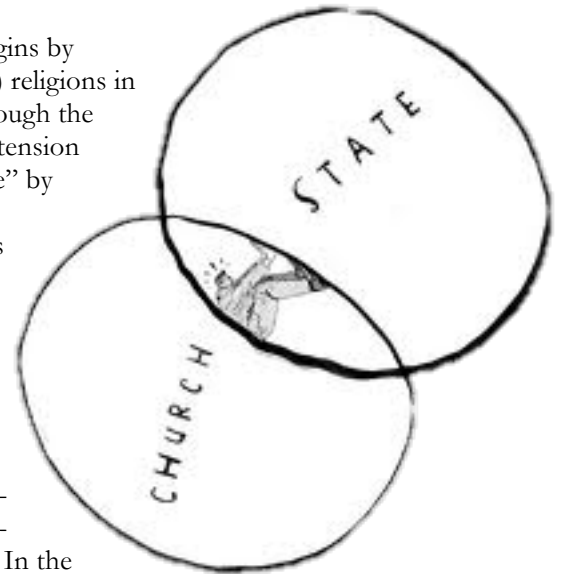


Spring 2015
RSOC 134 – Religion & Secularization
MW 2:15-3:20 | Kenna 212
Elizabeth Drescher, PhD

Course Description

This course explores the relationship between religion and secularism. It begins by exploring the development of religious diversity among (primarily Christian) religions in the West in the early modern period (from the Protestant Reformations through the eighteenth-century). It moves to more contemporary themes, including the tension between religious identities and the modern state, the so-called “God debate” by prominent “new atheists,” and other recent global controversies related to religion in a world assumed by many to be largely secular. The course fulfills **RTC3** requirements for the core curriculum *for students who have already completed RTC1 and RTC2 requirements. (Students who have not completed RTC2, and who are not transfer students, may take the course as an elective, but will not receive RTC3 credit.)*



According to many important nineteenth- and twentieth-century social commentators and scholars, modernization of the world meant its secularization: as the world developed, it would also become more secular—less dependent on and less influenced by religious ideas. By the early twenty-first century, we know that this assumption has turned out to be inaccurate. In the United States, while a growing number of people claim no religious affiliation, the majority of the so-called “Nones” nonetheless believe in supernatural beings or powers. Their spiritual and religious practices continue to influence American culture, including politics, education, and institutional religion. Elsewhere in the world, religiously influenced violence, as in the Charlie Hebdo attacks in France, continue to challenge assumed boundaries between religion and “the secular.”

In this course we will consider religion and secularity not as binaries, but as existential, social, and political bedfellows that together shape what it means to be both religious and secular in contemporary culture. We will focus on the development of ideas (e.g., “toleration,” “religious freedom,” “diversity”) and critical concepts (e.g., “religion,” “the secular,” “pluralism”) that shape the intersection of religion and secularity in historical and contemporary contexts. The readings will include texts from religious studies, anthropology, sociology, history, and other disciplines that enable us to examine theoretical approaches to religion(s) and secularism(s) that unfold in various debates and conflicts at the intersections of religion and politics, religion and science, religion and popular culture, et cetera. Case studies will invite students to explore how historical experience and theoretical concepts enter into the lived reality of religion and secularity.

Learning Objectives for Religion, Theology, and Culture 3

- 3.1 Identify diverse perspectives and evaluate ethical positions on contemporary questions.
- 3.2 Evaluate and apply insights from the study of religion to open-ended questions facing contemporary society.

Course Learning Objectives

- 1. Students will gain an awareness of the historical, political, and theoretical roots of secularization in relation to global political, economic, social, and religious change.
- 2. Students will be introduced to the major debates about religion, secularity, and the so-called “post-secular.”
- 3. Students will be able to critically analyze new approaches to religion and secularization in light of relevant sources in religion, anthropology, sociology, history, and other related disciplines.
- 4. Students will apply insights gained from class readings, discussions, and their own resource to questions of religiosity and secularity in American life as they experience and observe it.

