

What's left...

- Quiz on chapter 16 next Monday in class
- Social movement project due next Monday by 23:59
- Final exam on May 16th, at 9AM
- Attendance sheet will be posted on Moodle after next Monday's class

Warm up: The Cult of You

- What are the rituals you follow for good luck in your daily life?
- Or something you set intention of doing to avoid bad luck?
- In other words, what are your superstitions?
- If you really don't have one, try to think of one that you heard that is interesting.
- Discuss your superstitions with your neighbors.

Religion & Society



What Is Religion?

- **Religion**

- A system of beliefs and practices around sacred things, a set of shared “stories” that guide belief and action
- Religious beliefs help shape social behavior by setting expectations and helping people distinguish between right and wrong.

Sacred vs. Profane

- **Sacred** describes holy things.
- **Profane** describes ordinary, mundane things of everyday life.



Pascal Deloche/Getty Images

What Is Religion?

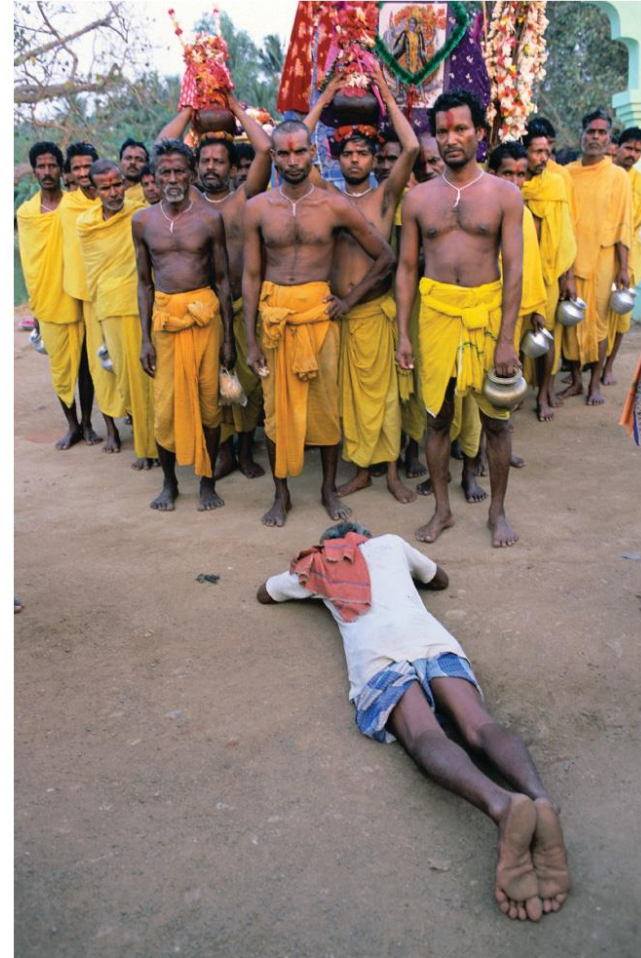
A Sociological Approach

- Sociologists do not evaluate the truth of any religion, but rather study the ways in which religions shape, and are shaped by, cultural institutions and the ways in which religions influence, and are influenced by, the behaviors of individuals.

Theory: Marx, Weber, and Durkheim

Slide 1 of 3

- ***Karl Marx*** argued religion was used to keep workers from questioning their oppressed position in everyday life by promising them riches in the afterlife.



