

The Globalization of Religion

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Introduction

This simulation will focus on the globalization of religion. Religions have crossed many boundaries, having been spread by immigrants, refugees, aggressors, or by the founders of this country. Ultimately, cultural differences have changed religious beliefs and traditions within religious practices. Our group simulation will attempt to examine the globalization of religion by considering whether and how it might be possible to improve the understanding and acceptance of diverse religious beliefs and cultural differences. We will attempt to leverage such opportunities by engaging the advancement of technology, communications, organizational strategies, economics, and sustainability in an interdisciplinary approach. Four world religions have been selected for this simulation, and although names have been changed, the religious profiles are from real world religions. The issues intend to explore through this simulation are the cultural, political, economic, and technological influences on the globalization of religion.

Discussion of Interdisciplinary Issues – Culture

Culture and religion are inextricably interwoven. Indeed, on the surface, one could argue that they are the same. What is the difference between culture and religion? In the purest sense of definitions, religion is a subset of culture. Culture, itself embodies the language, traditions, kinship systems, shared values, and beliefs that define a society.

Pretend you can now zoom up to 50,000 feet above the earth's surface, so we can have a broader view of the cultural and religious landscape. Now, from our vantage point, we might see "American culture" and "American religions" as a subset below us. What is American culture? How is it different from Canadian and Mexican culture? Go back to the basic definition: language, traditions, shared values, kinship systems, and beliefs.

Gain some more altitude for an even broader view: At 100,000 feet, we begin to see interconnections spanning the planet: Roman Catholicism is not just “American.” It is also Cuban, Italian, Canadian, and everything else. But, there are different shades of Roman Catholicism, and one begins to see that the various stories about faith and values are told through cultural paradigms: In Mexico, Our Lady of Guadalupe helps provide cultural context to divine miracles, while in eastern Europe, Medjugorje provides equally valuable context. Similarly, in Islam, Buddhism and in Native religious traditions, common religious themes get retold within a cultural context in order to deepen understanding and meaning.

The interdisciplinary aspect of globalization and religion can be seen in the increasing use of communications technologies to bring religious values either into harmony or direct clashes. CNN recently broadcast a story of an American Jew who “prayed” at the Wailing Wall through a cell phone held up to the wall. Television also is bridging and connecting the world and religion. We see that in the form of globally broadcast religious events, such as Billy Graham revivals.

From our vantage point at 100,000 feet, we find an intersection between science and religion: When science discovers a new way to save lives using the tissue of aborted fetuses, for example, then we enter an interdisciplinary realm of biomedical ethics. This is a world where philosophers, physicians, rabbis and priests work closely to sort out complicated questions, such as “When does life begin? When does it end?” “How did we get here?” “Who has the right to create life or end life?”

Politics and religion also create another fascinating interdisciplinary arena. In the United States, the concept of “separation of church and state” comes into direct conflict with conservative politicians who like to declare that America is a “great Christian nation.”

So, what happens when two believers of the same faith, from different cultures come together to discuss whether human cloning is ethical? How does culture play a part in the ultimate position that the world's Muslims will take on the cloning debate? We can see that a global cohesiveness defined merely by religious boundaries is not practical or possible. Rather, the rapid diffusion and sharing of knowledge between cultures that is occurring because of globalization will likely result in more mutations of religion, which will add more variables to the question of what the final impact of globalization will be on societies on Earth.

Discussion of Interdisciplinary Issues – Politics

From an interdisciplinary point of view the link between politics and religion raises many issues. Politicians are mostly concerned with the issues that they or their constituents want to promote. In some cases these issues may not provide a benefit for the majority of the public. Globalization has the same effect. Globalization may benefit some but not others.

Religious globalization may not benefit most and could harm some of those touched by it. Some of the potential problems with religious globalization are related to virtues, values and ethics. To a large extent major world religions have already seen globalization. Some form of most religious factions and denominations exist throughout America and the rest of the world. Exceptions to religious globalization are Cuba and others whose virtues, values, and ethics are controlled by the politics of those countries.

Since the development of America, politics and religion have been very closely related. The United States was founded on the principle of religious freedom. In our country we have the right to practice any form of religion or not practice any religion at all. The first Amendment to our constitution ensures this freedom, but it also provides for the separation of church and state. This demarcation relates to our government not establishing or supporting any one particular

religion. However, in reality, religions and politics have helped shape our country's culture, laws, and economic development.

In some countries, religions and governments are close to one in the same. One can argue that politics and religions remain integrated even as religions globalize and spread to other countries. Most of America's religions were introduced by the people that immigrated into our country. The basic religious beliefs remained intact, however, cultures and religious practices were adapted to our democratic form of government. As religions globalize, religion continues to be used to promote political issues and politicians use religion as a political tool.

Discussion of Interdisciplinary Issues – Economics

There is little doubt that the economy drives the marketplaces of individual countries and, more importantly, the global market today. In the last 30 years or so, the world economy has expanded globally like no other time in history. It is generally believed that this economic growth can be traced almost identically to the tremendous growth in the use of the internet. That development, along with the strategic placement of satellites throughout the universe, has allowed money to change hands in vast sums as quickly as one can generate an electronic command at the keyboard in front of the operator.

It would not be correct, however, to think for a moment that this tremendous growth in the world's economy has happened in a vacuum. There have been many other influencing factors, which have worked together in an interdisciplinary fashion to forge this growth. Issues such as politics, technology, and culture, have worked together to generate this incredible expansion.

This economic growth has for the most part helped the countries where it has taken place. Many theorists believe that this economic expansion globally has been fueled mainly by the United States, and, to a lesser extent, by the Eastern European bloc. The radically held belief is that most of the rewards of economic globalization have been realized because of what is commonly known as “Westernization” or “Americanization.” The expansion of the large American consumer brands to a position of global dominance lends credence to this way of thinking.

Religion and the economy are more closely tied than one would expect. As the economy has grown in the major countries of the world, the main religions of each of those countries have grown financially because its members have accumulated more wealth and are able to contribute more dollars to finance the basic financial needs of the religion as well as its growth and development. A look at the investment in buildings and architecture by the major religions of the world speaks volume about the financial strength of major religions such as Christianity, Protestantism, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Mormonism, Pentecostal, etc.

The economic growth of religions has also been driven by technology since mass media can be used to spread the word and provide many of the benefits of church membership in the confines of one’s own home. Missionary work is generally thought to be a traditional method of evangelizing people that existed in generations gone by. However, missionary work is alive and well in many third world countries where large religions send their young people to convert the native people and expand the foundation of their religion.

