

Where are we NOW? Looking back on what we've learned...

Yoga is Hinduism's gift to humanity... Hindus must take back yoga and reclaim the intellectual property of their spiritual heritage.

-- Aseem Shukla, "The Theft of Yoga"

Whether we're covered in ashes and sitting by the Ganges, or dressed in a leotard and sitting in the back room at a fitness center, the ultimate challenge is the same; to come into direct, unflinching contact with our own unruly and ever-changing minds, our fragile and impermanent bodies.

-- Anne Cushman, "The New Yoga"

IN THIS CLASS we will look back over the past semester and think about what we have learned. Please contemplate your experience in the light of the readings below, and come to class ready for a lively discussion!

REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS:

READ "The New Yoga" by Anne Cushman: A writer and teacher of yoga and meditation reflects on the relationship between contemporary western yoga and the Indian philosophical and spiritual traditions.

READ "The Theft of Yoga" by Aseem Shukla: A surgeon and co-founder of the Hindu American Foundation writes about the disconnection between western yoga and its Hindu roots.

WRITE a one-page response to the following set of questions: Has your yoga practice changed in any way as a result of your studies? Do you think that the American hatha yoga practice would benefit from a deeper engagement with Indian philosophy? If so, how? If not, please explain why.

Please email your essay to all three of the class instructors by the stroke of midnight on Sunday, Dec. 4th. This essay will not be graded, but it will count (or not!) for 5% of your final grade.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

"The War Over Yoga": a collection of viewpoints on whether the contemporary practice of yoga has been divorced from its origins and essential teachings.

"Who *Owns* Yoga?": an article by Deepak Chopra.

"Take Yoga Back": a website by the Hindu American Foundation.