Christophe Boisvieux/Getty Images

Theory: Marx, Weber, and Durkheim

Slide 2 of 3

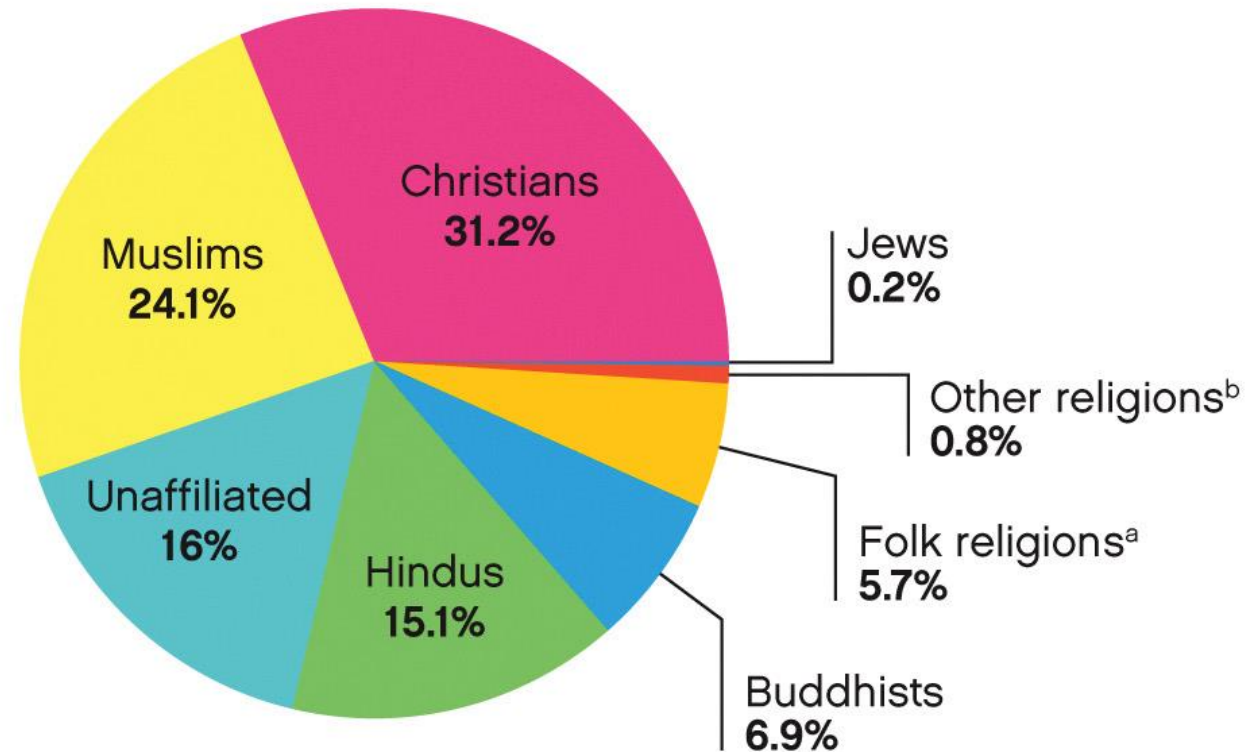
- According to *Max Weber*
 - Protestantism is a necessary basis for capitalism because it states that a person fulfills the duty to God through hard work.
 - According to Protestantism, making money is permissible, but spending that money on pleasure and personal enjoyment is not.

Theory: Marx, Weber, and Durkheim

Slide 2 of 3

- *Emile Durkheim* argued that religion is an “eminently social thing.”
- Religion’s function is to promote social unity or solidarity by strengthening the collective conscience.