Today, most religions are not relegated to the few countries where their roots began. Many religions are worldwide in one way or another. Religions have been able to globalize because of their economic strength and willingness to expand beyond their natural geographic

borders to the global marketplace, in a way that is very similar to what has taken place with economic growth.

Discussion of Interdisciplinary Issues -- Technology

Technology, within the scope of religious globalization, plays a major role in how and to whom the religion and its doctrine extends. Human civilization has never been without technology, and has relied upon the potential of technological advances in order to advance its own social branches. It can be stated that human civilization at some point in history was without religion and had no purpose to create one. Up until the age of global dominance by the human race, it was necessary to establish a universal form of living and thinking due to the ever-growing need to control and manipulate the minds and hearts of people all over.

In today's world, where information and its instant quality are readily available to even the most remote of sectors in the world, religion, if it is to survive, has adapted and utilized technology and its light-speed ability to maintain a grip on its members. Religion and its ceremonies are still practiced within a temple or church, yet we see the influence of technology upon religion as we now have a DVD version of the bible for all Christian followers to appreciate, not only in the digital versatile disc version, but there are possibly half a dozen channels on basic or digital cable dedicated to religious practice and teachings. Religions have also made the leap onto the information superhighway, which brings religious teachings into every home and monitor in a global setting.

If by word of mouth alone, we have seen religion spread globally over thousands of years, today with the inception of instant technological gratification, we can assume that religion will continue to strive and flourish. Technology is a major player in the world and allows for a greater rate of transformation or resistance to spiritual definition.

Summary

Religion is an abiding force crossing through culture, politics, economy and technology.

Ways we see religion's influence:

- Debate about whether humans have the right to create artificial life forms or to end life,
- Nation states that integrate religious values into their governments and politics. In the extreme, we see Islamic theocratic governments in such places as Iran. In democracies, we see Christian values playing a key role in foreign affairs,
- Technology is bringing different religious values together, via television, radio, cell phone and the Internet (recall the Jewish guy praying at the Wailing Wall via cell phone, and that an international television broadcast, CNN, made it known to the world?).
- Economic changes on a global level also are influencing the spread of religious values, enabling prosperous nations to influence less prosperous nations.

Roles of Class Members

GROUPS

Neo-eclectic	American convert
Neo-eclectic	Radical group member
Neo-eclectic	Jack/Neo-eclectic
Neo-eclectic	Major clergyman (group leader)
Neo-eclectic	Traditional follower

Earth Dwellers	Headwoman (group leader)
Earth Dwellers	Medicine Woman
Earth Dwellers	Elder
Earth Dwellers	Tribal member
Earth Dwellers	New-Ager

Universalist	Hillary Gore
Universalist	Universalist monk
Universalist	Universalist woman in U.S.
Universalist	Darma Lanai (group leader)
Universalist	Phil Bryant

Romanite	Great Holy One
Romanite	Disciple
Romanite	Religious defector
Romanite	The Mightiest (group leader)

MEDIA REPORTERS

Media Reporter	Conservative
Media Reporter	Liberal

PROCEDURE

The first exercise in our simulation will include a brief indoctrination of group members in order to reinforce both religious and cultural beliefs. For the purpose of this simulation, virtues, values, and ethics will be folded into religious beliefs. The events that we will simulate take place in the near future in multiple places within our existing world. Participants will also get an introduction to their roles and tasks for the simulation. As our group members learn about religion and culture, news breaks out about the first of a series of events that will shape the dynamics of this simulation. (*Wire Reports-New York. Media reporters, see your “Wire Reports” and Role Descriptions on how to break the news to the groups. The class won’t know what this is until the reporters break the news to everyone.*) **(20 minutes: 6 p.m. to 6:20 p.m.)**

The second exercise in our simulation will involve group members acting within their assigned roles to respond to the event. Each will attempt to work with other religious groups in an effort to build alliances, gain resources and survive the situation. As this is happening, the second world event will strike. (*Media reporters: See “Wire Reports-London” and break the news to the groups. The rest of the class won’t know what this news is until the reporters break it to everyone.*) **(20 minutes: 6:20 p.m. to 6:40 p.m.)**

BREAK: 6:40 p.m. to 6:50 p.m.)

The third and final phase of our simulation will be a final world event that the groups will also have to contend with, while also dealing with the first two world events. (*Media reporters: See “Wire Reports-Washington”*) **(20 minutes: 6:50 p.m. to 7:10 p.m.)**

The last part of our simulation (20 minutes) will be dedicated to class discussion.

Class Discussion (20 minutes: 7:10 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.)

Discussion group leader:

We want to explore what happened to each religion and its followers during the three major events that occurred during the simulation. We will start with World War III:

- What was the impact of this world war on each religion?
- Did anyone or any religious group find another religious group that they could align themselves with during this difficult time?
- Did any group decide not to take a position on the war and stay out of the mainstream and try to live life as normal as possible?
- Did any person or religious group decide to support the position of the terrorists? Why?
- Was your faith stronger, weaker, or the same as a result of this world war?

The next major event was the bird flu pandemic that swept the world

- What impact did this pandemic have on each religion?
- Did anyone or any religion lose faith because of this world wide calamity?
- What did each religion do to help those who were stricken by the bird flu? If any person or religion spent time during this crisis helping others, was there any attempt to convert others to your religion?
- Did any religious group align themselves with another religious group to fight the pandemic? If so, why was that particular religion attractive?
- Was anyone willing to give up their religion to find a cure for the bird flu?

The last major event was the discovery that human cloning had been legalized

- What was the reaction of each religion to this discovery?
- What religion(s) took the position that cloning was against the beliefs, values, and ethics of their religion?
- What religious group(s) made the decision that this significant discovery was acceptable from a religious perspective? If so, why was that position taken?
- Did any religious group wish that human cloning could have been legalized before the bird flu pandemic so that each sick person could have been cloned back to their healthy self?
- Was your faith stronger, weaker, or the same as a result of this world war?

Recap:

- How many people came through these three major world events with the same faith as they started? With a stronger faith? With a weaker faith?
- How many people changed their religion as a result of one of the major world events? If so, what caused you to change your faith?
- As religions become globalized and lose some of their fundamental and traditional roots, can they be as strong if exposed to major world events?
- Did the forces of politics, culture, the economy, and technology in the three major events give religious groups and its members a reason to consider change from their core beliefs?

Wire Reports

From The Disassociated Press

Note: Each of these items will be reported differently, depending on whether the reporter was radical or conservative. “Reporting” will be conducted via class announcements that simulate a news broadcast.

