

- How might a reductionist theory of belief be used to analyze *The Lion King*?
- Why have religion scholars tended to focus on belief? Why is this a problem?
- What are three reasons why you should document your sources when writing an academic paper?

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3. Belief + Writing

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Anonymous Feedback

- Nice notes (“we Stan”)
 - ➔ Thanks!
- Linux user
 - ➔ Please email me



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Reminders

- No laptops in class
- Quercus discussion comments due today
 - ➔ Class participation marks

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Field Research Contract

- Visit religious site with one or two other students from your tutorial
 - ➔ Must be site no one is familiar with
 - ➔ No one in group can belong to that religion
 - ➔ Contract on Quercus (“Assignments”)
 - ➔ Info and advice on Q for finding a site
 - ➔ You can change contract afterwards!
 - ➔ Due **February 12** (worth 2%)

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Field Research Contract

- Bahá'í
- Buddhism
- Christianity
- Hinduism
- Indigenous traditions
- Jainism
- Judaism
- Islam
- Paganism
- ~~Scienology~~
- Shinto
- Sikhism
- Taoism
- Unitarianism
- Wicca
- Zoroastrianism

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Christians

- Anglican
- Baptist
- Catholic
- Coptic
- Global Revival (“Catch the Fire”)
- Jehovah’s Witness
- Lutheran
- Mennonite
- Mormon (LDS)
- Orthodox
- Pentecostal
- Presbyterian
- Seventh-Day Adventist
- United Church

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TAs + Tutorials

- TAs’ office hours in Historical Studies room NE4235
 - ➔ Amy: Jan 24, 1-3pm
 - ➔ Mark: Jan. 28, 12-2pm
 - ➔ Rachelle: Jan. 29, 3-5pm
 - ➔ Rony: Jan. 30, 3-5pm
 - ➔ Sara: Jan 28, 11am-1pm

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TAs + Tutorials

- TAs' email addresses on WordPress ("Contact")
 - ➔ amelia.porter[AT]mail.utoronto.ca
- Tutorial readings + homework + reflections
 - ➔ Updated each week on WordPress ("Tutorials")

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Today

- Finish "Belief"
 - ➔ Remaining theories
 - ➔ Belief + the study of religion
- Analytical writing
 - ➔ Film Paragraph assignment
- Visitor: Dr. Michael Kaler
 - ➔ Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre

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Belief!

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1. Meaning of "belief"?

2. Theories of belief (+ *Lion King!*)

3. Belief + the study of religion

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2. Theories of Belief (+ *Lion King!*)

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Theories of Belief

- Cognitive vs. affective beliefs (p. 117)
- Habitus (p. 125-6)
- Reductionist theories (p. 108-9)
- Non-reductionist theories (p. 111-5)
- Belief and common sense (p. 119-123)
- Cognitive approaches (p. 109-11)

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Reductionist

- Religion is “really” about something else (of THIS world)
- “humans make up images of god for human purposes”
- Reductionist theories: objects of religious beliefs are constructed by people
 - ➔ “Reduce” god(s) to products of human beings

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Reductionist

- Usually a critique of religion
 - ➔ Beliefs are false/meaningless
- Other (more positive) perspectives that still take a reductionist approach
 - ➔ Religious beliefs teach us values, provide our lives with meaning, etc.
 - ➔ Afterlife stories (last week’s reading)

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Reductionist

- “humans make up images of god for human purposes”
 - ➔ Xenophanes: horse gods look like horses
 - ➔ Feuerbach: God is a projection
 - ➔ Freud: father → God (comfort + protect)
 - ➔ *The Lion King?*

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“he lives in you”



“Father?”

“remember who you are”



“the one true king”

Reductionist

- “humans make up images of god for human purposes”
 - ➔ What is Simba’s purpose?
 - ➔ Relationship with his father
 - ➔ Internal struggle: should he go back home and help?

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Reductionist

- Possible meanings:
 - ➔ Belief in the supernatural can allow us to deal with feelings of loss
 - ➔ People we love become part of us in some ways, and we can connect with them (and learn from them) even after they die

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Reductionist

- Religion is “really” about something else (of THIS world)
- “humans make up images of god for human purposes”
- Most films for RLG101H assignment will not have supernatural elements
- Might be possible to apply reductionist theory to other abstract concepts

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Reductionist

- Abstract concepts:
 - ➔ Love, honour, tradition
 - ➔ Often helpful to look at concepts used as reasons for doing something
 - ➔ Lion King?