FIGURE 16.1 Percentages of Religious Adherents Worldwide, 2016



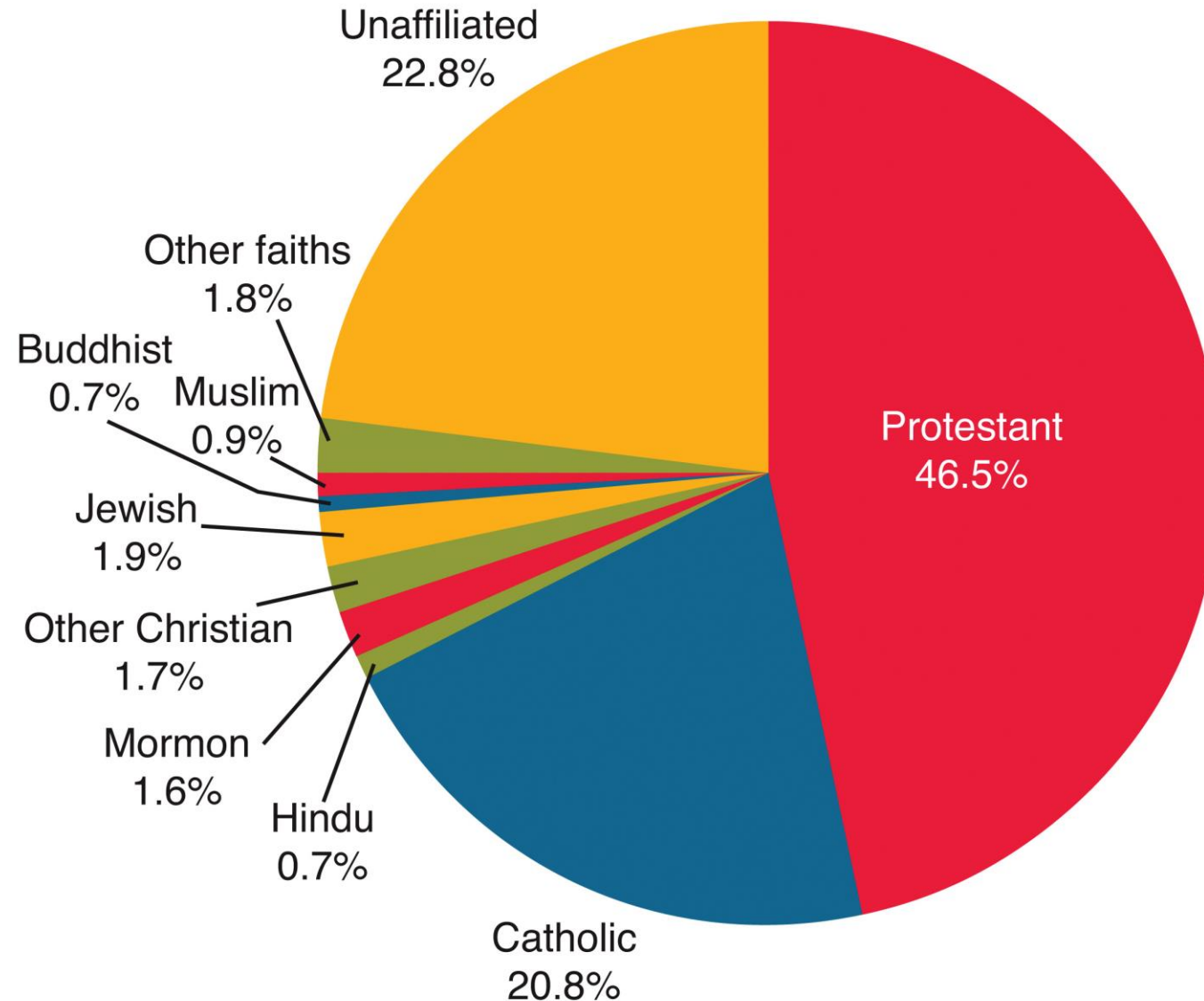
^a Includes followers of African traditional religions, Chinese folk religions, Native American religions, and Australian Aboriginal religions.

^b Includes Bahá'ís, Jains, Sikhs, Shintoists, Taoists, followers of Tenrikyo, Whoians, Zoroastrians, and many other faiths.

SOURCE: Hackett & McClendon, 2017.