The media reporters can get creative here, if they so wish. Wouldn't it be great if they had time and resources to videotape their newscasts on a set resembling a television news station? Then, they could just play it on TV at the appropriate time in the script, while also roaming the room and gathering reaction. A home video camera, with a poster-board backdrop would do! (*See role descriptions for reporters.*)

NEW YORK (DAP) – UN bombed, world war breaks out -- Religious fundamentalists have bombed United Nations headquarters. At least 100 world leaders have been seriously injured, are dead or are missing. Declaring that global efforts to reduce dependence on Mideast oil is an evil plot, the fundamentalists vowed more attacks worldwide. Global leaders, in an emergency meeting this morning, have declared war on several Mideast nations, who they suspect of harboring and helping the fundamentalists. But, other world leaders, who are allies of these Mideast nations, have counter-attacked, mobilizing their forces and vowing that they will repulse any attack on their people or soil with “full force,” including nuclear missiles, in order to protect their sovereignty. U.S. military officials say the actions amount to a new global world war. Meantime, a group of fundamentalists calling themselves, simply, “The Resistance” have taken responsibility for the U.N. bombings and have issued a statement: “God, himself, has said that we must strike down our enemies. All who do not repent now, and allow us to live freely and prosper are infidels, who are not fit to live,” the statement said. The group issued a list of demands that included requiring all women to quit their jobs and return home to their husbands, and for the release of all “political prisoners” who are members of their faith from all jails worldwide. The terrorists remain elusive, and the war has touched the capital cities of almost all nations worldwide with suicide bombs, chemical bomb attacks and the bio-terror attacks. It seems no country is safe.

LONDON (DAP) -- Global Pandemic Strikes -- Bird Flu hits 70 percent of the world's countries, in spite of world health efforts to stop the spread of the disease. At the current rate of the virus spread, one fourth to one third of the global population will be affected within 12 months, according to health officials. Third World countries are hit the hardest, not only because they depend on poultry as a key cash export, but also because they are dependent on birds for subsistence. Earth Dwellers are particularly concerned about the spread of this new virus, which reminds them of the time 500 years ago when European explorers introduced pig flu viruses that wiped out more than two-thirds of their population. But farmers in eastern Europe say that they will never give up their chickens, which they are dependent on.

WASHINGTON (DAP) -- Human Cloning is Legalized -- Science has perfected cloning, and now world leaders have legalized the process. U.S. President Elmer Fudd says cloning is a viable

way to deal with disease because, now, terminally ill patients can simply clone themselves and therefore ensure virtual immortality. Fudd says cloning also silences the religious debate over research involving the tissue of aborted fetuses. However, conservative Christian evangelical groups now worry that humans have made themselves more powerful than God by finding a way to become immortal. But, liberals disagree with the Christian conservatives, saying that the scientific breakthrough will level the playing field for all human beings, ensuring all are guaranteed a healthy body and a good life. Environmentalists worry that the carrying capacity of Earth will be burdened by a growing population of voracious super humans.

Religious Profiles

At-a-Glance

RELIGIOUS PROFILES **“Neo-eclectic”**

Followers in America: 7 million (over 2 times Episcopalians)

Worldwide Followers: 1.5 billion

Locally: 50,000

Ethnicity: Diverse, 1/5 of all African slaves were Neo-eclectic

Culture: Conservative / fundamentalists

Basic beliefs:

- There is only one God (no God but God)
- Belief in angels
- Peace through submission to God
- God is genderless
- Revealed books and scriptures
- Belief in Adam, Noah, Moses and Jesus
- Belief that Jesus was born of a virgin, without a human father
- Judgment day
- Welfare tax
- Fasting once per year
- Pilgrimage
- Virtue of chastity
- Fundamentalists do not believe in paying interest or getting paid interest
- The group is willing to share religious beliefs but does not actively recruit new members
- Forbidden to wage wars for the sake of acquiring worldly glory, power, or rule
- Fundamentalists believe offenses from homicide to assault are punishable by retaliation
- Renunciation of religious faith is punishable by death

Resources:

- Oil
- Medical practitioner
- Technology support
- Financial
- Global presence

RELIGIOUS PROFILES

“Universalists”

Followers in America: 2 million

Worldwide Followers: 325 million

Ethnicity: Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, China, Japan, India, Korea, Vietnam, Tibet,
Canada, United States

Culture: Factions include extreme asceticism, conservative, fundamentalists &
traditionalists

Basic beliefs:

- There is no God
- Need to overcome craving (tanha)
- Need to find Enlightenment
- Need to find nirvana and become a saint (arhat)
- Do not believe in the cycle of life and death
- Man does not have a soul
- Believe in Four Noble Truths
 - Noble truth of pain, noble truth of the cause of pain
 - Noble truth of the cessation of pain, noble truth of the way that leads to the cessation of pain
- Need to follow Eightfold Way in their life
 - Right views, right intention, right speech
 - Right action, right livelihood, right effort
 - Right mindfulness, and right connection
- Meditate daily for long periods of time
- Darma Lanai is religious leader of Universalists in Tibet
 - All Darmas are reincarnated one from the other
- Teach non-violence and compassion for all living beings
- Five basic rules of moral conduct
 - No killing, stealing, lying, improper sexual conduct, or intoxicants

RELIGIOUS PROFILES

“The Romanites”

Followers in America: Over 100 million

Worldwide Followers: 2 billion

Ethnicity: Completely Global.

Culture: All world cultures

Basic Beliefs:

- All followers and religious hierarchy abide to the book of “The Mightiest”, and of his teachings about tolerance, patience and prosperity.
- Major builders of society and of structures erected many major temples throughout the globe to honor “The Mightiest”
- Mainly preoccupied with maintaining tradition and ritual as part of everyday life.
- Pray to not only “The Mightiest” but also to fallen disciples of “The Mightiest”.
- They carry a belief of spirituality, that the body is a natural mechanism utilized for the journey onto the realm of the mighty.
- Romanite perspective: Of Life, Earth, Space, Time, all coincide within “The Mightiest”.
- Taught under a strict discipline of mind and body and fulfilling the potential of both. Known for their ability to assemble, defend, attack or respond to extreme circumstances.
- Assemble for ceremonies.
- Known to act as dual church and state.
- Convert people with great frequency.
- Behave in a highly hypocritical sense.

Resources:

- Technological superpower
- Abundance of followers
- Militaristic superpower.
- Financial dominance
- Global influence
- Psychological prowess
- Scripture abundance

RELIGIOUS PROFILES **“Earth Dwellers”**

Adherents in America: 1.7 million

Worldwide adherents: 300 million

Local adherents: 400,000

Ethnicity: More than 1,200 known tribes worldwide; 515 tribes in America; 26 tribes locally.

