



Duncan Ryuken Williams will draw on his penetrating and revealing work, *American Sutra*, to provide an intimate look at Buddhism behind barbed wire and its influence on American Buddhism today.

Being Buddhist in contemporary America inevitably involves engaging the assumption held by some that America is a "Christian nation." But the question of how to simultaneously assert an identity as a Buddhist *and* an American is not just a present concern. Some of the most important lessons about American Buddhism may come from the experiences of Japanese American Buddhists during the World War Two, a period when their religious faith and national loyalty were profoundly questioned. Whether it was in the Army and Department of Justice camps in Hawai'i and the mainland, in one of the ten War Relocation Authority camps, or under martial law in Hawai'i, Japanese American Buddhists found various ways to claim a place of their own, drawing on their faith at a time of difficulty. This series will explore the "barrack churches" behind barbed wire, Buddhists in the U.S. military, and the role of Buddhism in Hawai'i and the so-called "free zones," deriving lessons for contemporary American Buddhism in an increasingly pluralistic American religious landscape. This legacy is the foundation of for the development of ecologic and human rights initiatives in the Buddhist community.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Monday, June 22, 2020, 5-7pm (HST)
Interlinked: The Foundations of American Buddhism. We'll explore the early history of American Buddhism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as established in Hawaii and the continental U.S. by Asian immigrants and early converts. How was American Buddhism formed during its first several decades?

Tuesday, June 23, 2020, 5-7pm (HST)
Interlinked: Buddhism in Hawaii during WWII. We'll explore how Buddhism on the Hawaiian Islands endured and persisted during WWII after martial law was declared.

Wednesday, June 24, 2020, 5-7pm (HST)
Interlinked: Religious Freedom and Buddhism during WWII. From confinement sites in the interior during WWII, how did people turn to their faith to orient them to find a semblance of normalcy and freedom in the midst of incarceration? How was Buddhism practiced behind barbed wire surrounded by armed guards?

Thursday, June 25, 2020, 5-7pm (HST)
Interlinked: American Buddhism and Ecology. We will explore how Buddhism can offer an ecological perspective, environmentally-oriented practices, and new understandings of Sangha/community to live in a sustainable manner.

Friday, June 26, 2020, 5-7pm (HST)
Interlinked: Buddhist Social Engagement in 2020 (Tsuru for Solidarity Crane Folding). We'll focus on issues of immigration and diversity in this session about socially-engaged Buddhism in the year 2020. Especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, what can Buddhists do to maintain resiliency and perspective in enacting wisdom and compassion in an increasingly interconnected world?



Professor Duncan Williams

Dr. Williams is an Associate Professor of Religion at the University of Southern California and the Director of the USC Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions and Culture. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University and previously held the Shinjo Ito Distinguished Chair of Japanese Buddhism at University of California at Berkeley. He is the author of many publications including: *The Other Side of Zen: A Social History of Sôto Zen Buddhism in Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton, 2005). In 2019, he published *American Sutra*, a groundbreaking history tells the little-known story of how, in one of our country's darkest hours, Japanese Americans fought to defend their faith and preserve religious freedom.



Full Syllabus Available On the BSC Website

www.bsawahaii.org

Recommended preparation:

1. "Introduction: Dislocation and Relocations of Issei Buddhists in the Americas" in *Issei Buddhism in America*.
2. "The Japanese Language School Controversy in Hawaii." in *Issei Buddhism in America*.
3. "Night-Stand Buddhists and Other Creatures: Sympathizers, Adherents, and the Study of Religion" in *American Buddhism*.
4. *American Sutra: A Story of Faith and Freedom in the Second World War*.
5. "Great Earth Sangha: Gary Snyder's View of Nature as Community." in *Buddhism and Ecology*.
6. *Green Buddhism: Practice and Compassionate Action*.
7. "Making Paper Cranes Fly: A Report from Fort Sill, Oklahoma"
8. Interview with Ashok XXX (ACLU) in Tricycle magazine

BSC Summer Session

The BSC Summer Session held its first classes in 1974 with Dr. Alfred Bloom and Dr. Mokusen Miyuki. For over 40 years, distinguished teachers have shared their knowledge and perspectives on the Wisdom and Compassion of the Teachings of Buddhism.

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Questions? Please call:

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46th Annual Buddhist Study Center

Summer Session Interlinked

*Understanding the Origins and
Evolution of American Buddhism*



Monday - Friday

June 22-26, 2020

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Buddhist Study Center (BSC)

1436 University Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96822