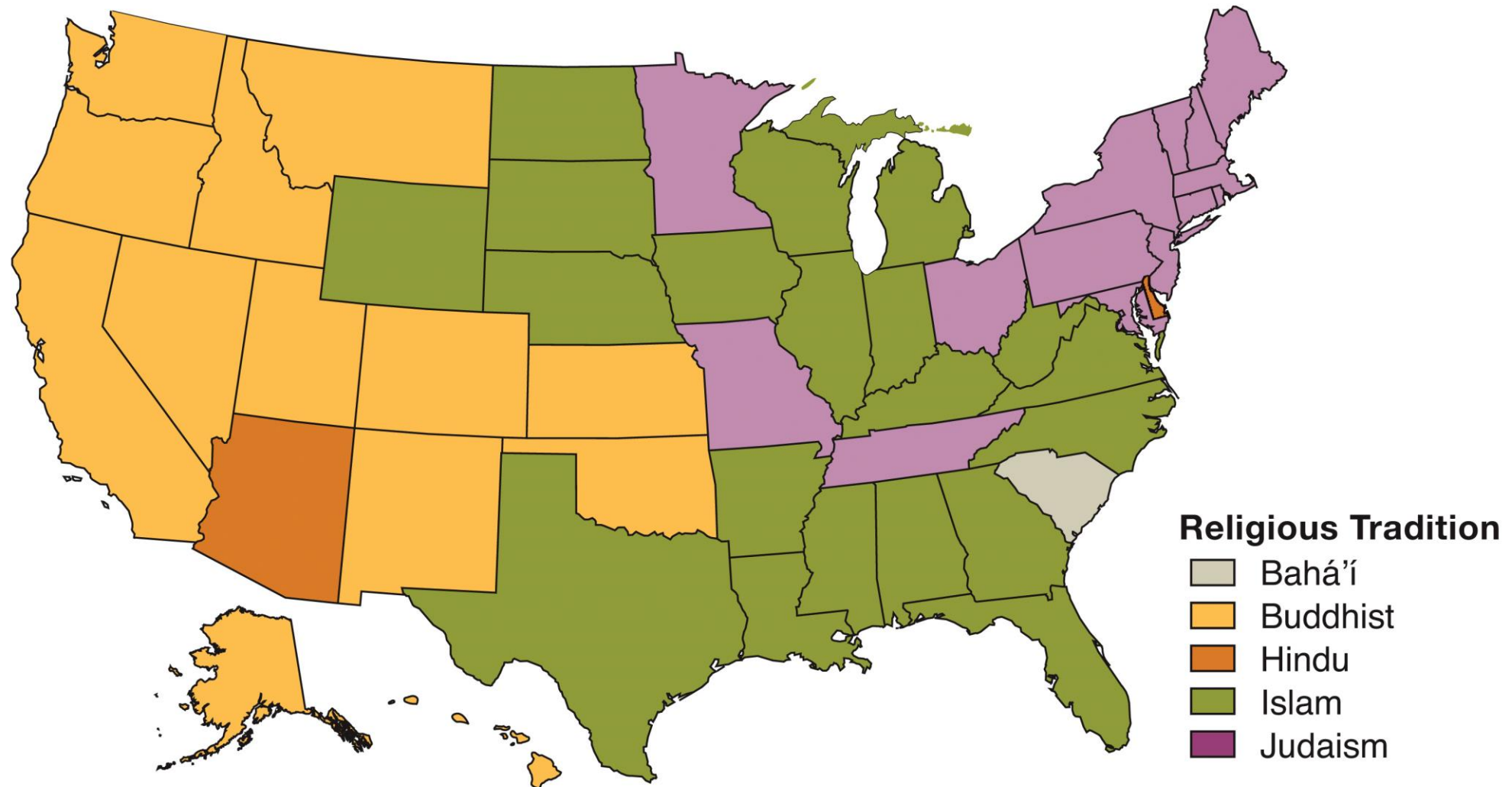
From "Christians Remain World's Largest Religious Group, but They Are Declining in Europe," by Hackett, Conrad and David McClendon. Pew Research Center, Washington, DC (April 2014)

Religious Composition in the United States



"Second Largest Religious Tradition in Each State, 2010," from the 2010 U.S. Religion Census, sponsored by the Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies. Reprinted with permission.

Second Largest Religious Tradition in Each State, 2010



SOURCE: Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies 2012.

Religion in America

- *Religiosity* is the regular practice of religious beliefs, as measured by church attendance.
- Thirty-eight percent of Americans report attending services weekly.

Secularization or Speculation?

Slide 2 of 2

- Attendance at religious services is declining overall in the United States, but the number of people who profess to have religious or spiritual beliefs is holding steady or rising.