Required Texts

Craig Calhoun, Mark Juergensmeyer, Jonathan VanAntwerpen, eds., *Rethinking Secularism* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). (Appears as “Rethinking” in course schedule.) ISBN-13: 978-0199796687

Elizabeth Drescher, *Choosing Our Religion: The Spiritual Lives of American Nones* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2016). (Appears as “COR” in course schedule.) ISBN-13: 978-0199341221

Course Requirements

Intellectual Engagement	25% of final grade
Case Study Presentation	25% of final grade
Midterm Project	25% of final grade
Final Debate	25% of final grade

Intellectual Engagement – This is an upper level course, which requires significant engagement by students to achieve learning outcomes. Students are expected to attend *every class*, to arrive *on time*, and to *have read* all of the assigned materials. Students should be prepared to discuss the main points or arguments in each reading, significant insights offered by the author(s), and their own insights, questions, areas of confusion, agreement, or disagreement raised by the materials.

Students should likewise consider how the issues raised in readings and other materials relate to real life contexts, either in their own experience or their observation. Throughout the course, we will apply our understandings of the concepts, issues, and questions raised in the readings to case studies of situations in the recent past in which encounters between religion and secularism were central. Working together, students will prepare individual responses to cases assigned by the instructor, researching these cases in common, exploring news reports, commentary, and academic analysis.

To help with this, students will be asked to write a **250 to 300-word summary** (about two paragraphs) of the readings or other course preparation materials **for each class**. Summaries will be collected at the end of each class (primarily to track attendance), but their main purpose is to help students prepare for the class discussion by (1) identifying the main points of the materials we’re studying together; (2) noting the evidence that supports the main point(s); and (3) posing 1 or 2 questions, curiosities, or critiques raised by the material. The summaries also give the professor the opportunity to understand something of how students who are less verbal in class discussions understand the reading. These papers must be submitted at the end of class on the day of the discussion. Students will receive no credit for the summary if they are not in class. A Guide to College Reading and note-taking worksheet is provided on the course Camino site. (RTC 3.1)

Case Study Presentations—Working in small groups, students will research a case of religious/secular encounter assigned during the first week of class. Case presentations will begin in **week six**. Research will involve reviewing relevant news accounts, commentary, and academic analysis of the case. Each student in the duo will share her or his informed perspective in class during the assigned week. Students will have 20 minutes to present their insights on the case as it speaks to historical and current questions of religion and secularization. Guidelines will be provided the first week of class. A **required research workshop** conducted by SCU librarians will help students to identify resources for their presentations. (3.1, 3.2)

Midterm Exam – An online, take-home midterm exam will allow students to articulate their understanding of changing understandings of religion and the secular as these influence world events. (3.2)

Final Exam – The final exam will take the form of an Oxford-style debate in which two teams of students research opposing positions on a proposition presented by the professor two weeks before the final exam session. Guidelines on the debate format, research requirements, and grading criteria (which will be developed in consultation with students) will also be provided two weeks before the exam. (3.1, 3.2)