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Non-Reductionist

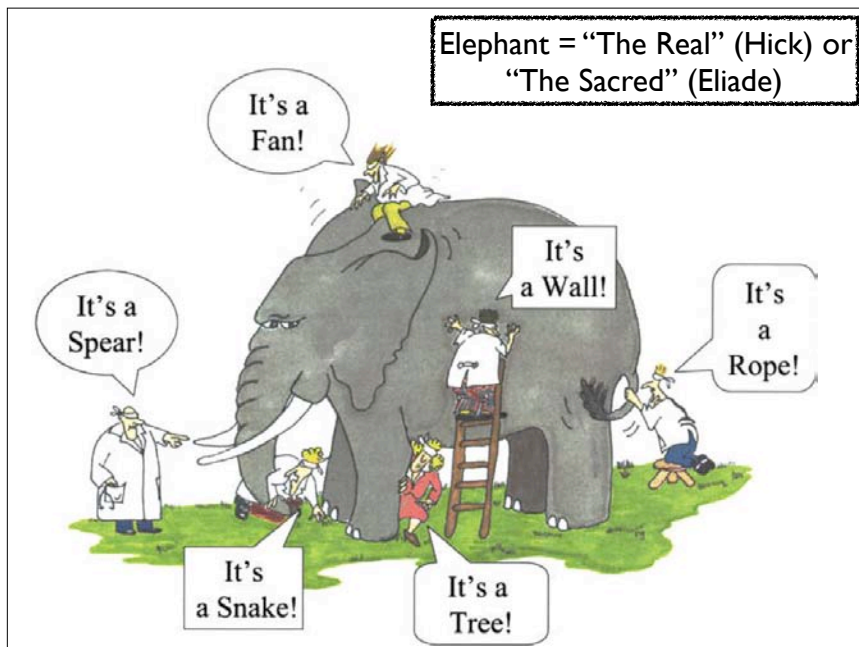
- Assume beliefs point to reality or “essence”
- Different religions = different perceptions
 - ➔ Blind men and the elephant
- Hick (“the Real”), Eliade (“the Sacred”)
- *The Lion King*: Mufasa really does live in the sky
 - ➔ Not a helpful or interesting interpretation!

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Non-Reductionist

- “This uniqueness is what is referred to as the ‘*sui generis*’ approach, that religion is a distinct element of human activity, that can be explained in solely human terms.” (p. 114)
- Error in quote: “can be explained” should be “**can’t** be explained”

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“Common Sense”

- Leach, Malinowski, Geertz, Evans-Pritchard, Tonkinson (p. 119-123)
 - ➔ Don't worry about this section
 - ➔ Main point: “belief” is complicated!!

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Cognitive Approaches

- Study of the brain
- Luther Martin
(note: he is NOT Martin Luther!)
- Non-reductionist (Whitehouse)
- Reductionist (Guthrie, Boyer)

