

A History of American Science and Religion: Darwinism and the Divine
*an American Studies and History course on the cultural life of science and religion
and an Ethical and Spiritual Inquiry Course (an E course)*

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Office Hours: MW, 1-3; TuTh, 11-1; and many afternoons, 3-5
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AMST352/HIST355E.JS (CRN#5185/5179)
Spring 2011
TuTh 1-2:15, in Sampson 225

Course Description

This course will explore the impact of Charles Darwin's theory of species development through natural selection on the history of science and religion, and on the cultural life of the United States. More than any other scientific theory, Darwinism has been taken up by scientists and non-scientists alike as the basis for whole worldviews—with strong endorsements and criticism. The controversies over Darwinism grew out of and supported a range of religious beliefs which turned the responses to scientific theories into major players in American cultural debates and the basis for broad ideological trends. As a window into this cultural history, this course will examine selected features of science and religion since the nineteenth century as ways to understand the varied values circulating and competing within American life.

Throughout the course, we will have access to a number of different fields including history, biology, anthropology, sociology, psychology, politics, religious studies, philosophy, and literature. The course will be a seminar in format, with common readings, field work, films, discussion, reflective and interpretive writing, and supplementary readings for individual research. Through your work with these diverse materials, emphasis will be placed on your development of thinking, reading, writing, and speaking skills. Please fill out a card at the beginning of the semester so I can begin to get to know your intellectual interests right away.

Course Requirements and Grading

-Participation: attendance in class, involvement in discussions and projects, and 10 one-page essays }	20% of final grade
-Research Paper	20%
-Two Midterm Exams	20% each
-Final Exam	20%

Extra Credit

- Attend related campus and community events, write a one-page essay, and briefly report your experiences to class.
- Arrange to make a class presentation on your research paper in relation to a particular day's topic.

I assume academic honesty. Anything less will be taken seriously at the department and university levels. Your work for this class must be your own, with quotations or references to the work of others clearly cited. On this topic and for ways to improve writing, you have resources from this class and at the Writing Center (Flagler 209; 822-7717; writinglab.stetson.edu); the Writing Program (www.stetson.edu/writingprogram); and the Academic Resource Center (Stacy Collins, director, scollin1@stetson.edu, academicresources@stetson.edu), 101 CUB, 822-7127, and please contact the Resource Center if you have special learning issues.

Small classes are a privilege: make use of it! Because so much of this course involves exchange of ideas in class and consideration of subtle values, your *attendance and participation* are crucial parts of your learning, and make up a significant part of your grade. There are many forms of participation, including careful listening, reviewing notes after class, essay writing, and especially questions and discussion in class; these are each important, and for the development of your oral communication skills, I emphasize the significance of class discussion. Much of class time will build on your reading and will link to projects and films. More than three unexcused absences will be reported to the administration and put your grade in jeopardy.

The one-page essays are places for you to capture your thoughts, practice writing, and prepare for class; in class, they can serve as a basis for comments and questions. The entries can allow you to test out ideas you are exploring, even serving as early drafts for papers. I encourage you to write, even if only briefly, every time you do some work for the class (before or after class, after reading, or after a project). In addition to this general advice, there are *ten one-page essays* due as part of your participation grade—that is, one per week (allowing for a few crazy weeks!). Turn them in during the week of the material discussed; *essays submitted late will contribute to a lower Participation grade*. Write a paragraph on one typed page in response to the class material; include your *report* on what you've learned and your *reflections* in response to its facts and interpretations. This type of assignment will also be a *way to make up for excused absences*.

There will be *three Field Experiences*, incorporated into the course, with class time arranged for your individual research and for your reporting on your experiences. Observing the way people of different commitments practice their theories and express their beliefs will be a window into the roots of Americans' deepest values—and a chance to apply the learning we do in class to lived experience.

*Biology Laboratory Classes: By November 1, arrange with a professor in the Biology Department to visit a laboratory class. Attend as participant-observers: look for the working assumptions and behaviors of the participants, the ways theories and methods of inquiry are conveyed from teacher to student, and the manner in which its facts and truths are presented.

*Church Service: By November 1, attend a worship service of an institutional religion. (For those attending religious services in the Western tradition, make note of references in the Bible related to creation and to nature: Gen. 1-2, Job 38, Psalms 104, Proverbs 8, and John 1.) No matter your own beliefs, attend as a sympathetic observer to look for the lived practices of religious theories and beliefs: what are the worldviews of the participants, what do they respect, how do they interact, and what do they hope for?

*Over the Thanksgiving break, interview someone (consider a family member or relative) about their views of science and religion. Explore for personal cosmologies: what is most important, how did this person come to his or her beliefs, how strongly are they held, how do these beliefs affect daily life and ideological orientation, are they related to work or family life or political commitments?

The work of the *research paper* will grow during the semester, and these writing steps on your own research project are separate from the ten one-page essays on the shared course material:

-Step 1: during the first month, think of questions for you to answer; a good paper begins with good questions, and often involves story hunting: you may find a live issue in relation to your life, coursework, major, career goals, or avocational interests; and consider class material as jumping off points to the questions your report will seek to answer: *turn in choice of topic, with a paragraph explanation*;

-Step 2: by September, use the library and other resources to consult sources, including primary and secondary sources, for your research: at least one book and one journal article, book reviews, encyclopedia entries, government documents, web pages, newspapers and magazines, audio-visual material, and/or interviews: *turn in a one-paragraph refined research topic and list of sources with brief annotations (summary of what's in them)*;

-Step 3: in October, read your sources and think about how your new learning might change your initial questions and topic: *turn in a one-paragraph summary of what you have learned from one book and one other source*;

-Step 4: in November, refine your topic and the argument you want to make about it: *turn in a statement of your thesis on the topic with a one-paragraph explanation of how you will explain it*; and

-Step 5: during the last week of classes, *turn in your final written research paper of 10 typed pages*—earlier is welcome!

