

Secularism and the Problem of Authority

Professors Kosmin and Keysar

Spring 2008

Course PBPL – 342

The aim of the course is to foster a comprehensive understanding of two of the central issues confronting the contemporary world, secularism and authority. Hopefully, participants will emerge more knowledgeable about the provenance and scope of secularism and better informed to make choices as citizens and as leaders.

The course is interdisciplinary and ranges across a number of humanities and social science disciplines. You should approach it with this fact in mind.

The course will be intellectually demanding and there will be a considerable amount of reading involved prior to each class. You should expect around 2 hours of preparation in advance of each class requiring “reading for meaning”. The assigned reading is compulsory since the teaching will be Socratic in style and involves seminar discussions. The readings will facilitate class participation. Research reports with short verbal presentations and written papers will also be expected.

There are 3 parts to the course:

1. Introduction to concepts
2. Political secularism
3. Secularism in society and culture

The course will be team taught by the course instructors and in addition some guest presentations will also be included – see schedule.

Assessment and grading will be based on the following schema:

25% class participation

25% quizzes & short papers

25% midterm

25% exam

You will be provided with a free copy of the course volume Kosmin and Keysar’s *Secularism & Secularity: Contemporary International Perspectives* and other assigned readings. No books will have to be purchased.

In order to acquaint yourself with some of the issues and topics to be discussed you should visit the website of ISSSC – Institute for the Study of secularism in Society & Culture

<http://www.trincoll.edu/secularisinstitute/>

PART I: INTRODUCTION TO CONCEPTS

Class	Topics
--------------	---------------

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Types of Authority, Definitions |
| 2 | Mapping the Territory of Secularism & Secularity |
| 3 | Laws, Rules, Regulations, Principles & Conventions:
10 Commandments and Sports as case studies |
| 4 | The Powers of Reason and Revelation - Habermas and Ratzinger |
| 5 | The Authority of Sacred Texts – Bible, Koran & Commentaries/ Debate
Guest: Prof. Ron Keiner |

PART II: POLITICAL SECULARISM

- | | |
|----|---|
| 6 | Political Authority & Theocracy – Plato, Augustine, Marsilius of Padua, Calvin,
Divine Right of Kings |
| 7 | The English Revolution – Common Law, Laws & Liberties of Massachusetts,
John Locke |
| 8 | The American Revolution – Declaration of Independence, Preamble to
Constitution, Virginia Bill of Rights |
| 9 | The Authority of Learning & Enlightenment: les philosophes & l'Encyclopedie/
Guest: Prof. Jean-Marc Kehres |
| 10 | The French Revolution |
| 11 | Human Rights and Universal Values I/ Guest: Dr Frank Pasquale |
| 12 | Human Rights and Universal Values II/ Guest: Dr Frank Pasquale |
| 13 | Leadership, Charisma & the Authoritarian Personality |
| 14 | The Marxist Revolutions/Joseph Stalin |
| 15 | Islam: The Ataturk Revolution & Turkish Secularism |
| 16 | Separation of Religion & State |

PART III: SECULARISM IN SOCIETY AND CULTURE

- | | |
|----|--|
| 17 | The Authority of Science |
| 18 | Science & Secular Values |
| 19 | Public Opinion Polls |
| 20 | Family, Patriarchy, and the Emancipation of Women |
| 21 | Secularity in the U.S., U.K., Canada & Australia |
| 22 | The Authority of the Media/ Guest: Prof. Mark Silk |
| 23 | Catholic Americans & Church Authority in Social Policy |
| 24 | The Authority of the Market: The Secularization of the American Sunday |
| 25 | The Secularization Debate |

Class Readings

Class 1 - Types of Authority, Definitions

Class 2 - Mapping the Territory of Secularism & Secularity

Class 3 - Laws, Rules, Regulations, Principles & Conventions:
10 Commandments and Sports as case studies

Reading:

1. Barry A. Kosmin, "Introduction: Contemporary Secularity and Secularism," in *Secularism & Secularity: Contemporary International Perspectives*, Barry A. Kosmin and Ariela Keysar, eds. (Hartford, CT: ISSSC, 2007).

Class 4 - The Powers of Reason and Revelation - Habermas and Ratzinger

Readings:

1. Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, "That Which Holds the World Together," in Habermas and Ratzinger, *The Dialectics of Secularization* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006).
2. Benedict XVI (Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger), "Why Church and State Must Be Separate," an excerpt from "Theology and the Church's Political Stance," in Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, *Church, Ecumenism and Politics: New Essays in Ecclesiology*, (NY: Crossroad, 1988).
3. Jurgen Habermas, "Pre-political Foundations of the Democratic Constitutional State," in Habermas and Ratzinger, *The Dialectics of Secularization* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006).

