

Science and Religion: Syllabus

Fall 2006

Professor: Kent Dunlap

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Office hours: Monday 2-3pm, Thursday 3-4pm and by appointment

TEXTS

- Barbour, Ian, *Religion and Science; Historical and Contemporary Issues*, HarperCollins, 1997. ISBN 0-06-060938-9
- Appleman Philip. ed., *Darwin (A Norton Critical edition)*, WW Norton and Company 2001. ISBN 0-393-95849
- Dawkins, Richard, *The Selfish Gene*, Oxford University Press, 1976. ISBN 0199291152
- James, William, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, Random House, 1999. ISBN 0-679-64011-8
- Readings from Course book

One of the following:

- Miller, K., *Finding Darwin's God: A Scientist's Search for Common Ground Between God and Evolution*, HarperCollins Publishers, 2001 ISBN: 0060930497
- Collins, F. *Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*, Free Press, 2006 ISBN: 0743286391

COURSE SCHEDULE (Please note: these dates are tentative and may require revision as the course develops)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Class Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
Sept 6	Intro & / Quiet American	Quiet American;
8	Relationships between Science & Religion Independence: Gould and the Two Magisteria	Vedantam Gould
11	Conflict and dialogue: responses to Gould	Dawkins, Ruse
13	Barbour's classification	Barbour, Ch 4
15	Philosophy of Science and Religion What is Science?: Theory	TBA
18	What is Science? Limits	Regal, Gladwell
20	What is Science? Culture	Spector
22	World Religion: Christianity	TBA
25	World Religions: Islam	TBA
27	<i>Library Tour</i>	TBA

29	World Religions: Buddhism	TBA
Oct 2	Comparison of Science and Religion	Barbour Ch 5 & 6
4	<i>Library Data base instruction</i>	Larson
6	<i>Contemporary issue: Stem cell research</i>	Sci American
9	<i>Trinity Days</i>	--
11	Stem Cell Debate	--
13	<i>Mentor-led discussion</i>	TBA
16	History of Science and Religion History 1: Medieval Origins of Science	Barbour Ch 1
20	History 2: Enlightenment	Barbour Ch 2
23	History 3: 19 th Century	Barbour Ch 3
25	History 4: Pre-Darwin	Darwin
	Evolution and Human Nature	Darwin
27	Darwin and Darwinism	Darwin
30	Darwin and Darwinism	Darwin
Nov 1	Darwin and Darwinism	Darwin
3	Genes and Human Nature 1	Dawkins
6	Genes and Human Nature 2	Dawkins
8	Genes and Human Nature 3	Dawkins, Blackmore
10	<i>Contemporary Issue: Intelligent Design</i>	Paley. Orr
13	Intelligent Design Debate	
15	Science of Religiosity Phenomenon of Religious Experience 1	James
17	Phenomenon of Religious Experience 2	James
20	Phenomenon of Religious Experience 3	James
	<i>Thanksgiving</i>	
27	Neurobiology and Religion	Sapolsky
29	Mentor-led Discussion	TBA
Dec 1	Evolutionary Origins of Religion	TBA
4	Relationship of Science and Religion Revisited Compatibility of Science & Religion 1	TBA
6	Compatibility of Science & Religion 2	TBA
8	<i>Contemporary Issue: Corporate Funding of Academic Research</i>	Dunlap
11	<i>Contemporary Issue: Government Funding of Academic Research</i>	TBA

ASSIGNMENTS

Papers:

- Literary analysis: Ethics and Religion in the Quiet American (3-4 pages)
- Argument Paper: The science and ethics of stem cell research (~5 pages)
- Research Paper: What has happened since the *Selfish Gene*? (~6-7pages)
- Essay: Comparison of authors discussing the compatibility of science and religion
(2 papers @ ~5-6 pages each)
- Final Paper (5-6 pages)

Reading response writing:

- Short take-home papers (~1.5 pages)
- In-class writing (~1 page)

Other:

- Debates (2)
- Short oral presentations (2)

GRADING

Papers:	45%
Reading responses:	40%
Oral presentations:	5%
Class participation	10%

COURSE POLICIES

Class attendance: Attendance is required. Students may miss one class without incurring a penalty. Additional unexcused absences will be deducted from the final grade. Students cannot pass the course if they miss more than 5 classes.

Submission of papers: All papers must be turned in as hard-copies during class. I will not accept a paper by email because, in the past, this practice has lead to a lot of complications about computer compatibility, unreliability of the server, accidental deletion, etc.

Late policy: Papers will be accepted late only if you inform me the day before the due date. All late work will be deducted 10 % for every day late. Medical excuses will be considered only with a note from the College Health Center.

Plagiarism: Not tolerated. I adhere strictly to the College's Integrity Contract, so please re-read it. All work must be written in your own words. Please read the Student Handbook to see the definition of plagiarism and ways to avoid it.

Extra-credit opportunities:

To receive extra credit, students can attend academically-oriented lectures/events and write a 1.5 - 2 page response paper. In the paper, you should summarize the talk/event and discuss what you found thought provoking. This paper is due within one week after the event was presented. You will receive a possible 10pts/ paper. You may receive credit for a maximum of 3 lectures.

Course Description

The contemporary arguments on intelligent design and stem cell research demonstrate that the age old debate between science and religion is still very much still alive. This course will examine fundamental philosophical, ethical and historical questions at the intersection of religion and science. Are these two dominant “ways of knowing” destined to always conflict? Do religion and science provide separate and compatible world views? How has religion been a force in motivating and constraining science and technology? How has science prompted changing perspectives in theology and ethics? Using both historical and contemporary sources, we will explore ways in which religion and science collide, coexist and influence each other. We will focus on Christianity, Judaism and the biological sciences, but also include some discussion of non-Western religions and physical sciences.

Readings (*from Course Packet*)

1. Vedantam, S. “Eden and Evolution”, *Washington Post*, February 5, 2006.
2. Gould, S.J., Nonoverlapping Magisteria, *Natural History* 106, 1999.
3. Dawkins, R. You Can’t Have it Both Ways: Irreconcilable Differences? *Skeptical Inquirer* 23, 1999.
4. Ruse, M. Commentary on NOMA. Published online: www.metanexus.net. 1999.
5. Regal, P.J. “The illusion organ” In: *The Anatomy of Judgment*, Univ Minnesota Press. 1990.
6. Gladwell, M. The picture problem, *The New Yorker*. December 13, 2004.
7. Specter, M. Rethinking the brain, *The New Yorker*, July 23, 2001.
8. Russel B., Why I am not a Christian. Haldeman-Julius Publications, 1929.
9. Larson, E.J., and Witham, L., Scientists and religion in America, *Scientific American*, September, 1999.
10. Multiple authors. The future of stem cells. *Scientific American*, 2005.
11. Blackmore, S., The power of memes, *Scientific American*, October 2000.
12. Orr, H.A. Devolution. *The New Yorker*, May 30, 2005.
13. Sapolsky, R., “Circling the blanket for God” In: *The Trouble with Testosterone and Other Essays on the Biology of the Human Predicament*. Simon and Schuster, 1997.
14. Dunlap, K.D. Conflict of interest and the funding of biomedical research at universities, 2001 (unpublished).