

Trinity College Program on Public Values

The Leonard E. Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life  
The Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture  
The Moses Berkman Journalism Program

Annual Report  
2016-2017

May 23, 2017

**Program on Public Values**

Faculty Study Group Lunches

This year's Public Values eclectic luncheon seminar series was well attended by a core group of 15 faculty members, in addition to student fellows and invited guests with a particular interest in the subject.

September 9: Our first guest of the semester was Dr. Mika Lassander, Senior Researcher Åbo Akademi University, Finland. We read a paper by Dr. Lassander and Peter Nynäs: "Contemporary Fundamentalist Christianity in Finland: The Variety of Religious Subjectivities and their Association with Values," from *Interdisciplinary Journal for Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society*, 2(3), 2016).

October 31: The Public Values lunch seminar hosted Tom Krattenmaker, author, *USA Today* contributing columnist specializing in religion in public life, and communications director at Yale Divinity School. We read the Introduction, Chapter 9, and the Epilogue of his book, *Confessions of a Secular Jesus Follower*.

February 14: Gordon Bates, a United Church of Christ minister, discussed and a leading voice for prison reform in Connecticut, discussed Chapter 8: *The Return of Retributive Justice*, and a section of the Epilogue of his new book, "The Connecticut Prison Association And The Search For Reformatory Justice" (Wesleyan University Press, January 2017.)

March 21: The Public Values lunch seminar hosted 2017 Greenberg Distinguished Visiting Scholar Marc Stern, one of the country's foremost experts on the law of church and state. In 2010 Marc joined the American Jewish Committee, where he now serves as General Counsel. We read his February 2017 article posted by the American Constitution Society, "President Trump and the Johnson Amendment."

May 11: The final lunch seminar of the semester featured guest Philip S. Gorski, professor of Sociology and Religious Studies at Yale University and Co-Director of Yale's Center for Comparative Research and the Religion and Politics Colloquium at the Yale MacMillan Center. The reading was reading the Introduction and Chapter 1 from his new book, *American Covenant: A History of Civil Religion from the Puritans to the Present*.

**The Leonard E. Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life**

This year marked the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Greenberg Center at Trinity College. A number of events were scheduled as a part of this celebration including a September 26<sup>th</sup> panel discussion and articles about the Center in the *Jewish Ledger* and the *Trinity Reporter*.

#### Campus Activities and Co-Sponsored Events

**September 26:** An Anniversary public panel discussion titled “From the Religious Right to the Rise of the Nones: 20 Years of Religion in American Public Life.” Trinity President Joanne Berger-Sweeney gave opening remarks, and the event was attended by approximately 80 people including Arnold Greenberg (Leonard’s brother) and former Trinity President Evan Dobelle.

The panelists were:

Stephen Carter, novelist and William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Law, Yale University  
Kathleen Flake, Professor, Richard Lyman Bushman Chair of Mormon Studies (American Religions), University of Virginia

John Green, Director, Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics, Distinguished Professor of Political Science, University of Akron

Mark Silk, Director, The Leonard E. Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life, Professor of Religion in Public Life, Trinity College.

December 8: Co-sponsor, a panel discussion at Mark Twain House in Hartford on “Mark Twain: Religion and Irreligion.” Four scholars explored different aspects of Mark Twain, religion, and irreligion in the nineteenth century:

Prof. Kerry Driscoll, "Mark Twain and Native American Spirituality."

Dr. Andrew Walsh, "Religion in Mark Twain’s Hartford."

Steve Courtney, "The Friendship Between the Rev. Joseph Twichell and Mark Twain."

The panel was introduced and chaired by Prof. Mark Silk.

April 11: Co-sponsor of Common Hour event, “Being Muslim in Trump’s America.” The event was held in Rittenberg Lounge and featured Peter Gottschalk (Wesleyan), Haroon Moghul (Center for Global Studies) and Omar Tawil (Muslim Chaplain Trinity College).

#### Undergraduate Fellows

Each semester, two to three undergraduates each work as interns for approximately 10 hours per week at the Center, participating fully in its programs and researching and writing articles for the *Religion in the News* website. This year our undergraduate fellows were senior Jack Stanton, and juniors Christopher Bulfinch and William Winter, who have worked on increasing our social network presence, including adding Twitter followers and subscribers to our website.

#### Greenberg Distinguished Visiting Fellow

Each year, the Leonard E. Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life selects a leading scholar of religion to spend a week on campus engaging with faculty, students, and members of the community. In celebration of our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, we invited one of our first guest speakers to the Center: Marc Stern, one of the country's foremost experts on the law of church and state. Marc Stern worked for 33 years at the American Jewish Congress, ultimately serving as General Counsel. In 2010 he joined the American Jewish Committee, where he now serves as General Counsel. He has authored numerous legal briefs, published many articles, and participated in arguing four cases before the U.S. Supreme Court. In 2012 he received the Religious Liberty Award from the First Freedom Foundation.