Peter Frster/picture-alliance/dpa/AP Images

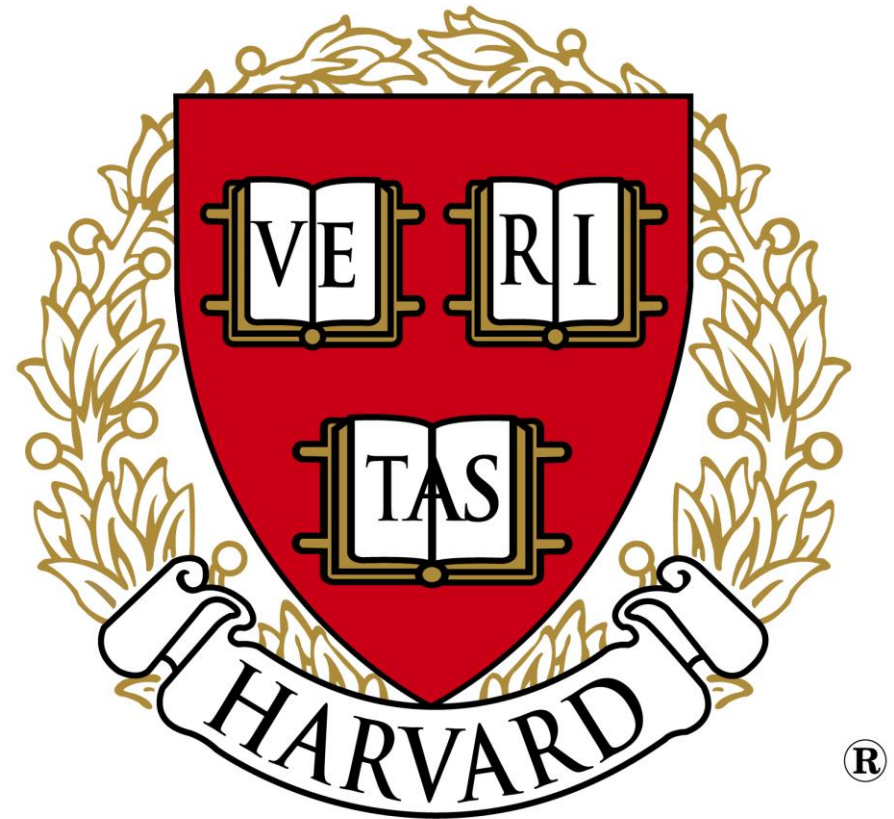
Religious Attendance



© The Star-Ledger/Robert Sciarino/The Image Works

Secularism

- **Secularism** is a general movement away from religiosity and spiritual belief and toward a rational, scientific orientation.



Pluralism

- **Pluralism** is the presence of numerous distinct religious groups in one society.
- Possible negative effect: having too many choices weakens the credibility of any one church.
- Possible positive effect: diverse religions can engage with one another to build a common sense of community.

What Is Religion? Functions

- *Religion*

- Shapes everyday behavior by providing morals, values, rules, and norms for its participants
- Gives meaning to our lives
- Provides the opportunity to come together with others to share in group activities and identity

At the Micro Level

- Microsociologists look at religion in terms of its meaning and uses in people's everyday lives.
- For example, **reflexive spirituality** involves looking to religion for meaning and wisdom rather than for absolute truth about the world.

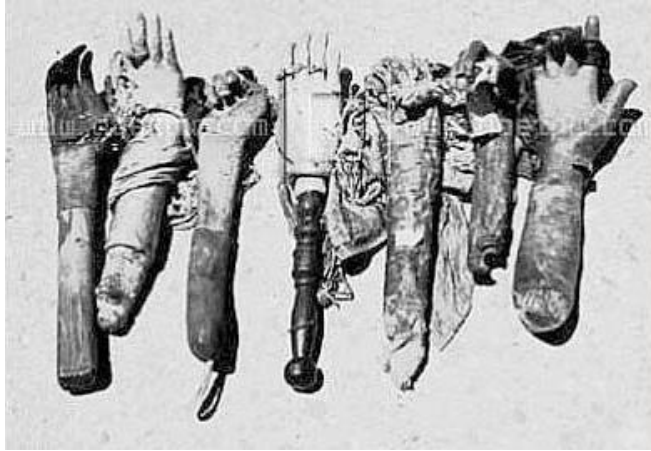


Joshua Lutz/Redux

What is Religion? Societal Effects

- Religion can be made dysfunctional by promoting inequality with sexist, racist, or homophobic doctrines.