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perception

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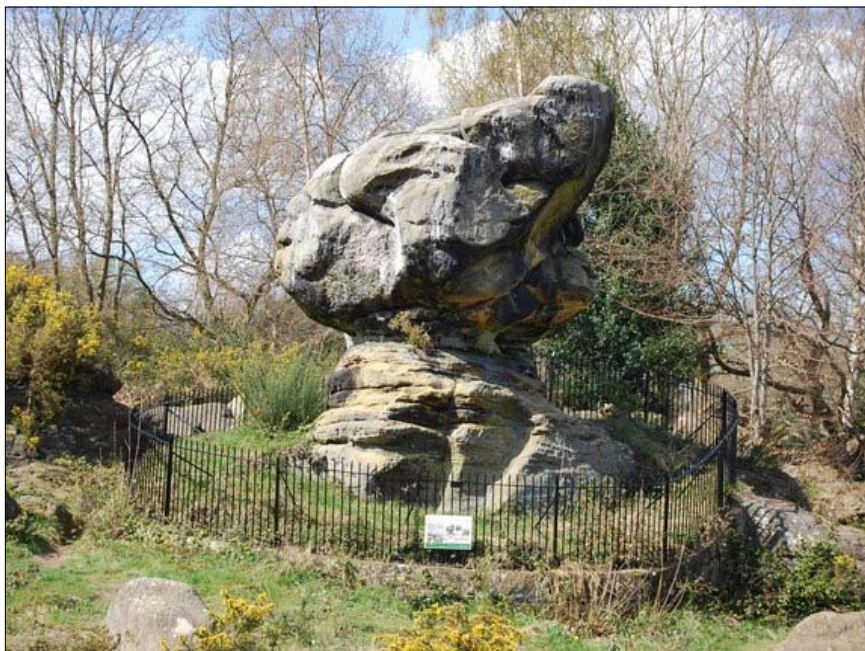
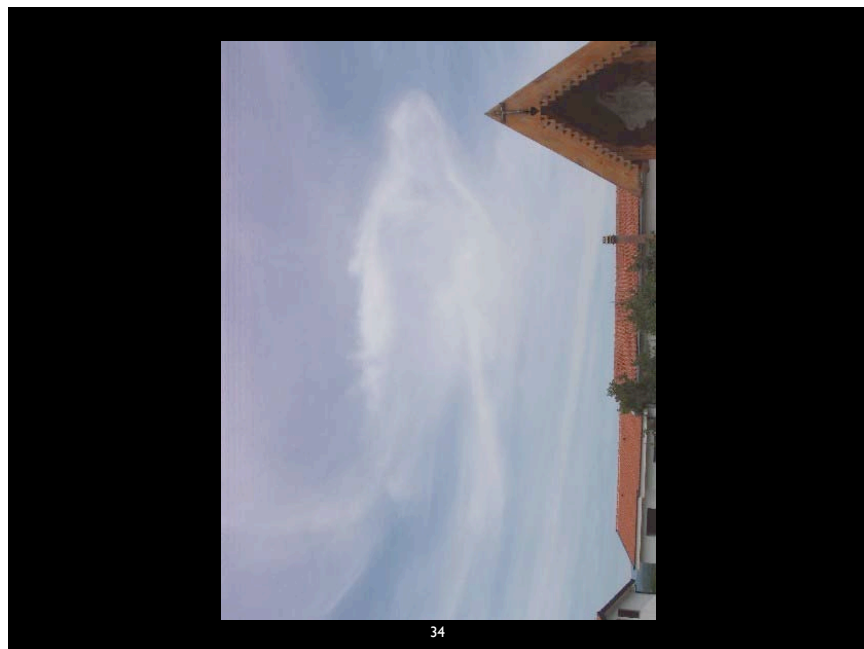
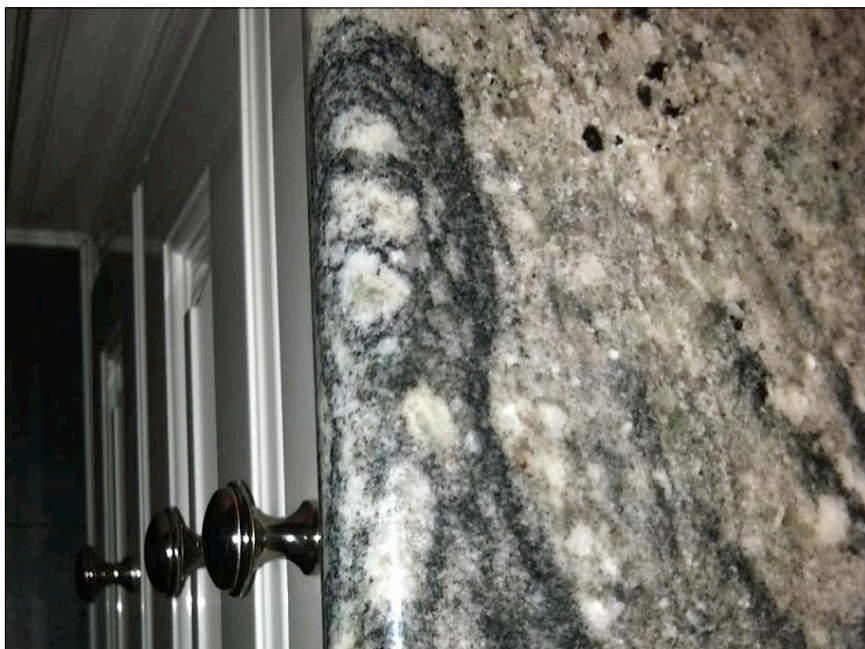
pareidolia



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3. Belief and the Study of Religion

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Study of Religion

- Protestant Reformation (Christianity)
- Martin Luther: 95 Theses (1517)
 - ➔ Catholic church: institution b/t person and God; “over-emphasis” on rituals
 - ➔ New Testament (Paul): **Faith** over **works**:
“You have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works.” (Ephesians 2:8-9)

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Study of Religion

- Tylor: Religion is **belief** in spiritual beings
- Why this focus?
 - ➔ Protestant Christian view
(NOT universal view)
 - ➔ Faith over works
- Scholars of religion from Protestant cultures

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Belief?