2017 Greenberg Fellow events included:

3/20 Taught Mark Silk’s class on Religion and American Politics

3/21 Noon: Public Values Lunch Seminar for faculty and students.

4:30 pm: A public lecture on “The Old-Time Religious Liberty: Gone for Good?” followed by a public reception and dinner with 40 invited guests at Hamlin Hall.  
3/22 Led Renny Fulco’s senior seminar

### Future of Religion in America

The Center’s Columbia University Press series of volumes on the Future of Religion in America is now in full swing. Publication began with *The Future of Evangelicalism* in 2016. In January, co-editors Candy Brown and Mark Silk along with several of the contributing authors participated in a panel discussion about the value at the American Church History Association. *The Future of Mainline Protestantism* is currently in press while *The Future of Catholicism* has been accepted for publication and is now in the final stage of editing. The completed draft of the *The Future of African-American Religion* is being reviewed by the editors and a draft of *The Future of Judaism* is nearing completion. *The Future of Metaphysical Religion* is in the process of being written.

### Religion in the News

*Religion in the News* is an entirely on-line magazine, with each new article or Greenberg Center event appearing on the website, and emails sent out to our former mailing list subscribers. It has become a vehicle principally for our undergraduate fellows, whose articles are published as soon as they are edited. In addition, we have added a regular feature titled “At the Greenberg Center,” which offers a running account of what we are doing on campus and in the Hartford area. The site also provides automatic feeds of Mark Silk’s Spiritual Politics blog and Tweets from Center staff drawing attention to religion news of interest.

*Religion in the News* circulates by mail to more than 2000 recipients. Christine McMorris is also setting up a Facebook page for the Center, and will work on increasing “friends” who will hear about what is happening at the Center. The website can be found at [www.religioninthenews.org](http://www.religioninthenews.org).

### Silk Activities

#### *Courses:*

Relg 265. Religion and American Politics (enrollment: 40)

PBPL 497: Senior Thesis

Academy of Lifelong Learning: The Election of 2016 (with Renny Fulco)

#### *Publications:*

“Religion and Politics,” *American Governance* (Gale Publishing, 2016 (272-75)

“Impulses of Common Purpose: An Interview with Mark Silk,” *Reflections: A Magazine of Theological and Ethical Inquiry from the Yale Divinity School* (Fall, 2016)

“Before the Scandal Broke,” *Smithsonian* (November, 2016), 25-32, 102.

“Spiritual Politics” column appears twice a week on the Religion News Service (RNS) website.

#### *Lectures, etc.:*

Sept. 21. “Religion and the Election,” Congregation Beth-El Chai Society

Sept. 26. “Explaining the Nones,” From the Religious Right to the Rise of the Nones: Twenty Years of Religion in American Public Life, panel discussion on the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Greenberg Center, Trinity College

Oct. 5. “John Adams’ Sly Joke,” History-American Studies Lecture, Trinity College

Oct. 6. “Religion and the Campaign,” Trinity Alumni Association, Connecticut State House

Oct. 19. “Religion and American Politics: What’s Making 2016 Different?” Christopher F.

Mooney Lecture in Theology, Religion & Society, Fairfield University

Nov. 1. Teaching Writing, Writing Center program

Nov. 4. “The Utilitarian Context of American Civil Religion,” Beyond Bellah: Civil Religion in the United States, Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture, Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis

Nov. 13. Chair, “Luther and the Jews,” panel discussion, Morgan Library, New York

Dec. 7. “Election Aftermath: Faith and the Common Good,” panel discussion, St. Catherine of Siena Church, Riverside, CT

Dec. 21. "The Discovery of the Abrahamic Tradition in Modern Times," The Sixth Annual International Conference of the Center for the Study of Relations Between Jews, Christians, Muslims, The Open University of Israel  
Jan. 7. Chair, "Future of Evangelicalism in America," panel discussion, American Society of Church History, Denver  
Jan.-Feb. Lecture series on religion and American politics, Congregation Sholom B'nai Israel, Manchester, CT (January-February)

The Moses Berkman Journalism Program

E. J. Dionne of the *Washington Post* visited Trinity College as the seventh recipient of the bi-annual Moses Berkman Memorial Journalism Award, in recognition of his career as one of the country's foremost political journalists. A twice-weekly op-ed columnist for *The Washington Post*, he is a senior fellow in Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution, a government professor at Georgetown University and a commentator on politics for National Public Radio, ABC's "This Week" and MSNBC. Dionne is also a columnist for *Commonweal*, a liberal Catholic publication. Before joining the *Post*, Dionne spent 14 years with the *New York Times*, reporting on state and local government, national politics, and from around the world, including stints in Paris, Rome, and Beirut. His most recent book, published January 2016, is *Why the Right Went Wrong*.