Culture: Earth-centered, polytheistic. Some earth-dweller cultures focus on shamanism and animism. Many cultures that have come into contact with Western societies have created hybrid religions, mixing Christianity with traditional religious beliefs.

Basic beliefs:

- The earth is our mother. The sun is our father.
- Belief in many deities, each with specific purposes.
- Peace through harmony with the universe. Balance must be reciprocal.
- The Creator is genderless, benevolent, and allows free will.
- No sacred texts; rather, religious traditions are maintained through oral history and ceremony.
- Belief that many objects/items/landmarks are sacred, such as point of emergence into this world at the center of the village, wind holes in the earth where prayer with deities is possible, lightning strike points that contain supernatural powers that can bring wealth and success.
- Belief that non-tribal peoples may be alien race, not of this world.
- The entire tribe’s current existence is just one of many “stages” of existence foretold in creation stories; currently, we are in the “Fourth World” and will continue to evolve eventually into the Fifth World.
- Life after death: People will return to the earth as water vapor, manifest as clouds, bringing life-giving rain and moisture to all beings on the ground.
- Prayer through ceremony requires the use of “medicine,” a sacred plant that allows tribal members to commune with the Holy People, or deities.
- “Medicine” is anything that brings spiritual and physical healing. Not to be confused with Western-style science of healing. Medicine can be prayer. It can be sacred herbs used in ceremony. It can be spiritual guidance offered by a medicine woman, hence the term “That is good medicine”
- If religion were politics, the people would be extremely conservative U.S. Republicans, strongly pro-family, anti-abortion, requiring order and harmony. However, bleak social conditions prompt the people to side with liberals, who offer welfare programs.
- Members are born into the religion. “In-laws” are expected to support and practice the religion. Occasionally, outsiders might be “adopted.”

Group Descriptions

GROUP DESCRIPTION

Neo-eclectics

This religious group has gained much more acceptance and understanding of its beliefs over the past five years. Awareness of its size and diversity in America has been increased by the intensified discussions and desire to learn more about this world religion. As Americans learn more about the Neo-eclectics, we discover more similarities than differences in our beliefs. We find Romanite and Mediterranean roots in this religion and discover that they too are moral, ethical, and patriotic Americans.

The cultural and ethnic diversity of the Neo-eclectics in America helps provide a link to cultures that may have once been considered distant or alien. In that sense, this religious group has helped globalize religion in America. The challenges Neo-eclectics face are connected to the tragic occurrences of 9/11 and the fundamentalist religious extremists which claimed responsibility for those events.

GROUP DESCRIPTION

Romanites

With a history extending deep into the annals of human civilization, the Romanites have been successful in converting over 2 billion people of the world population. Under the leadership of the Great Holy One, Romanism preaches the word of The Mightiest that states, “Heart, soul, and body are our transitory shells that will release us unto the path and dwelling of The Mightiest and prosperity will reign for all.” The Romanites, in a physical sense are the ultimate globalizers, unfazed by adversity, Romanite followers are beyond relentless when spreading the word of The Mightiest. The Romanites are of a strict discipline and exercise tolerance, but will not hesitate to defend with a broadsword in hand. Never shy from political and social conflict and altercations, when pushed to the limit, the Romanites unite and create an immovable object capable of mass destruction.

Romanite Responses to Global Crisis:

World War: The Romanite religion, like all other factions, moves into action and assembles itself for protection and survival. With many members within the countries at war, the Romanites are deeply affected by the outcome of the war and are doing everything possible to ensure an outcome favorable to the Romanite way of life.

Pandemic: In reaction to the pandemic, the Romanites are divided between two points of view, which are: 1. They see the pandemic as a reaction from the Mightiest due to the large scale of destruction and disobedience and many see no need to try and survive or help anyone in need. Thus they have opted to retreat to the most remote of areas of the world and have come in contact with other peoples and cultures. 2. The other half also believes that the pandemic is

punishment from the Mightiest due to the same reasons, only in that they take on a proactive role and organize themselves to try and save as many people as possible and search for a cure to the problem.

Cloning: Again we see the Romanite religion divided on all fronts. One portion of the religion thinks that cloning in any form encountered goes against any of the Mightiest teaching because the Mightiest believed in the uniqueness of life and character. Even though nature reproduces at an immeasurable rate, human life contains a special quality, that of choice and action. Thus cloning is found to be immoral and blatant blasphemy. The Romanites opposed to this view, in principle share the views of the side that is against cloning; their difference is in how they exercise their values. In favor of cloning, these Romanites see the potential behind it and see it as an opportunity for all Romanites to become omnipotent and reflect the Mightiest more accurately rather than in defiance.

GROUP DESCRIPTIONS

“Universalists”

This religion has its base in India and is more than fourteen centuries old. The founder's name was Siddhartha Gautama, who was the son of the king at that time. Siddhartha began a journey at the age of twenty-nine to find the true meaning to life. It took him six years, but he found the state of enlightenment. From that time on, he was known as Universa, which means the Enlightened One. The Universa lived until the age of eighty. When he died, he left his teachings behind, which are known as the dharma, for all of his followers.

Universalism is very similar to Hinduism except that this religion does not rely on any god or force beyond the Universalists themselves. They believe that they need to find enlightenment on their own. Universalism does believe in the cycle of birth and death, which was revealed to Universa during his meditation. They believe that they are bound to this cycle, because they crave to repeat it. They call this craving tanha. They also believe in karma as do the Hindus because this helps them to break the cycle.

Universalism is different from Hinduism because they do not believe that man has a soul. They believe that they live in a state of anatman, which means non-soul in their language. The most important part of the belief system of the Universalists is the need to follow what they call the Eightfold Way in their life. The Eightfold Way is merely right views, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right connection. Their primary goal in life is to follow this Eightfold path so that they can break the cycle and find nirvana.

They meditate for long periods of time so that they can eliminate their cravings or tanha and be released from the cycle. Nirvana is the release from the cycle and once anyone can reach this state, they are known as arhat, which is the same as saint in Christianity. The most famous Universalist in the world is the Darma Lanai, who is the spiritual and temporal ruler of the Tibetan Universalists. The current Darma is the fourteenth ruler of Tibet. Universalists believe that once the Darma Lanai dies, he is reincarnated into the body of his successor. The lanai, which means the superior one, is the clergy of the Universalists.

Universalism has grown throughout the world as globalization has taken those beliefs to many countries. There has been tremendous growth in the Asian countries as well as in countries

in the Western hemisphere, most notably in Canada and the United States. The westernized version of Universalism is much different than it is in India or Tibet as Universalists in America do not spend all day, every day, in meditation as the traditional Universalists do. Universalists here have no set day of worship but they do gather in temples to listen to a priest, monk or nun talk to them about the teachings of Universalism. There is also a time for meditation during this one-two hour gathering. Western Universalists do try to start their day with a period of meditation so that they can rid themselves of all that is bothering them, such as frustration, unhappiness, and confusion and prepare to start the day and get on to the more important things in their lives.