Study of Religion

- Problems with thinking that religion is all about belief?
 - I. Language issues involving “belief”
 - ➔ Various meanings in English
 - ➔ No equivalent word for “belief” in some languages

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Study of Religion

- Problems with thinking that religion is all about belief?
- 2. Sometimes belief is not (that) important
 - ➔ Different traditions
 - ➔ Different people within the *same* traditions / communities

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Analytical Writing!

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Analytical Writing!

1. Film Paragraph
2. Academic integrity
 - ➔ Turnitin.com
3. Grading rubric
 - ➔ Assignment components

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Writing is difficult

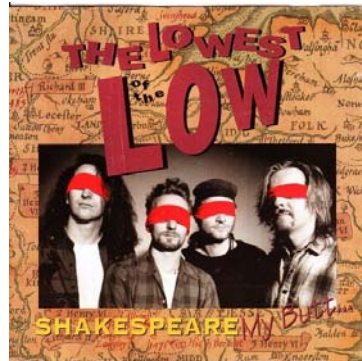
Writing = learning

Use your voice

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Song!

- “Just about ‘The Only’ Blues” by Lowest of the Low (1991)



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And I don't know if I'm coming
And I don't know if I'm going

There's a letter I can't open
And there's a song that I can't write
And there's a book that I can't put down

Here comes another sleepless night
Well, sure I'd like to work this all out
But I know I'm not that bright

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Let's take a walk down to The Only
And drink until our kidneys fail
And you can tell me that you want me
And I can think about betrayal
You can leave me thinking, drinking all night
'Cause that's the sharpest nail



I. Film Paragraph

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Film Paragraph

- Audience
 - ➔ Knows the film
 - ➔ Does NOT know the theory
 - ➔ Imagine you are writing to a reasonably smart high school student (NOT a prof!)
 - ➔ Importance of clarity
 - ➔ Write to communicate, NOT to impress!

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Film Paragraph

- Analyze film from TA's list using theory of belief
 - ➔ cognitive vs. affective beliefs / habitus / reductionism
 - ➔ When you look at (parts of) the film using a theory of belief, what **meaning** do you see?
 - ➔ Ask interesting **questions** about the film
 - ➔ E.g., Why does Simba go back to fight Scar?

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Film Paragraph

- Why this assignment?
 - ➔ Learn a theory by using it (=apply to data)
 - ➔ Learn that religion theories can help us understand stuff not obviously "religious"
 - ➔ Learn to see something familiar (film) in a new way
 - ➔ Practice one paragraph then do more
 - ➔ Have fun!?

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Film Paragraph

- Assignment documents on Quercus (under "Film Paragraph")
 - ➔ Instructions
 - ➔ Advice + sample paragraph
 - ➔ Sample paragraph with comments
 - ➔ Grading rubric (include with your assignment)

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Film Paragraph

- Deadline: 11:59pm on **January 31**
 - ➔ Submit to Quercus **and** turnitin.com
 - ➔ Submission instructions on Quercus (Assignments > Film Paragraph)

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Film Paragraph

- Late penalty: 1 mark (out of 20) per day
- Illness, crisis, etc.
 - ➔ Submit assignment as soon as you can
 - ➔ THEN submit documentation to me
 - ➔ Make sure you get help! (e.g., UTM Health & Counselling)

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2. Academic Integrity

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Documenting Sources

- When to document sources:
 - ➔ Direct quotes (need quotation marks and citation)
 - ➔ Ideas from texts → i.e., paraphrasing (need citation)
- This course only: when referencing an author that Nye discusses, just cite Nye
- See sample *Lion King* paragraph for all of the above

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Documenting Sources

- Use Chicago Manual of Style for citations and bibliography
 - ➔ Author-date
 - ➔ Only source: Nye's text
 - ➔ Don't formally cite film or include in your bibliography
 - ➔ Look at sample *Lion King* paragraph

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Documenting Sources

- Why document sources?
 - a) to show that you're part of a conversation ("breadcrumbs");
 - b) to give proper credit to other scholars for their work
 - c) to tell readers where to find more info on the topics you're discussing

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Academic Integrity

- Not okay:
 - ➔ Sharing your written work
 - ➔ Using another student's written work
 - ➔ Using your work to obtain credit in more than one course
 - ➔ Using another person's ideas without citations
 - ➔ Using another person's words without **quotation marks**

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