

Religion and Science

Required texts:

Miller, **Crucible**

Lem, **Solaris**

A Course Reader containing all other readings for this course will be on sale in Printing Office

Course requirements:

1. Two assigned essays – 4-5 pages each (25 %). At least one essay must be done before 6 May.
2. Midterm--multiple choice, short answer type (20%)
3. Final exam: essay type (40%)
4. Attendance and participation in Sections (15%)

Schedule of Class Meetings

- 6 Apr:** **Introduction: What Is the Science-Religion Debate About?**
“Religion,” Dictionary of Religion; Strenski, “The Rest Is History”; Telescopic
View of a Higher Power” and “Warming Winds for an Icy Debate.”
- 8 Apr:** **The Meaning of Religion**
Smart, “Introduction”, Religious Experience of Mankind; Zeldin, “What Becomes
Possible When Soul-Mates Meet,” 465-72
- 13 Apr:** **The Life of Science**
Zeldin, “How Curiosity Has Become the Key to Freedom,” 183-203 and “Why
Fathers and their Children Are Changing their Minds about What They Want from
Each Other,” 358-73
- 15 Apr:** **Science against Ideology/Religion**
Popper, Conjectures and Refutations, ch 1, “Science: Conjectures & Refutations” :
33-9; Popper, The Unended Quest, 31-44
- 20 Apr** **From Magic to Religion to Science?**
Malinowski, “Magic, Science and Religion,” 17-41. “Science and Magic Join to
Spur Nigerian’s Output” (newspaper clipping) and “Mauritanians Reassured on
Eclipse” (newspaper clipping); Lévi-Strauss, “The Sorcerer and His Magic”
- 22 Apr** **Religion as Science**
E. B. Tylor, “The Spirit World ”; Horton, “Traditional African Thought and
Western Science,” 197-221.
- 27, 29 Apr** **Explaining Evil: Science and Witchcraft**
Miller, The Crucible; Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic, chs 14-16
(Reserve); “Witchcraft,” Dictionary of Religion.

4 May **When Darwin Was a Creationist**
Genesis 1:1-2:9, 2: 15-25; Paley, “Proof of God from the World of Biology,” 18-26;
Darwin, “Concerning Variabilities in Nature”, 60-5; Darwin, Autobiography, 61-5.

6 May Midterm

11, 13 May **Darwin and Humanism**
FILM: “Inherit the Wind” (IN CLASS)
The Scopes Trial (1925), 533-44; Gaffney, “Trial of the Century.” (newspaper clipping). Darwin, Descent of Man, 254-76; Darwin, Autobiography, 55-73; Origins of the Species, 113-37, 154-5.

18 May **“Darwin” Bites: Spencer’s Social Darwinism**
Spencer, “Social Statics and Social Dynamics,” 17-25; Hofstadter, “The Vogue for Spencer,” 31-50; Theodore Roosevelt, “Biological Analogies in History,” 512-544; Boesche, “Homeless Hungry? It’s Your Fault.”

20 May **Other Religions, Other Sciences: Hinduism and Buddhism**
Staal, Concepts of Science in Europe and Asia, pp. 1-28. Smart, Religious Experience of Mankind, ch 2-6 (Reserve). Embree, Sources of the Indian Tradition, pp. 18-9, 80-3, 126-9, 398-9.

25, 27 May **Buddhism and Its Sciences: Cosmology, Rebirth and Karma**
Jayatilleke, The Message of the Buddha, ch 5, 6, 7, 11, 12. Stevenson, from Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation, pp. 1-34

1, 3 June **What Does It All Mean? How Can It All Mean?**
Popper, “Has History Any Meaning?” The Open Society and Its Enemies, vol 2, ch 25. Easterbrook, “Science Sees the Light”. Teilhard de Chardin and his critics “Evolutionary Mysticism,” pp. 458-85.

8, 10 June **Awkward Meanings in the Universe**
FILM: “Powers of Ten”
Lem, Solaris; Russian Orthodox Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom (Music) and text.

Assigned essays: Do two (2)

Due 8 Apr

1. on Zeldin, "What Becomes Possible When Soul-Mates Meet," 465-72

Due 13 Apr:

2. on Zeldin, "How Curiosity Has Become the Key to Freedom," 183-203
3. on Zeldin, "Why Fathers and their Children Are Changing their Minds about What They Want from Each Other," 358-73

Due 15 Apr:

4. On Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations*, ch 1, "Science: Conjectures & Refutations" : 33-9; Popper, *The Unended Quest*, 31-44

Due 20 Apr:

5. On Lévi-Strauss, "The Sorcerer and His Magic"

Due 22 Apr

6. On Horton, "Traditional African Thought and Western Science," 197-221.

Due 27 Apr:

7. Miller, The Crucible

Due 4 May:

8. On Paley, "Proof of God from the World of Biology," 18-26;

Due 11:

9. On "Inherit the Wind"

Due 18 May:

10. On Spencer, "Social Statics and Social Dynamics"

Due 20 May:

11. On Staal, Concepts of Science in Europe and Asia, pp. 1-28.

Due 25 May:

12. On Jayatilleke, *The Message of the Buddha*, ch 5, 6, 7, 11, 12.

Due 27 May:

13. On Stevenson, from Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation, pp. 1-34

Due 1 June:

14. On Popper, "Has History Any Meaning?" The Open Society and Its Enemies, vol 2 , ch 25.

Due 3 June:

15. On Teilhard de Chardin and/or his critics "Evolutionary Mysticism," pp. 458-85.

8 June:

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16. On Lem, Solaris