

Complete Schedule for the 2007 Minns Lecture Series

**The Experience of Religious Varieties:
Psychology of Religion for the 21st Century**

by Branden Thornhill-Miller

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Psychology of Religion for the 21st Century

Although the psychology of religion has yet to receive the institutional support it needs to fulfil its promise, few disciplines are as important today for our self-understanding and collective future. Touching upon topics that range from the perennially fascinating—including prayer and healing, the neuroscience of mystical encounters, dreams, and near-death experiences—to the socially critical—such as fundamentalism, intergroup conflict, and terrorism—this talk will introduce the psychology of religion as a field whose time has come.

Wednesday, March 14, 2007, 7:30 p.m.

First Church in Boston, 66 Marlborough St., Boston, 02116, contact: Ruth Owen, 617-267-6730 ext.223

**Religious Refugees and Spiritual
Immigrants: the Psychology of Unitarian
Universalism**

What are Unitarian Universalists really like? What might theists, mystics, pagans, and scientifically inclined atheists who identify themselves as UUs hold in common?

Little is actually known about the personal experiences, individual differences, and psychological variables that have led people to this eclectic tradition. This talk will report some preliminary research revealing the nature of Unitarian Universalism in a new way, on a different level.

Thursday, March 15, 2007, 7 p.m.

King's Chapel, 64 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108, contact: Lucy Sewall, 617-227-2155

**The Modern Missionary Position: the
Psychology of Fundamentalist Sects in
Global Context**

Since 9/11 few of us have been able to look at religious and cultural differences in the same way. But what can psychology tell us about how we got from the burning bush to creationism, Al Qaeda, and George Bush? While critically evaluating fundamentalism this talk will also challenge us to recognize some of its shortcomings in ourselves. No matter what our theological stance, the mentality of terrorism may not be entirely alien to some of our own, very human impulses.

Wednesday, March 21, 2007, 7 p.m.

First Parish in Cambridge, 3 Church St., Cambridge, MA 02138, contact: Linda Baker, 617-876-7772 ext 202

**What it Means to be Human: Creativity,
Mental Illness and Religious Experience**

At least since Plato some kinship of spirit has been assumed between the poet, the madman, and the seer. But how could the noblest expressions of our humanity and of our greatest genius be related to the disintegration of mind? This talk presents some of my research developing the Extraordinary-Ordinary Noticing (EON) theory of personality, creativity, and religious experience. It shows how psychology may now offer a more satisfying, less pathology-oriented explanation of this definitively human relationship.

Thursday, March 22, 2007, 5:30 p.m.

Harvard Divinity School, Sperry Room
contact: Rebekah Cutler Ingram,
ringram@hds.harvard.edu

Lectures Outside the Boston—Cambridge Area:

Challenges for the Psychology of Religion: Fundamentalism, Meaning-Making, and the Future of Religion, Tuesday, March 27, 2007, 5:30 p.m.

Meadville-Lombard School of Theology, University of Chicago,
contact: Rev. Dr. John Tolley, jtolley@meadville.edu

Homo Syntheticus: Art, Religion, and the Future Human, Thursday, April 5, 2007

Starr King School for the Ministry, The Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA
contact: Rev. Dr. David Sammons, dsammons@sksm.edu