Class 5 - The Authority of Sacred Texts – Bible, Koran & Commentaries/ Guest: Prof. Ron Keiner

Readings:

1. S. Schechter, "Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology: The 'Law,'" *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 8, No. 1. (Oct., 1895), pp. 1-16.
2. James Moffatt, "The Sacred Book in Religion," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 53, No. 1. (Apr., 1934), pp. 1-12.

Class 6 - Political Authority & Theocracy – Plato, Augustine, Marsilius of Padua, Calvin, Divine Right of Kings

Readings:

1. Marsilius of Padua, *Defensor Pacis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956, 2001), p 156-173.
2. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, sections XXIX-XXXII (On Civil Government).
3. G. H. Sabine, *A History of Political Thought* (London: Harrap, 1964), pp. 391-397. (The Divine Right of Kings).

Class 7 - The English Revolution – Common Law, Laws & Liberties of Massachusetts, John Locke

Reading:

1. Laws & Liberties of Massachusetts, 1647:
http://oll.libertyfund.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1036&Itemid=264
2. John Locke, Letters Concerning Toleration (1689-92).
<http://www.constitution.org/jl/tolerati.htm>

Class 8 - The American Revolution – Declaration of Independence, Preamble to Constitution, Virginia Bill of Rights

Reading:

1. Virginia Bill of Rights, 1776: http://www.constitution.org/bor/vir_bor.htm
2. Document: Annotated text of the Declaration of Independence

Class 9 - The Authority of Learning & Enlightenment: les philosophes & l'Encyclopedie/Guest: Prof. Jean-Marc Kehres

Readings:

1. John Hope Mason and Robert Wokler, "Autorite Politique" in *Diderot: Political Writings*, (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 6-11.
2. Pierre Bayle, *Various Thoughts on the Occasion of a Comet*, translated with notes and an interpretive essay by Robert Bartlett (New York: State University of New York Press, 2000), pp. 18-23.
3. Rene Descartes, *A Discourse on the Method of Correctly Conducting One's Reason and Seeking Truth in the Sciences*, (Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 5-11.

Class 10 - The French Revolution

Readings:

1. Declaration of the Rights of Man, 1789: <http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/declaration.html>
2. The French National Assembly: Debate on Eligibility of Jews for Citizenship, 1789 in Paul R. Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, eds. *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History* (Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 103-105.
3. Constitution of 1791: <http://sourcebook.fsc.edu/history/constitutionof1791.html>

Class 11 - Human Rights and Universal Values I/ Guest: Dr Frank Pasquale

Readings:

1. Micheline R. Ishay, "Introduction. Human Rights: Historical and Contemporary Controversies," in *The Human Rights Reader*, 2nd Ed (New York: Routledge, 2007).
2. Addendum B: United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights:
<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

Class 12 - Human Rights and Universal Values II/ Guest: Dr Frank Pasquale

Readings:

1. Jack Donnelly, *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*, Second Edition (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp. 13-21 and 40-53.
2. Edward Feser, "Godless Morality? Why Judeo-Christianity is Necessary for Human Rights," *Crisis*, Volume 24, No. 6 July/August 2006 (www.crisismagazine.com)

Class 13 - Leadership, Charisma & the Authoritarian Personality

Readings:

1. T.W. Adorno, E. Frenkel-Brunswik, DJ Levinson, *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York, 1950).
2. Bruce E. Hunsberger and Bob Altemeyer, *Atheists: A Groundbreaking Study of America's Nonbelievers* (New York; Prometheus Books, 2006), pp. 96-101.

Class 14 - The Marxist Revolutions/Joseph Stalin

Reading:

1. Paul Froese, *The Plot to Kill God: Findings from the Soviet Experiment in Secularization* (Los Angeles: University California Press, 2008).

Class 15 - Islam: The Ataturk Revolution & Turkish Secularism

Readings:

1. Patrick Kinross, *Ataturk: The Rebirth of a Nation* (London: Phoenix Press, 2003).
2. Jacob M. Landau, *Ataturk and the Modernization of Turkey* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1983).
3. Binnaz Toprak, "The Islamist-Secularist Divide," in *Secularism, Women & The State: The Mediterranean World in the 21st Century*, Barry A.Kosmin and Ariela Keysar, eds. (Hartford, CT: ISSSC, 2009).

Class 16 - Separation of Religion & State

Readings:

1. T. Jefferson, Letter to Danbury Baptists, 1802:
<http://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9806/danpre.html>
2. Gregory W. Hamilton, "Religious Pluralism and America's Christian Nation Debate," in *Liberty Online: A Magazine of Religious Freedom*, September/October 2007.
<http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0408/p01s02-ussc.html>
3. Borden v. East Brunswick Board of Ed. – Full Text
4. Borden v. East Brunswick Board of Ed. – Martin Pachman letter to Jo Ann Magistro
5. Amanda Paulson, "Culture War Hits Local Pharmacy," the *Christian Science Monitor*. April 08, 2005 edition: <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0408/p01s02-ussc.html>
6. Nikkie R. Keddie, "Secularism and the State: Towards Clarity and Global Comparison," *New Left Review*, Vol a. Nov/Dec 1997.
7. Ahmet Kuru, "Passive and Assertive Secularism Historical Conditions, Ideological Struggles, and State Policies toward Religion," *World Politics* 59 (July 2007), 568–94.

