Instructor’s Guide

ACTIVITY SIX
Comparing Religious Practices and Beliefs

Target Audience:
- Advanced undergraduate students
- Graduate students
- Appropriate for courses on specific religious groups or religious studies in general

Activity Type:
- Research activity - appropriate for term paper
- Digital activity - computer and internet access required
- Critical thinking exercise

Activity Goals:
- Encourage students to use the DRH for research
- Improve students' digital data literacy skills
- Encourage critical consideration of the subjective nature of knowledge construction

This activity requires students to use the visualize feature of the DRH to complete a research paper on comparative religious practice. Students are asked to select a specific query in the DRH, and assess its global and historical distribution before comparing the belief/practice within specific religious groups. It is assumed that the students are familiar with the visualize feature, which was first introduced in activity three. Nevertheless, some additional guidance is provided in this activity, to lead students through this slightly more complicated digital tool. This activity therefore provides experience with both religious studies research, and using digital tools.

Students are provided with a short selection of queries, but instructors may wish to provide additional guidance in the selection. Students are also encouraged to select 3-5 different religious groups. If they are learning about specific groups, the instructor may wish the students to include a specific region.

The questions for consideration are meant both to help the students structure their papers, and to ensure that they critically consider both the information they are accessing, and also the tools they are using.

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