Course Schedule

****Please note that this schedule is subject to change based on the needs of the class.****

CLASS SESSION	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
Week 1		
What is Religion?		
Wednesday, March 30	Course Introduction	Please read the syllabus carefully. Case study assignments.
Friday, April 1	What is Religion	José Casanova, "Secularization, Enlightenment, and Modern Religion," chapter 1 of <i>Public Religions in the Modern World</i> (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 11-39.
Week 2		
What is the Secular?		
Monday, April 4	What is Secularism	Charles Taylor, "Western Secularity" (Rethinking)
Wednesday, April 6	Diversifications of the Secular	José Casanova, "The Secular, Secularizations, Secularisms" (Rethinking)
Friday, April 8	The Modern Debate	Talal Asad, <i>Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity</i> . Stanford UP. 2003. (chapter 6: Secularism, Nation-State, Religion, pp. 181-205). Jose Casanova, 'Secularization Revisited: A Reply to Talal Asad', in <i>Powers of the Secular Modern: Talal Asad and his Interlocutors</i> , ed. by David Scott and Charles Hirschkind, Stanford 2006, pp. 12-30. (Camino)
Week 3		
Between Religious and Secular		
Monday, April 11	Brian Freeze: Religious or Secular?	Guest lecture: Brian Green, PhD, Markkula Center for Applied Ethics Amy Harmon, "A Dying Young Woman's Hope in Cryonics and a Future," <i>New York Times</i> (Sept. 12, 2015)
Wednesday, April 13	The Religious-Secular Challenge of Posthumanism	Rosi Braidotti, "Post-Human: Life beyond the Self," chapter 1 of <i>The Posthuman</i>
Friday, April 15	Required Research Workshop	Learning Commons
Week 4		
The Religiosity of Secularity		
Monday, April 18	The Religiosity of Science	Stanley Tambiah, <i>Magic, Science, Religion, and the Scope of Rationality</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1990), pp. 1-15. (Camino)
Wednesday, April 20	Secular Religiosity	Jay Laycock, "Vampirism and Religion, a Dialogue," chapter 6 of <i>Vampires Today: The Truth About Modern Vampirism</i> (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2009), 120-137. (Camino)
Friday, April 22	Theoretical Perspectives	Daniele Hervieu-Léger, 'Individualism, the Validation of Faith and the Social Nature of Religion in Modernity', in <i>The Blackwell Companion to the Sociology of Religion</i> , Oxford 2001, pp.161-64.
Week 5		
Global Religious Secularity		
Monday April 25	Historical Perspectives	Jean Bauberot's 'The Two Thresholds of Laicization', in Rajeev Bhargava (ed.), <i>Secularism and its Critics</i> , pp. 94-136.
Wednesday April 27	Political Perspectives	Alfred Stepan, "The Multiple Secularisms of Modern Democratic and Non-Democratic Regimes" (Rethinking)
Friday April 29	ONLINE MIDTERM EXAM	No in-class session
Week 6		
Eastern Europe		
Monday May 2	Global Perspectives: Eastern Europe	Elizabeth Shakman Hurn "A Suspension of (Dis)Belief: The Secular-Religious Binary and the Study of International Relations" (Rethinking)

Wednesday May 4		Cecelia Lynch, "Religious Humanitarianism and the Global Politics of Secularism" (Rethinking)
Friday May 6	The Pussy Riot Case	Case Study Presentation & Discussion
Week 7	Western Europe	
Monday May 9	Global Perspectives: Religious Difference in Europe	Talal Asad, "Freedom of Speech and Religious Limitations" (Rethinking)
Wednesday May 11		R. Scott Appleby, "Rethinking Fundamentalism in a Secular Age" (Rethinking)
Friday May 13	The Charlie Hebdo Case	Case Study Presentation & Discussion
Week 8	The Middle East and Asia	
Monday May 16	Global Perspectives: The Middle East and Asia	Aziz Al-Azmeh, 'The Religious and the Secular in Contemporary Arab Life', in <i>Islams and Modernities</i> , 2nd edition, ed. Aziz Al-Azmeh, Verso Books, 1996, pp. 41-58. (Camino)
Wednesday May 18		Richard Madson, "Secularism, Religious Change, and Social Conflict in Asia" (Rethinking)
Friday May 20	The Arab Spring Case	Case Study Presentation & Discussion
Week 9		
Monday May 22	Religious Pluralism and Secularism	Courtney Bender, "Pluralism and Secularism," in <i>Religion on the Edge: De-Centering and Re-Centering the Sociology of Religion</i> , ed. by Courtney Bender and Wendy Cage (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 137-158. (Camino)
Wednesday May 25	The RFRA Case in Indiana	Case Study Presentation & Discussion
Friday	Changing American Religion & Secularism	No in-class session Online discussion of <i>Choosing Our Religion</i> , intro, chs. 1-2
Week 10		
Monday	Memorial Day	NO CLASS
Wednesday	The None-ing of America	<i>Choosing Our Religion</i> , chs. 3-6
Friday	The None-ing of the 2012 Election Case	Case Study Presentation & Discussion
Finals Week	**FINAL EXAM DATE TBD**	

COURSE POLICIES



Accountability: You are expected to read and adhere to the guidelines set forth in this syllabus. You are expected to ask questions and get clarification about anything in the syllabus that you do not understand during the first week of class. Do not wait until the end of the semester to express confusion with the course expectations. Before emailing the professor with questions about assignments, please be sure that you have carefully reviewed the syllabus.