GROUP DESCRIPTIONS

Earth Dwellers

From the Navajo in northern Arizona to the Maori in New Zealand, more than 300 million indigenous peoples inhabit Earth in 2006. In their own native languages, the names they call themselves almost always translate to “The People,” or “Human Beings.” These culture groups have formed their own belief systems unlike any of the other larger religions on Earth. The belief systems of indigenous peoples revolve around connection to the land, and is less concerned with political and religious history in order to focus more on peoples’ relationship with the Earth, and sacred objects within the earth. A common theme among indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere is a connection to space – space ringed by four sacred mountains in each of the four cardinal directions: East, South, West and North. Creation stories of indigenous peoples often start in a different dimension – an underworld from which The People emerged into this current world. Life today is cyclical and symbolic, governed by seasons that dictate which ceremonies are to be held in order to maintain balance and harmony with Earth and the universe.

Few indigenous peoples are untouched by globalization. Even those who remain isolated in the jungles of South America, Africa and Southeast Asia have felt the impact of globalization in one form or another – from the incursion of Christian missionaries, to logging, to eco-tourism, to in-migration by settlers hunting for more land for housing and ranching. In the face of globalization, indigenous peoples face several issues, or problems: The loss of language is first among their concerns, for without language many of the sacred ceremonies that ensure that The People can maintain harmony with the universe cannot be conducted. So, along with loss of language is the loss of culture. Many indigenous peoples now adhere to both Christianity and their traditional religion, as globalization takes more of a hold on their cultures.

Roles and Tasks

ROLES & TASKS

Neo-Eclectics

HANDOUT

Major Clergyman: This is the main expert in the religious sciences such as jurisprudence, ethics, philosophy and mysticism, and will teach the followers. This person has studied the religious doctrines and is a religious expert. At the beginning of the simulation the Clergyman will instruct the group about Neo-eclectic beliefs.

ROLES & TASKS
Neo-Eclectics

HANDOUT

American Convert: This person is a college undergraduate that has converted to the Neo-eclectic religion. Having been lured to the group's way of life with promises of gold and hidden treasures after having felt that Romanicism had failed her, this person finds herself at peace. She is a pre-med student that is attending college using her military educational benefits after her service in Iraq.

During the simulation she will be deeply involved in trying to help others, putting them first before her own needs. She will be engaged in research and become prematurely involved in her future field. Among other issues, this simulation will test her true interests and dedication to her selected career.

ROLES & TASKS
Neo-Eclectics

HANDOUT

Traditional Follower: This person is slightly at odds with the American version of the Neo-eclecticism. However, is supportive and wants to help the rest of the group understand the true value of reverting to the old-style religion.

During the simulation, this person will view activities through a conservative / fundamentalist paradigm. His goal will be to try to keep others aligned with the basic beliefs of the neo-eclectic religion. He will stop at nothing to ensure that the neo-eclectic religion and culture will prevail. He is a middle-aged professional with a large family and is prominent in the community.

ROLES & TASKS
Neo-Eclectics

HANDOUT

Radical group member: This person is bent on using this religion to advance her political agenda and gain support from others of her same ethnicity. This person's ethics are questionable, and viewed as a bad element, although still accepted into the group. She questions some of the strict religious beliefs and at times questions her faith.

During the simulation, this person will use the events to promote her cause. She will attempt to convince others to join her movement to promote a radical racial group that will survive world events using covert tactics. Her activities are not limited to working within her immediate group.

ROLES & TASKS
Neo-Eclectics

HANDOUT

Jack Neo-eclectic: This person was born into the religion by means of ancestry and culture.

Having been born in India, Perry is a Neo-eclectic by default, but not by choice. Perry enjoys a drink now and then, frequents nightclubs, loves to dance and have fun. Perry is twenty five years old, is a recent college graduate and still in search of a significant other.

During this event, Perry will begin to mature in her thinking. She will find herself torn between embracing her religion and becoming more of a traditionalist, or become a radical follower.

Her social skills will play a part in helping her survive the events in our simulation.

ROLES AND TASKS **Universalists**

HANDOUT

Darma Lanai: This is the spiritual and temporal ruler of Tibet who has the unique ability to translate the teachings of Universa into words that is followers can easily understand and follow. He is the fourteenth Darma Lanai and believes that he is reincarnated from the Darma before him. He is a spokesman around the world for peace and human rights and he has received the Nobel peace prize for his work. He is an incredibly spiritual man.

Tasks/goals for this role: The primary goal for this role during all three issues is to find converts to the religion.

During the World War, the primary goal will be to preach the message of non-violence and compassion for all living beings. The focus will be to speak to the men of other religions and convince them of this message.

During the pandemic, the goal will be to encourage other people to step away from the mainstream of the world and find inner peace through meditation. Again, the principle contacts will be men of other religions.

During the period of legalized human cloning, the goal of this role will be to oppose cloning and stress the importance in the belief in the cycle of life and death. Cloning is not natural, only karma can break the cycle of life and death. Again, the goal will be to convince men of other religions that cloning is not acceptable.

ROLES AND TASKS

Universalists

HANDOUT

The American actress, Hillary Gore: She has been a Universalist for approximately thirty-five years. She is a good example of a westernized Universalist. While she does start her day with meditation, she does not live her entire life in the search for nirvana. She does not practice asceticism and she does not live the life of a monk. She does, however, try to live her life in peace and harmony with those around her.

Tasks/goals for this role:

During the World War, this nationally recognized actress stresses the need for non-violence and an opposition to war on all accounts. She is an active and vocal campaigner for peace at any cost. She actively looks for converts from among as many women from other religions as possible to her way of thinking.

During the pandemic, the actress is an active spokeswoman for the rights of all people to obtain a flu shot. She is also very active in the fight to exterminate all poultry as a way to control the pandemic, even though this action may mean less food for the poor.

During the period of legalized human cloning, the actress is a vocal spokesperson against the cloning since it violates one of the basic beliefs of her religion. She actively campaigns for converts to Universalism to get people to focus on what is truly important in their lives. Again she appeals to women of other religions in her appeal.

ROLES AND TASKS

Universalists

HANDOUT

Universalist woman in America: This is an American woman who practices the westernized version of Universalism. She attends the Universalist congregational gathering and is not required to wear any head covering. She can also wear jewelry and open-toed shoes. She does not even have to wear a dress, but is allowed to wear casual clothing so that she can comfortably sit on the meditation cushions that are on the floor of the temple. She is also allowed to sit and meditate with the Universalist men.