The *mid-terms* will be essay questions that ask you to analyze the material of the course. The *final exam* will also be in essay format; one part of it will be a “second mid-term” and the other will be comprehensive. To encourage improvement, turn in your earlier writing with each successive writing assignment. In grading oral and written work, I will emphasize your understanding of the material, the persuasiveness of your argument, and your clarity of presentation. Please print on used paper or on two sides of new paper and turn in only your paper, clipped, without any folders or binders.

All the assignments involve careful thinking and writing. Please see the *American Studies Web Page* for many postings designed to help you do your best work in the course and in life in general. In particular, click on Faculty, then on my name, then Teaching; or go directly to <http://www.stetson.edu/artsci/american/pcteaching.php>: see the Guide to Learning and Writing, Research Projects, Writing Guides, Grading Guide, and Guide to Public Speaking. Also on the same department web page, go to the Learning By Doing link, then to Work to Learn/Learn to Work; or go directly to <http://www.stetson.edu/artsci/american/worktolearn.php>, to see, at the bottom of that page, a few documents that reach beyond this course and may contribute to your future work: an overview of What Students Can Learn from American Studies and the American Bar Association's Guide to Legal Education.

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Blackboard: This computerized bulletin board will be a place to post course information, including bibliography, web references for class work and research, assignments and requirements, recent updates, and more.

-Paul J. Croce, "Creationism/Creation Science," Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature (and print book in library)

-Henry Morris, A History of Modern Creationism, 16-109, 327-35 and appendices A, B, F, and G

Books for Purchase (I have some copies I can lend or put on reserve):

-Charles Darwin, On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection

-William Graham Sumner, What the Social Classes Owe Each Other (<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/18603>)

-Carl Degler, In Search of Human Nature

-Harold Frederic, The Damnation of Theron Ware

-Edward Larson, Summer of the Gods

-James Gilbert, Redeeming Culture

-Chet Raymo, Skeptics and True Believers (also available on Nook and Kindle, and used copies)

On the Web: Institute for Creation Research (ICR): <http://www.icr.org/publications/>, search for specific articles: Duane

Gish, "Startling Discoveries Support Creationism;" Larry Vardiman, "Global Warming and the Flood;"

Anonymous, "Gospel of Creationism in a Moslem Land"

Schedule of Topics and Readings (the Requirements include assignments to read in preparation for that day)

Aug. 25	introductions	Gilbert, browse ch. 2, and <u>Inherit the Wind</u>
Aug. 30	the theory—at play in the culture	Darwin, ch. 4 (and chs. 1-3 recommended); <u>Inherit</u>
Sep. 1	monkey trial	film: <u>Inherit</u> ; begin Sumner <i>paragraph on research paper due</i>
Sep. 6	applying Darwinism to society	Sumner, through ch. 4, 6, 9; Degler, preface, 1-15, 27-31
Sep. 8	old-time religion	Frederic, part I
Sep. 13	LBC 108: Auditorium endurance of tradition	Sen. Mike Haridopolos, on Traditional Values and the Republican Party
Sep. 15	entertaining doubts	Frederic, part II
Sep. 20	religion and sensuality	Frederic, part III
Sep. 22	religious alternatives	Frederic, part IV
Sep. 27	culture trumps biology	Degler, chs. 3 and 8
Sep. 29	restless about modern science	Larson, through pt 1, <i>refined research topic and sources</i>
Oct. 6	battling for the Lord—& the market	Larson, part 2
Oct. 11	evolution of creationism	film, and <i>Midterm due</i>
Oct. 13-16	Fall Break	
Oct. 18	losing the battle, but...	Larson, part 3
Oct. 20	creationist arguments	Morris, 16-43, 327-35 and appendices A, B, F, and G; Croce on Creationism/Creation Science
Oct. 25	Creationist Western Civ	Morris, 45-109; ICR: Gish, Vardiman, anonymous (see Web readings above)
Oct. 27	attending lab and church	Field Experiences in labs and churches; <i>summary of two sources, including at least one book</i>
Nov. 1	the lure of science	Gilbert, through ch. 5
Nov. 3	People's Choice, and people's report	exchange field learning experiences
Nov. 4	12:30pm, 25L Cory Suter, Recent Stetson Grad and Law Student on Creationism and the Constitution	
Nov. 8	currents of religion within science	Gilbert, chs. 6-10, Degler, ch. 9 recommended
Nov. 10	religion by other means	Gilbert, chs. 11-14
Nov. 15	religion in the spirit of modern science	Raymo, through ch. 4
Nov. 17	scientific cosmology	film: "Becoming Human," <i>statement of thesis and explanation</i>
Nov. 22	hold the gravy, pass the cosmological beliefs	Field Experience: interviews on scientific and religious beliefs
Nov. 29	whose authority?	Raymo, chs. 5-9
Dec. 1	knowing and believing	report on cosmologies, <i>research paper due</i>
Dec. 6	nature and the sacred	Raymo, chs. 10-14
Dec. 8	Darwin with a wax nose	Degler, ch. 13 and epilogue