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Bioethics, Humanities, and Society

**Center for Ethics and
Humanities in
the Life Sciences**



Department of **ANTHROPOLOGY**

CASID

Center for Advanced Study of
International Development



Center for European and
Russian/Eurasian Studies

Please join us for a noon Brown Bag

Developing Moralities, Social Navigation and Seeing Religion in Central Asia and the Balkans: Cases from the Kyrgyz Republic and Albania

Since the fall of communism, mass media coverage and public policy discourse around religion in the former Soviet Union and the Balkans has focused largely on the fear of religious terrorism and the danger to the state perceived to accompany increased religious activity. A number of analysts in Central Asia are consumed with a fear of militant Muslims and those in the Balkans are anxious about continued ethnic conflicts that use Catholic, Orthodox, and Islamic associations to reify groupings of difference. I look at the development of morality as an aspect of social navigation situated in everyday religion, and draw upon examples from the Kyrgyz Republic, a predominately Muslim state in Central Asia, and Albania, a formerly atheist state in the Balkans with a mixed population of Catholics, Orthodox and Muslims. I suggest that the state-sponsored process of "othering" undesired religious adherence threatens to put at risk both individual freedoms of religious expression and attempts by religious individuals to hold the state system accountable for political and social failures. This in turn can serve to radicalize groups in opposition to the state and/or "others".



David W. Montgomery earned a Ph.D. in religion at Boston University and was a 2006-2007 Rockefeller Visiting Fellow at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame. He holds graduate degrees in medical ethics from Michigan State University and in international relations from Boston University, and has served as a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer. Montgomery has conducted anthropological field research in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan as an IREX Individual Advanced Research Opportunities Scholar and has been a research fellow at the Institute on Culture, Religion and World Affairs and the Institute for the Study of Conflict, Ideology and Policy.

Thursday, April 17 • 12:00 Noon
305 International Center