Tasks/goals for this role:

During the World War, the Universalist woman sides against the U.S. government in the war against the terrorists. She seeks out other women to join in the cause to stop participation in the war. She actively recruits other woman to support her position for non-violence and peace.

During the pandemic, the Universalist woman takes on an active role as a nurse who tends to the needs of the sick. Her goal is to help them with their suffering and prepare them for death. She tries to get converts to her religion.

During the period of legalized human cloning, the Universalist woman rallies the women that she gathered to protest against the war and instructs them to go to talk to other women and men to oppose cloning and support the normal life cycle of birth and death.

ROLES AND TASKS

Universalists

HANDOUT

Universalist monk in India or Tibet: This individual is a traditionalist from the old world who spends his life in meditation and the search for nirvana. He does not agree with the westernization of Universalism and is appalled by what is allowed in the Western world, namely that women can participate in the services and meditations as equals to men and that men do not have to spend their lives in meditation but can dress as other western men and hold jobs in the capitalist world.

Tasks/goals for this role:

During the World War, the Universalist monk spends a great deal of his time in meditation. When he enters any discussion with worldly men from other religions, his goal is to try to convince them that a life of asceticism is the only way to find peace.

During the pandemic, the monk again focuses on meditation and prayer as a solution to the problems of the world. He actively recruits other religious men to join him in meditation and to escape the harshness of the world.

During the period of legalized human cloning, the monk preaches to all those men that will hear him that cloning is not normal. Only karma can help a person break the cycle of life and death.

ROLES AND TASKS

Universalists

HANDOUT

Phil Bryant, the coach of the NBA Los Angeles Ponders: This man is a convert to Zen Universalism, who believes that he can use the teachings of the Japanese form of Universalism to help his players win ballgames. He does this by helping his players learn the real truth about religion and life for themselves, through their own experiences of meditating and praying together, reading the teachings of Zen, learning to solve the riddles of Zen Universalism called koans, and by playing together as a team.

Tasks/goals for this role:

During the World War, Phil Bryant uses his national recognition to encourage all athletes and sport lovers to oppose the war and pray and meditate for peace, even though that might not appear to be the manly thing to do.

During the pandemic, the coach uses his influence to make vaccines available to followers of other religions. His belief is that if religious people survive the pandemic, then the world will be a better place to live.

During the period of legalized human cloning, Phil becomes very materialistic and actively campaigns for all of his former great stars to be cloned into a younger version of themselves so that his team can win another World Championship.

ROLES AND TASKS Earth Dwellers

HANDOUT

Headman (or headwoman): This is the tribal “leader,” who is consulted on everything from hunting patterns to decisions about what to do about contact with outsiders. The headman serves as a mediator to settle disputes, to call groups together when decisions must be made, and to represent the tribe when contact with outsiders is necessary. Works in close collaboration with a council of elders and the medicine people.

Tasks / Roles for this role:

During World War: Establish political dealings with the outside world, ensuring economic prosperity for the tribe. Who cares about World War, when we have rampant poverty and social issues plaguing our reservations? Of course, all our young boys are going off to war to help provide classified language code to be used against the enemies, and that’s a concern – we want our boys brought home.

During the pandemic: In the 21st century, the tribal leader must find ways to interact with non-tribal world to ensure that the tribe remains recognized as a sovereign nation, with government-to-government dealings with states and nations around it. Other governments will attempt to dissolve treaties with the tribe in order to get at its natural resources to be used as medicine to stop the pandemic; the headman must guard against that constantly by political lobbying, lawsuits and tribal initiatives. GOAL: Make a deal with neo-eclectics to win legislation protecting the tribe’s sacred herb from anti-drug laws.

During cloning era: Your concern will be about how the genetic mapping of DNA might be used by political leaders to contend that you are not really a legally recognized tribe, because you have ancestry that includes your conqueror, and therefore your status as a sovereign nation should be dissolved. As a result, you are against cloning.

ROLES AND TASKS

Earth Dwellers

HANDOUT

Medicine man (or medicine woman): This is the religious leader who conducts the ceremonies required to ensure harmony with the Earth, such as a planting ceremony at the start of spring, a winter ceremony for maintaining health of the people, as well as ceremonies for people who are marrying, sick or dying, or going off to war. The medicine man also offers interpretations and guidance on how to deal with unexpected or unknown situations. Works in close collaboration with headman and elders.

TASKS/GOALS FOR THIS ROLE:

During world war: Maintain order and harmony of the group; offer insight and meaning to unexplained world events when asked and only after the proper approach from tribal members includes the reciprocal giving of an offering, such as coral, jet-black stone, or tobacco. Advise headman on political strategy, ensuring it is in alignment with religious traditions of tribe.

During pandemic: Same as during war, except now you have additional burden of conducting healing ceremonies for ailing tribal members.

During cloning: Same as world war and pandemic. You should offer the tribe's religious view on cloning, which is that people emerged into this world from a different world, and that cloning would violate the original creation story of your ancestors, and therefore threatens to anger the gods and bring wrath and ecological and medical disharmony onto the tribe.

ROLES AND TASKS **Earth Dwellers**

HANDOUT

Elder: This individual is a keeper of tradition and stories, ensuring that the language and customs of the tribe are passed down from generation to generation. Elders also are consulted when families are seeking to make decisions about whether to barter or make trades with other families within or outside the tribe.

TASKS/GOALS:

During world war: Stay relatively non-political, working more closely with medicine people, to ensure oral history is passed down correctly to the next generation. Remind group what it was like before the world war and pandemic, so that the tribe maintains a cultural perspective. Before war and pandemic, life was peaceful and harmonious because everyone could focus on reaching consensus on issues such as what crops to plant, when to plant them, and what stories to tell the children. Tell a creation story around a campfire to inspire people to seek help from the medicine woman for current global troubles.

During pandemic: Remind tribe that pandemic is a sign of global imbalance caused by greedy corporations that want to exploit Mother Earth without giving anything back.

During cloning: You might be in favor of it, if it will allow you to finish your tasks in this world before getting too old. Disagree with medicine person, reminding them that the creation stories are meant as metaphors. Maybe the gods allowed cloning to be discovered so that the tribe could be ensured a future ...