Class 17 - The Authority of Science
AND
Class 18 - Science & Secular Values

Readings/Video:

1. Barry Kosmin, "The Congruence between the Scientific and the Secular," in *Science Education & Secular Values: A Symposium, A Special Supplement to Religion in the News*, Summer/Fall 2007.
2. Michael Ruse, "Defusing the War Over Public Science," in *Secularism: A Symposium, A Special Supplement to Religion in the News*, Winter 2006.
3. Jon D. Miller and Robert T. Pennock, "Science Education and Religion in America in the 21st Century: Holding the Center," in *Secularism & Science in the 21st Century*, Ariela Keysar and Barry A. Kosmin, eds. (Hartford, CT: ISSSC, 2008).
4. Jeffrey Burkhardt, "Scientific Literacy in a Postmodern World," in *Science Education & Secular Values: A Symposium, A Special Supplement to Religion in the News*, Summer/Fall 2007.
5. A. Einstein, "Ideas and Opinions" in *Out of My Later Years* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1950), Science and Religion, pp. 41-49.
6. John Tierney, "Are Scientists Playing God? It Depends on Your Religion," *The New York Times*, November 20, 2007.
7. www.climatecrisis.net (Al Gore – An Inconvenient Truth)

Class 19 - Public Opinion Polls

Reading:

1. George Bishop, "Polls Apart on Human Origins," *Public Opinion Pros*, August 2006.
www.publicopinionpros.com/features/2006/aug/bishop.asp

Class 20 - Family, Patriarchy, and the Emancipation of Women

Reading:

1. John Stuart Mill - The Subjection of Women, 1869
<http://www.constitution.org/jsm/women.htm>

Class 21 - Secularity in the U.S., U.K., Canada & Australia

Reading:

2. David Voas and Abby Day, "Secularity in Great Britain," in *Secularism & Secularity: Contemporary International Perspectives*, Barry A. Kosmin and Ariela Keysar, eds. (Hartford, CT: ISSSC, 2007).
3. Ariela Keysar, "Who are America's Atheists and Agnostics?" in *Secularism & Secularity: Contemporary International Perspectives*, Barry A. Kosmin and Ariela Keysar, eds. (Hartford, CT: ISSSC, 2007).
4. William A. Stahl, "Is Anyone in Canada Secular?" in *Secularism & Secularity: Contemporary International Perspectives*, Barry A. Kosmin and Ariela Keysar, eds. (Hartford, CT: ISSSC, 2007).
5. Andrew Singleton, "'People Were Not Made to Be in God's Image:' A Contemporary Overview of Secular Australians," in *Secularism & Secularity: Contemporary International Perspectives*, Barry A. Kosmin and Ariela Keysar, eds. (Hartford, CT: ISSSC, 2007).

Class 22 -The Authority of the Media/Guest: Prof. Mark Silk

Reading:

1. Christian Smith, "Religiously Ignorant Journalists: What We Don't Know and Why," *The Revealer*, January 14, 2004. http://www.therevealer.org/archives/timeless_000161.php
2. Mark Silk, *Unsecular Media: Making News of Religion in America* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995).

Class 23 -Catholic Americans & Church Authority in Social Policy

Reading:

1. William V. D'Antonio, James D. Davidson, Dean R. Hoge and Mary L. Gautier, *American Catholics Today: New Realities of their Faith and their Church*, (United Kingdom, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2007), pp. 85-104.

Class 24 – The Authority of the Market: The Secularization of the American Sunday

Reading:

1. Frank L. Pasquale, "The Quintessential Secular Institution," *Free Inquiry*, December 2009/January 2010.
2. Jonathan Finer, "Old Blue Laws are hitting red lights: Statutes rolled back as anachronisms," *Washington Post*, December 4, 2004.
3. Jonathan Gruber and Daniel M. Hungerman, "The Church versus the Mall: What Happens When Religion Faces Increased Secular Competition?" *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123, no. 2: 831-862 (2008).
4. Alan Raucher, "Sunday Business and the Decline of Sunday Closing Laws: A Historical Overview," *Journal of Church and State* 36, no. 1: 13-33 (1994).

Class 25 –The Secularization Debate

Reading:

1. Daniel Rigney, Richard Machalek, and Jerry D. Goodman, "Is Secularization a Discontinuous Process?" *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 17, no. 4: 381-387 (1978).
2. William H. Swatos Jr. and Daniel V. A. Olson eds., *The Secularization Debate* (Maryland, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000).