WTF fun fact #4091

The phrase "kill them all, let God sort them out" comes from a Crusader in 1209 who wiped out a town of cathar 'heretics'. Couldn't tell them apart from Catholics, so killed em all

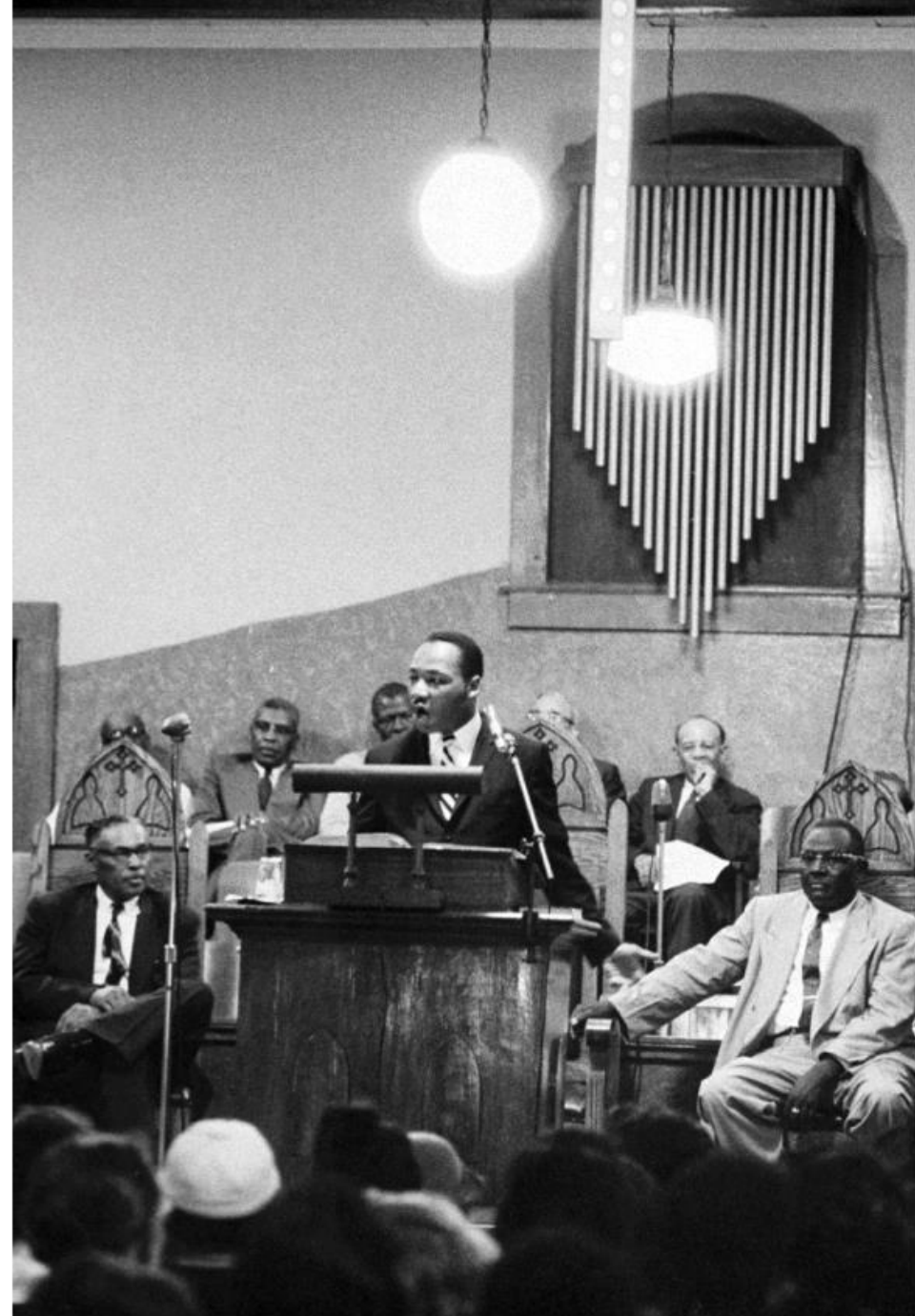


Discussion: Religion and Terror (ism)

What is Religion?

Societal Effects

- On the other hand, religious organizations have also been agents of social justice and political change.
- Religion played an important role in the civil rights movement.
- Black churches served as a strong organizational base for the work of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



Activity:

Letter from Birmingham Jail

- Go to Moodle- class activities- letter from Birmingham Jail
- Read the introduction to the letter. Then search for words “God”, “ Christian”, “Christianity”. How many times these words came up in MLK’s letter?
- Read two or three of those sentences and paragraphs that have the above key words. How did MLK use Christian belief to advocate for the human rights of Blacks in America?