ROLES AND TASKS Earth Dwellers

HANDOUT

Tribal member: The typical tribal member plays an important role in indigenous culture. This is because tribal cultures tend to function communally. When important decisions are made that would affect the entire tribe, then usually a consensus – often a unanimous agreement – is required before the headman is authorized to enter into an agreement on behalf of the tribe. Therefore, a single tribal member can veto actions that would affect the entire tribe by simply refusing to go along with the recommendations of the headman, the elder or the medicine man. Tribal members also serve an important function in indigenous religion: They pray to the gods, and make offerings to the gods, thus ensuring a sacred circle between The People and the divine realm is complete and continuous.

TASKS/GOALS:

During world war: Oppose tribe's decision to allow young people to be sent off to war.

Let headman know how you feel.

During pandemic: Pandemic might be punishment brought about because tribal members failed to leave an offering on one of the four sacred peaks encircling ancestral lands during the last hunting season. Be sure to lobby the headman and let him/her know whether you think a deal should be made with outsiders to legalize the sacred prayer medicine. You might be influenced by evangelical religious groups from the outside, who have taught you that you do not need to ingest the herb in order to pray to "God." Or, you might believe that you need to do both traditional prayer and the new prayer of the evangelicals. Ask the medicine man for a ceremony to deal with world events. Be sure to bring an offering to the medicine man of either coral, jet-black stones, tobacco, a bag of Blue Bird flour or a can of coffee before making your request.

During cloning: Side with the elder.

ROLES AND TASKS Earth Dwellers

HANDOUT

New Ager: This is an individual who has become disenchanted with the traditional religions of the world, from Romanites to Universalists. This role depicts a very “worldly” individual who has sampled a bit of almost every religion, and has taken a bit of everything from each religion while rejecting those things that he/she has found unacceptable. Now, this person has settled on the “ultimate” religion – that of the Earth Dwellers, who this person believes actually are gods descended from an alien race who landed on earth thousands of years ago in a spaceship. (This is something the rest of the Earth Dwellers do not personally believe about themselves.) The New Ager is extremely wealthy, and does not work, and therefore has all the time in the world to devote to helping support the Earth Dwellers. While the Earth Dwellers do not particularly like this individual’s outlook, the tribe tolerates the person, who seems sincere. They also do not mind the money and the power and influence this person is able to bring through political and economic connections. Although, some of those connections are as equally flaky as the New Ager.

TASKS/GOALS:

During world war: Seek out new “converts” from the other religions. There is a “harmonic convergence” taking place soon, and you want to let people know that they can solve most of the world’s problems if they will just join you for this important alignment of the universe at exactly 18 minutes into the simulation! You must all gather in the southwestern corner of the classroom and chant “Ohm” quietly but in unison in order to restore world peace, health and order to the planet. Your task will not be easy, but some Universalists might be inclined to offer support. You’ll also want to make sure the medicine man/woman also has blessed your activities beforehand.

During pandemic: Help advocate use of sacred herbs known only to tribe on a global scale: Offer these herbs to other religious groups and to scientists, telling them you have personally experienced the healing power of them.

During cloning: Embrace cloning and try to persuade tribal members to change their religious views to accept it.

ROLES AND TASKS

Romanites

HANDOUT

The Mightiest: is the supreme leader that governs the hearts and minds of the followers through religious doctrine. The Mightiest gave way to the Romanite religion by standing up to oppressors without faith or worship. These oppressors forced the Mightiest to self teach all that there was, and quickly discovered that he had a capacity to learn without boundaries. He formed the Romanite religion when he was forced to battle the ruling empire of Romagna and its king. Within great stadium of force, the Mightiest defeated the great king and rose to prominence. He denounced all racism and discrimination and succeeded in establishing the Romanite religion as the leading religion of the world.

Crisis Response/Tasks:

World War: The Mightiest is heavily against the war due to the possible outcome of total destruction of the world and of human civilization. He promotes peace and prosperity and that war is useless unless one's objective is power and control. Aims to teach about the horrors of war and gain members into the religion peacefully.

Pandemic: Wants and pushes to find a cure of herbal origins to cure as many people as possible and turn them into Romanites. The Mightiest is in conflict over the decision to terminate all who have the virus made by the G.H.O.

Cloning: Is aware of the potential threat of creating a one-man army of many, which is what motivates the G.H.O. Is against the entire idea of cloning, stating that it is unnatural and creates conflict with the "circle of life".

ROLES AND TASKS

Romanites

HANDOUT

Great Holy One: the living spiritual ground leader of the Romanites said to have a direct communication with The Mightiest. Born of the lineage of the Mightiest's family tree, the G.H.O is a person of a highly educated nature with the ability to speak a dozen languages. Having been responsible for the continuation of the Romanites during a spell of darkness, the current G.H.O is a man of perseverance with an ability to manipulate negative into positive. He lives lavishly within the city confines and performs once a week public ceremonies to honor The Mightiest and to convert any new followers.

Crisis Response/Tasks:

World War: Finds it necessary to defend the Romanite religion in all parts of the world against all foes. He is motivated to seek negotiations for all pro Romanite countries for the acquisition of new members into the religion but exercises discrimination in that he is against the idea of allowing former neo-eclectics into the religion. Yet the G.H.O remains a "wild card" figure that can alter his perspective at any point in time.

Pandemic: Remains on the side that sees the religion responsible to help and rebuild after so much death and destruction. Sees the possibility of a vaccine in the distant future and believes that they must isolate and terminate all who have the virus.

Cloning: Highly motivated by the ability to re-create and will see it to its full potential.

ROLES AND TASKS

Romanites

HANDOUT

Disciple: Within the ranks of the Romanites, lays the role of the Disciple, a person directly connected to the G.H.O. He/She is the next in line to become G.H.O and is of the same bloodline as the G.H.O and the Mightiest. His/Hers responsibilities deal with the pursuit and conversion of highly prominent social figures into the Romanite religion. He/She is of a high social, economic and religious status and behaves as such. Never one to die for his/her loyalties, the disciple has no boundaries and is willing to test the powers of all authority figures including the G.H.O. Twice a day he must conduct mass and rituals, which no one is exempt from including the G.H.O.

Crisis Response/Tasks:

World War: The disciple agrees with the G.H.O solely on the reason of defending the religion. Although a subordinate to the G.H.O., the disciple is an independent thinker and doer. He sees the possibility for peace and thus strives for that through his negotiations with other religions and countries. During the time of war the disciple is focused on converting, the more the better since it will be a numbers game given the loss of life during the war.

Pandemic: Agrees with the G.H.O. and see the need to help and rebuild after the catastrophic war. Disagrees with the G.H.O. and does not feel it necessary to terminate because the disciple is aware of a new immediately effective solution in the near future.

Cloning: Disagrees with the G.H.O. Sees it immoral and against the beliefs of the Mightiest. Wants cloning to be banned.