Mr. Dionne's activities on campus included:

Nov. 17: noon: Lunch with students and faculty  
2:30 Afternoon tea reception with religion department majors  
4:30 pm Public lecture titled "After 2016: Can a Divided Country Heal Itself?," followed by a Q & A, reception, and a dinner for 50 invited guests from the College and Hartford communities.

## Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society & Culture

[www.secularisinstitute.org](http://www.secularisinstitute.org)

### *Director's Annual Report for 2016-17*

*Barry A. Kosmin*

#### **Promotion**

Ariela Keysar, from Associate Research Professor to Research Professor, September 2016

#### **Publications**

*Secularism and Nonreligion*, ISSSC Sponsored Academic Journal

<http://www.secularismandnonreligion.org>

Barry A. Kosmin, Joint Editor.

The world's first journal dedicated to the investigation of secularism and nonreligion in all forms, commenced publication in January 2012. In September 2013, Ubiquity Press of London, UK became the publishers with ISSSC and the Non-religion and Secularity Research Network (NSRN) of UK as the sponsoring organizations. Articles are published on a continuous basis, ensuring publication as soon as submissions are accepted and formatted. *Secularism and Nonreligion* is an interdisciplinary, fully open access, peer-reviewed journal with the aim of advancing research on various aspects of 'the secular.' The journal encourages submissions that explore all aspects of what it means to be secular.

#### **Papers in Academic Journals**

Barry A. Kosmin, "An evidence-based strategy for sustaining the growth of unbelief," *Free Inquiry*, 36 (3), 2016, 38-43.

Barry A. Kosmin, Book review: Roberta Rosenthal Kwall: *The Myth of the Cultural Jew: Culture and Law in Jewish Tradition*, in *Contemporary Jewry*, 2016, 35 (3), 331-2.

Ariela Keysar, "Religious/Nonreligious Demography and Religion versus Science: A Global Perspective," in Phil Zuckerman and John R. Shook, editors, *The Oxford Handbook of Secularism*, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Ariela Keysar, Book Review: *Changing Faith: The Dynamics and Consequences of Americans' Shifting Religious Identities*, in *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, August 2016.

## **Course Teaching**

### **Barry A. Kosmin:**

“Sociological and Psychological Explanations of Antisemitism,”  
ISGAP Summer Institute on Curriculum Development in Antisemitism Studies, St.  
Antony’s College, Oxford University, U.K., August, 2016

“Secularism and Religion-State Relations around the World,” RS-628, Hartford  
Seminary, Fall Semester 2016,

“Culture War: The Place of Religion in U.S. Electoral Politics,” Trinity College Academy  
of Lifelong Learning, Fall Semester 2016

## **Invited Lectures**

### **Barry A. Kosmin:**

“A paradigm shift: The new reality facing European Jewry,” Beth Shalom Synagogue,  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, August 20, 2016

“Israel on the College campus,” Religion Department, Connecticut College, October 18,  
2016

“The Changing religious profile of the United States,” Faith in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Series,  
Simsbury Public Library, Connecticut, October 23, 2016

“Why the Jewish Leaders’ Survey can be an asset for building community resilience, “  
The 2<sup>nd</sup> European Jewish Communities Summit, Barcelona, Spain, November 14, 2016

“On Toleration: John Locke in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” Hartford Area Humanists, November  
22, 2016

“Secular Renaissance and Religious Transformation: American Jewry in the 21<sup>st</sup>  
Century,”  
University of Cape Town, South Africa, February 1, 2017

### **Ariela Keysar:**

“Anti-Semitism in a Global Perspective: Conceptual and Methodological Issues,”

Center for Jewish Studies, University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut,  
November 9, 2016

“Americans Professing No Religion: How has the rise of the Nones affected the scientific study of religion,”  
Fifth Biennial Conference on Religion and American Culture, The Center for the Study of Religion & American Culture, Indianapolis, June 1-4, 2017

## **Presentations at Academic Conferences**

### **Ariela Keysar:**

“Atheism and Nonreligion: Definitions and Global Trends,”  
“I think for myself”: American Millennials’ Religious and Spiritual Life, “  
“Freedom of Choice: Religion and Gender in a Global Perspective,” Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG), with Thea Piltzecker  
“I don’t know enough”: Religious and Political Illiteracy among Millennials,” (YARG), with Thea Piltzecker  
Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, October 28-30, 2016

“Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective: United States,” YARG Annual Seminar, Turku, Finland, November 24-27, 2016

“Are We All One Happy Family? American and Israeli Jews,” with Sergio DellaPergola, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem  
Association for Israel Studies, Annual Conference, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA  
June 12-14, 2017

## **Ongoing ISSSC Research Projects**

Barry A. Kosmin and Ariela Keysar, Principal Investigators “*20-Up: The Class of 1995/5755 Longitudinal Study 20 years later.*” July 2016 – December 2018

Ariela Keysar, U.S. Principal Investigator, *Young adults and religion in a global perspective*, YARG, 2015-2018