the classroom, but hopefully what can be done in bibliographies in the study of religion in the United States, but the study of religion, broadly speaking. So thank you all

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very much for a great conversation, and for your great work with Race and New Religious Movements in the USA, a documentary reader out now with Bloomsbury.

Brad Stoddard:

Thank you, Richard.

Emily Clark:

Thanks, Richard.

Mike Altman:

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Mike Altman:

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