

HANDOUT: 1800S RELIGIONS — FIVE FAITHS GRID

	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	Baha'i Faith	Seventh-day Adventists	Church of Christ, Scientist	Jehovah's Witnesses
Known as...	Mormons	Baha'is	Adventists	Christian Scientists	Witnesses
Year	1830	1863	1863	1879	1879
Founder/ Prophet	P/F-Joseph Smith	P/F-Baha'u'llah	F-Ellen G. White, others	P/F-Mary Baker Eddy	F-Charles Taze Russell
Where	New York, USA	Iran	Maine, USA	Boston, MA, USA	Pennsylvania, USA
Sacred Text/Texts	Bible and Book of Mormon	Kitab-i-Agdas (Book of Laws)	Bible	Bible and Science and Health	Bible
Consider themselves Christian?	Yes	No, but recognize divinity of Christ	Yes	Yes	Yes
Considered Christian by Mainline Christian Denominations	No	No	Usually	No	No
Women Clergy	No	No clergy, highest leadership reserved for males	Yes	No clergy; women and men readers	No clergy, elders only men
Stance on homosexuality	Condemned	Contrary to scripture	Contrary to scripture	Officially: None	Condemned
Sabbath	Sunday	Every 19 days	Saturday	Sunday	None
Adherents	12.2 million	7 million	10 million	400, 000	6.5 million
Trinitarian	Yes and No	No	Yes	Not strictly speaking	No
Go to War	Yes	No	No	Yes	No

Some Identifying Beliefs:

Latter-day Saints (LDS) — Jesus visited and taught among the Native Americans in North America after his resurrection. Source of the Book of Mormon: Mormon was a prophet who left his gospel written on golden tablets which Joseph Smith translated under God's inspiration. The family is the fundamental unit of the church. At death, the soul is separated from the body, but, if you have been a good Mormon, soul and body will be reunited at the time of the resurrection.

Baha'i Faith — Prophets of all faiths were divine messengers of God, suited to different times and places, including Abraham, Mohammed, Buddha, Jesus, and others. The last and final Prophet is Baha'u'llah. No sects or branches of Baha'i are allowed; they value unity, and hard work is a form of worship. Respect for diversity is written into religious doctrine. After death, the soul leaves the body and journeys toward or away from God. Heaven and hell are not places, but states of being. The purpose of human life is to develop the spiritual and moral qualities that lie at the core of an individual's nature.

Seventh-day Adventists — At Armageddon (the last day, when Christ returns to judge the living and the dead), the wicked will be punished a brief time in hell, then annihilated, rather than suffer in hell for eternity. Many are strict vegetarians in order to avoid breaking Mosaic dietary laws and to live purely. Some, as a spiritual discipline but not required by doctrine, do not drink, smoke, dance, play cards, read books for pleasure, or go to worldly movies.

Christian Scientists — Matter does not exist. Truth and goodness are real; evil, error, and physical existence are illusions. They refer to God as Father-Mother, and do not practice communion or baptism. Often do not accept medical care, believing a more complete understanding of God through prayer will bring about healing. However, the Mother Church encourages cooperation with authorities if there is conflict over medical care. This differs from Jehovah's Witnesses.

Jehovah's Witnesses — Christ returned secretly just before World War II, and the age of judgment is currently underway. They do not vote or serve in the military; do not use the cross as a symbol, or celebrate traditional Christian holidays or birthdays. Will refuse blood transfusions for themselves or their children because of a Bible directive to abstain from blood. Refused to join the Nazi Party in Germany and were targeted in the Holocaust. Have published "The Watchtower" monthly magazine continuously since 1879.

HANDOUT: EXCERPTS FROM COMMUNITY COHESION — A BAHA'I PERSPECTIVE

Public response by the Baha'i Community of the United Kingdom to government studies about the race-related riots in the UK in summer, 2001. NOTE: Full text available online at [Community Cohesion](#).

The world-wide Baha'i community has attracted members from more than 2,100 ethnic and tribal backgrounds and is active in more than 220 countries and territories. Along with this great diversity the worldwide Baha'i community is among the most unified bodies of people on earth. Its unity goes far beyond a shared theology. Baha'is of many backgrounds work closely together in daily community life, consulting and serving together on the faith's governing institutions, enjoying fellowship at regular gatherings for worship, and volunteering together on a wide range of social and economic development projects.

Centred on the need for unity and for social cohesion Baha'i belief states that this need can best be met by valuing and appreciating diversity rather than imposed uniformity or the pretence that diversity and the issues it raises do not exist.

Another fundamental principle of the Baha'i Faith - the equality of women and men - offers a ready response to one of the concerns of the reports. Full and active participation of both sexes in the life and administration of the Baha'i community, lacking as it does a priesthood or clergy, is a cardinal feature of Baha'i life.

The challenge facing the leaders of religious communities if they are to contribute meaningfully to building social cohesion in the country, is to submerge their theological differences in a great spirit of mutual forbearance, and work together for the advancement of human understanding and peace. The Baha'i view of religious truth as relative, not absolute, offers a framework within which they might work toward this goal.

The inclusive vision of the Baha'i community, its practical experience and example, and the existing participation of Baha'is in social cohesion projects offer a model and constructive input to the development and implementation of community cohesion strategies that can make community unity a proud claim of the United Kingdom.