ROLES AND TASKS

Romanites

HANDOUT

Romanite Defector: A new standing member of the Romanite religion, this individual is non authoritative yet very cunning and seeks acceptance and recognition within the religious ranks. He/She is personal assistant to the Disciple and is mentored as such. Regardless of obedience, the defector is of a faithless character and his/hers involvement within the religion is to advance their economic status and will succumb to all pressures that point to an egocentric decision making process, which is a trait shared by all members of the Romanite religion to varying degrees.

Crisis Response/Tasks:

World War: The RD believes that the war is just given the fact that idiot people are the makers of their own misfortune and welcomes the senseless violence. Still, this is not what he/she portrays in actuality. He agrees with the G.H.O. and does everything possible to acquire new members. Like the G.H.O., he also discriminates and renounces all neo-eclectics along with Universalists; still this is not what this individual communicates to those around him/her.

Pandemic: Wants to exterminate infected people and pursue a cure of herbal makings to profit from financially.

Cloning: Sees the potential for extreme riches and the re-creation of himself/herself, is too difficult to deny, and must be pursued.

ROLES AND TASKS

Romanites

HANDOUT

Follower: The follower is the member of the Romanite religion that is most numerous amongst its members, yet lies at the bottom of the Romanite religious hierarchy or social class. Nevertheless, followers all maintain personal agendas and exercise them often since they are the scapegoat figures of the doing and undoing of the Romanite religion.

Crisis Response/Tasks:

World War: in following the teaching of the Mightiest, the people want peaceful resolution and have shown opposition to the ways of the G.H.O, but never arousing to a potential revolt against the Romanite leader. They want to adopt all refugees of the war and convert them into Romanites.

Pandemic: Wants to pursue a cure and save all those that can be saved. Promotes tolerance and peacefulness along with active duty of caring for the sick.

Cloning: The follower is in favor of non-embryonic cloning but used in a highly measured state. Believes in cloning those who are terminally ill with dependants, and opposes cloning for military purposes.

ROLES AND TASKS

News Reporters

NOTE: These tasks are for the eyes of class members playing the role of news reporters only!

Two roles exist: A reporter from a very conservative, traditional news organization known worldwide and a reporter from an ultra-liberal news organization, also known worldwide.

BOTH REPORTERS:

- Your role provides the “engine” – the catalyst -- that drives reactions from the religious groups.
- Your objective is to deliver the news from what you consider to be a fair, unbiased, accurate perspective – at least, you will be deluded into thinking that what you are delivering is fair, accurate and unbiased. It really isn’t. However, your own paradigm (either arch-conservative or ultra-liberal) will cause you to pick and choose which facts to report, as well as how to report those “facts.”
- You can choose to be either radio, television or broadcast reporters. (Broadcast reporters might be easiest because you can just enter the group’s space and tell them who you are and that you are interrupting their deliberations because you have a “special report” to broadcast. (If you receive this task in advance, you may want to bring a prop – cardboard box with one side cutout in shape of TV monitor to put over your head! Get creative, if you wish! But, don’t work too hard. You don’t need any props at all for this simulation to work.)

TASKS

- Read the three “wire reports” that have come across The Associated Press news service into your newsroom.
- Decide which item(s) are “top news” and which should be reported first as either “breaking news,” “daily news,” or just a routine news item.
- Rewrite The AP reports (you can do this in your head, or just jot notes), and then choose your audience from among the religious profiles to deliver the reports to. (Earth Dwellers probably have limited communications, so they may only receive bits and pieces. Romanites are sophisticated and worldly, so they might receive the full report – or you may choose not to deliver to them if they do not fit your news goals.)
- After you have delivered your reports, do “follow-up” stories – take notes about the reaction. Ask for interviews with religious leaders on their reaction to the events. Then, report that reaction to the other groups.

Here is some information about how ultra-liberal and archconservative media operate, which you should use in deciding how to “spin” your news reports:

ULTRA-LIBERAL WORLDWIDE NEWS ORGANIZATION

“Liberal” may be a misnomer. Neo-liberal might be a better term. These types of news organizations are unabashedly brazen about their agendas. “Geraldo Rivera” comes to mind – report the news with flair and panache, but be adamant that the rest of the news media’s drab approach is a disservice to viewers and readers because it fails to single out what is most important. Al-Jazeera might be another example, although they report from what the United States considers a conservative perspective. In America, prominent examples include The Village Voice, New Times, The Onion, and The Washington Times (a strange hybrid that mixes conservative eastern religion with liberal politics, but has gained credibility by being accurate while also being inflammatory.)

Probably the easiest way to take on an ultra-liberal stance as a reporter is to become speculative in your reporting (although, that’s a serious no-no among organizations such as The New York Times, which requires any speculation to be published under an “analysis” heading.)

For this simulation, let’s assume that you are like a young Democrat environmentalist out to save the Third World and ensure peace and freedom for all. Previously you have taken editorial positions on the following:

- The environment: Global industrialists are ruining the earth, and laws preventing them from producing acid rain and toxic waste should be created, even if it means putting the firms out of business. Blast economic globalization if it will harm the environment.
- Genocide in Third World countries can be blamed on the greedy pandering of rich American politicians to multinational corporations who exploit the resources of these impoverished nations, without ever investing in the people themselves.
- Oil is evil, and it is the oil companies themselves, who are in bed with European political leaders, that keeps the world unnecessarily dependent on this outmoded resource whenever other technologies, like hydrogen power, could easily be used instead.

ULTRA-CONSERVATIVE WORLDWIDE NEWS ORGANIZATION

You are a thorn in the side to your ultra-liberal news competitor. You stand for everything that the other news organization detests. You side with the rich and powerful. You believe the world order can only exist if strict laws govern the actions of the people. True democracy can only exist by ensuring that political leaders remain strong and in charge, by strengthening the alliance between our nation's religious institutions and government, and by ensuring that corporations continue to thrive and grow in order to guarantee a prosperous nation. The world is this nation's playing field, to be exploited to bring prosperity, harmony and true democracy to this nation.

Previously, you have taken editorial positions on the following:

- The environment: Acid rain and global warming are a concern for the world, but we cannot allow efforts to address these issues to get in the way of "progress." Laws seeking to clean up the environment will only be effective if they also allow big business to thrive.
- Genocide in the Third World: Corrupt leaders in these countries should be overthrown, and replaced with true representatives of democracy. The U.S. should invade these countries and restore "order" so that the multinational companies can get back to work and help the people by providing jobs to them in the diamond mines, rain forests and salt pits that ensure our nation's success, as well.
- Oil makes the world go around. The world is not yet ready for alternative fuels.