Religious and Cultural Perspectives on Immigration in the United States
March 9, 2017

Professor Bernadette Brooten, brooten@brandeis.edu
Office: Mandel Humanities 113, Monday and Wednesday, 2:20-3:20pm

Bernadette J. Brooten is the Kraft-Hiatt Professor of Christian Studies; of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; and of Classical Studies at Brandeis University, and the founding director of the Feminist Sexual Ethics Project. Professor Brooten’s primary areas of research include Early Christian Literature and History, Women and Religion, History of Sexuality, and the History of Slavery. Her publications include Women Leaders in The Ancient Synagogue: Inscriptional Evidence and Background Issues (1982), Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism (1996), for which she received three awards, and Beyond Slavery: Overcoming Its Religious and Sexual Legacy, which she edited.

Professor Xing Hang, xinhang@brandeis.edu
Office: Olin-Sang 118, Tuesday and Thursday, 10-11am

Xing Hang’s first project examined the Zheng organization and its unique and profitable role in tying together the seventeenth-century maritime Asian trading lanes while struggling to define its legitimacy in terms of Confucian tenets and the imperial dynastic symbols of the Ming and Qing courts. Hang’s interests are now drawing him to a study of Chinese communities in Southeast Asia from the seventeenth to twenty-first centuries to understand their institutions, state-building efforts, collaboration with multiple state and imperial actors, and how these elements intersected with the rise of nationalism in China itself.

Moderator: Professor Kristen Lucken, klucken@brandeis.edu
Office: Mandel Humanities 125, Thursday 10am-3pm

Kristen Lucken lived and worked in Moscow and the Former Yugoslavia from 1990-1998, during a time of great historical change in Central and Eastern Europe. Lucken's research focuses on ethnic and religious identity in an age of globalization. She is particularly interested in the religious and educational lives of second-generation immigrants and the ways social institutions can facilitate or hinder their incorporation. A three-year study of Bosnian refugees living in New England unveiled the many ways religious institutions have eased their integration following resettlement. A four-year project with Peggy Levitt focused on second generation Indian-Americans and the transnational nature of their moral and religious development.

Marci McPhee, mcphee@brandeis.edu
Office: ASAC 31, Wednesday and Thursday 3:30-4:30pm

Marci McPhee is director of campus programs at the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life. She oversees the Sorensen Fellowship program and other on-campus programs and events. McPhee has been involved in the planning of the Center from its inception in 1998, and played an integral role in the development of the array of Brandeis Rabb School programs, including a founding role in Genesis at Brandeis for high school students. She teaches EL16a, "The Immigrant Experience in Waltham: A Service-based Practicum." McPhee is also a member of the inaugural Advisory Council of Friends of the Waltham Family School, Inc., and serves as faculty advisor for the Brandeis undergraduate group Net Impact, "using the powers of business to make a positive net social, environmental and economic impact." During the 2009-10 academic year, she taught English in the Marshall Islands in the Pacific through WorldTeach.
Chaplain Maryam Sharrieff, sharrieff@brandeis.edu

Maryam Sharrieff is the Interim Muslim Chaplain at Brandeis, an educator, lecturer, linguist, researcher, and student of the development of Islam in America. Her research projects have examined the African-American Shi’i Muslim Community; Latino Converts to Islam in America, The legacy of Female Scholarship in Islam and Gender and Its Linguistic Implications in the Qur’an and Torah. Ms. Sharrieff’s research interests also include the Muslim contribution to Sicilian Society, the Representation of Faith in and on Film, Homosexuality in Canonical texts, American Muslim Women’s Leadership, Fundamentalism Across Faiths and America’s Founding Father’s Interactions with the Muslim World. Sharrieff has studied and conducted research in Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Italy, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria and the United Arab Emirates. She has presented on Muslim women’s leadership at the World Parliament of Religion’s Conference. She remains committed to building and contributing to institutions conducive to the pursuit of human excellence and to developing a career as a scholar, educator and an academic administrator, particularly in working to establish a better understanding of Islam in America today.

Professor Mitra Shavarini, shavarini@brandeis.edu
Office: On leave this semester

Mitra Shavarini is a lecturer at Brandeis, affiliated with Women’s and Gender Studies and the Department of Sociology. She has over twenty-four years of higher education experience, including Harvard Graduate School of Education. Shavarini’s research focuses on women’s education in Muslim societies as well as Immigrants & Education in the U.S. She has two academic books that deal with each of these topics: Educating Immigrants: The Educational Experiences of Second-Generation Iranians and Women & Education in Iran and Afghanistan. Her most recent book, Desert Roots: Journey of an Iranian-Immigrant Family is altogether more up-close and personal. In it, she tells of the pursuit of the American Dream by one immigrant family: her own.

Professor Ellen Smith, esmith2@brandeis.edu
Office: Lown 204

Ellen Smith is Associate Professor and Director of the Hornstein Jewish Professional Leadership Program, and an affiliate faculty member in the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies and the Heller School of Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University. Trained as both an academic historian and a museum curator, her teaching at Brandeis includes courses on American Jewish women’s history, immigration history, visual and material culture, and museum studies. An author or curator of over 30 articles, catalogs, and museum exhibitions, she also co-directs advanced training programs at Brandeis for Jewish professionals and organizations. Ellen is principal of Museumsmith, a company that consults to museum, historic preservation, and interpretive history projects throughout the country. A popular speaker and educator, she has won numerous leadership awards and sits on the boards of several non-profits.

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