

# *Science and Religion: Historical Approaches*

HIS/HOS 493

*Spring 2008; Tuesdays, 1:30-4:20 pm*

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In this seminar we will investigate the relationship between science and religion in the modern world (our emphasis will be on Europe and the United States since 1500). Has this relationship been uniformly antagonistic? If so, why? If not, what general conditions or specific problems have led to other forms of engagement? Emphasizing the approaches preferred by historians of science, we will read a set of recent secondary studies on these questions, along with primary sources from key episodes of entanglement between theistic institutions (practices, commitments, etc.) and an increasingly “scientific” modernity: e.g., the Galileo controversy; the quest for a materialized “soul” during the Enlightenment; the impact of evolutionary theory on religious belief in the nineteenth century; and so on—there is an enormous amount to think about. Two papers are required: one due at the midterm, the other on dean’s date. We will discuss these and the other requirements in class. Participation, of course, is essential to success in this course. A list of readings follow (the books are available for purchase at Labyrinth, and everything else should be in the packet).



## **WEEK 1:**

### **Introductory and Organizational Meeting**

Brooke, John Hedley, and others, “Complexity and the History of Science and Religion,”  
from *Historically Speaking* 8, no. 5, May/June 2007.

*Review this forum, which I will post to  
Blackboard as a PDF before our first meeting.*

## **WEEK 2:**

### **The Conflict Thesis**

Ferngren, Gary B., ed. *Science and Religion: A Historical Introduction*. Baltimore: Johns  
Hopkins University Press, 2002.

*Read chapters 1 and 2.*

Draper, John William. *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science*. New York:  
D. Appleton and Co., 1874.

*Read preface through chapter 2.*

White, Andrew Dickson. *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in  
Christendom*. 2 vols. New York: Appleton, 1897.

*Review table of contents, and read chapter 11.*

### WEEK 3:

#### **God and Nature at the Origins of Modern Science**

Hooykaas, R. *Religion and the Rise of Modern Science*. Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1972.

*This is a short book, based on an important set of lectures: read all.*

Brooke, John Hedley. *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

*Chapters 2 and 3.*

### WEEK 4:

#### **Galileo on Trial**

Ferngren, Gary B., ed. *Science and Religion: A Historical Introduction*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.

*Read chapters 3, 5, and 7.*

Finocchiaro, Maurice A., ed. *The Galileo Affair: A Documentary History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

*Read chapters 3-4, plus pages 214-226, and finish with chapter 9.*

### WEEK 5:

#### **A “Natural” Theology?**

Brooke, John Hedley. *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

*Read chapter 5.*

Ferngren, Gary B., ed. *Science and Religion: A Historical Introduction*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.

*Read chapter 13.*

Hume, David. *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. Edited by Richard H. Popkin. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1980.

*Read this dialogue in its entirety.*

### WEEK 6:

#### **The Dream of Enlightenment**

Outram, Dorinda. “Science and the Enlightenment: God’s order and man’s understanding,” and “The rise of modern paganism? Religion and the Enlightenment.” In *The Enlightenment*. Second Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 93-125.

*Two chapters from a useful primer.*

Darnton, Robert. “Philosophers Trim the Tree of Knowledge.” In *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History*, (Chapter 5). New York: Basic Books, 1999, pp. 191-214.

*A classic essay on learning in the enlightenment.*

Diderot, Denis. *D’Alembert’s Dream*. In *Rameau’s Nephew and Other Works*. Translated by Ralph Henry Bowen. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2001.

*Read this bizarre tale of matter and spirit.*

MIDTERM

**WEEK 7:**  
**A Romantic Turn**

- Brooke, John Hedley. *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.  
*Read chapter 6, particularly for the sketch of Kant, etc.*
- Knight, David. "Romanticism and the Sciences." In *Romanticism and the Sciences*, edited by Andrew Cunningham and Nicholas Jardine. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 13-24.  
*Should serve as a useful introduction to the issues this week.*
- Gregory, Frederick. "Theology and the Sciences in the German Romantic Period." In *Romanticism and the Sciences*, edited by Andrew Cunningham and Nicholas Jardine. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 69-81.  
*This essay offers greater detail on the German situation.*
- Schleiermacher, Friedrich. *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*. Edited by Richard Crouter. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.  
*Read all of this important statement on the supra-rational quality of spiritual experience.*

**WEEK 8:**  
**Evolution: That Timely Unfolding**

- Brooke, John Hedley. *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.  
*Read chapters 7 and 8.*
- Ferngren, Gary B., ed. *Science and Religion: A Historical Introduction*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.  
*Read chapter 16.*
- Richards, Robert. "Ernst Haeckel and the Struggles over Evolution and Religion." *Annals of the History and Philosophy of Biology* 10 (2005): 89-115.  
*Should be interesting, given our primary source this week.*
- Haeckel, Ernst. *The Dagger of Darkness*. Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2004.  
*Read lectures 1 and 2.*

**WEEK 9:**  
**The Trial of the Century**

- Larson, Edward J. *Summer for the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America's Continuing Debate over Science and Religion*. New York: Basic Books, 1997.  
*This is a well-respected narrative treatment of this important episode. It is long, but let's try to do the whole thing.*
- Darrows, Bryan. *World's Most Famous Court Trial*. Reprint. ("Tennessee Evolution Trial"). Union: Law Book Exchange, 1997.  
*For a taste of the transcripts, try this brief excerpt in the packet.*

## WEEK 10:

### The Mind of the Believer

Harris, Ruth. *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in the Secular Age*. London: The Penguin Press, 1999.

*Is religious enthusiasm a kind of insanity?*

Freud, Sigmund. *The Future of an Illusion*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1989.

*Psychology can perhaps be understood, in its formative period, as a science of religion itself.*

Reiff, Philip. *Freud: The Mind of the Moralizer*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959.

*Or was Freud offering yet another kind of religion? Read the final chapter of this prickly study by a prickly man—in the packet.*

## WEEK 11:

### Can Nature Save Us? (Or Vice Versa?)

Ferngren, Gary B., ed. *Science and Religion: A Historical Introduction*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.

*Read chapter 27.*

Dunlap, Thomas R. *Faith in Nature: Environmentalism as Religious Quest*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004.

*Can the environmental movement be thought of as a kind of religious revival?*

White, Lynn, Jr. "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis." *Science* 155 (1967): 1203-1207.

*A classic early study on attitudes toward nature.*

Lovelock, J.E., and L. Margulis. "Atmospheric Homeostasis by and for the Biosphere: The Gaia Hypothesis." *Tellus* 26, no. 1 (1974): 2-10.

*Gaia "spiritualized" ecology in the 1970s.*

## WEEK 12:

### Design and Intelligence

Ferngren, Gary B., ed. *Science and Religion: A Historical Introduction*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.

*Read chapter 21.*

Kitcher, Philip. *Living With Darwin: Evolution, Design, and the Future of Faith*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

*Kitcher is a philosopher, one who has worked for much of his career on the philosophy of biology. This is his most recent work—an examination of the current ID controversies, etc.*

Brooke, John Hedley. *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

*Read the "Postscript" on science and religion in the twentieth century.*

TERM ENDS – FINAL PAPERS DUE ON DEAN'S DATE