Classroom Behavior: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to behavioral standards may be subject to discipline, up to and including being asked to leave the class. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion, and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which students express opinions. In order to assure a classroom environment conducive to learning, please turn off your cell phones and refrain from texting, surfing, sleeping, or engaging in other activities unrelated to

the class. Unless specifically directed to do so by the professor in the context of class learning objectives, *students may not use any digital device in class*, including laptops, smartphones, smart watches, tablets, or technologies as yet known by the professor. (Students with a certified disability may use laptops for note-taking. See below for *Disability Accommodation* policies.) Students who violate this policy by texting, posting, or otherwise distracting the professor or other students with digital activity or other disruptive practices will be asked to leave the class and will be *marked absent for that class*. Students who violate the policy more than one time *may receive a failing grade for the course*.

Attendance: Attendance will be taken in each class. Prompt attendance for each class session is required. Arriving late or leaving early more than two times will count as an absence. If students must miss a class, it *is their own responsibility to get notes from a classmate and make up missed work*. The professor *will not* meet with students during office hours to make up material from missed classes. **More than two excused or unexcused absences will negatively impact a student's final grade**. It is not possible for a student who misses more than two classes to earn above an A- grade in the course.

Academic Integrity: Students should read and understand the University's policy with regard to academic integrity: <http://www.scu.edu/studentlife/resources/upload/Academic-Integrity-Policy-and-Protocol.pdf>

Suspected violations of academic integrity (“e.g., plagiarism, falsification of data, misrepresentation of research...and other acts generally understood to be dishonest”) will be investigated immediately, and students shown to have violated the University academic integrity policy will receive a failing grade on the assignment and may also fail the course.

It is worth noting that what constitutes plagiarism is often misunderstood, and students often plagiarize unintentionally. Students are advised to take particular care when quoting, summarizing, or paraphrasing another source in writing assignments or oral presentations so that the student does not appear to be representing the words, thoughts, or ideas of the source as her or his own. The University of North Carolina provides a handout on plagiarism that may be helpful for students to review: <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html>.

Disability Accommodation: If you have a disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Disabilities Resources, Benson 216, www.scu.edu/disabilities as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through Disabilities Resources, please discuss them with me during my office hours. Students who have medical needs related to pregnancy or parenting may be eligible for accommodations.

While I am happy to assist you, I am unable to provide accommodations until I have received verification from Disabilities Resources. The Disabilities Resources office will work with students and faculty to arrange proctored exams for students whose accommodations include double time for exams and/or assisted technology. (Students with approved accommodations of time-and-a-half should talk with me as soon as possible). Disabilities Resources must be contacted in advance to schedule proctored examinations or to arrange other accommodations. The Disabilities Resources office would be grateful for advance notice of at least two weeks. For more information you may contact Disabilities Resources at 408-554-4109.

Title IX Statement

Santa Clara University upholds a zero tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. If you (or someone you know) have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence or stalking, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please go to www.scu.edu/studentlife and click on the link for the University's [Gender-Based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) or contact the University's EEO and Title IX Coordinator, Belinda Guthrie at 408-554-3043 or by email at bguthrie@scu.edu. Reports may be submitted online through www.scu.edu/osl/report or anonymously through Ethicspoint: www.ethicspoint.comhttp://stage-www.scu.edu/hr/quick-links/ethics-point/

While I want you to feel comfortable coming to me with issues you may be struggling with or concerns you may be having, please be aware that there are some reporting requirements that are part of my job at Santa Clara University.

For example, if you inform me of an issue of harassment, sexual violence, or discrimination, I will keep the information as private as I can, but I am required to bring it to the attention of the institution's EEO and Title IX Coordinator. If you inform me that you are struggling with an issue that may be resulting in, or caused by, traumatic or unusual stress, I will likely inform the campus Student Care Team (SCU CARE).

If you would like to reach out directly to the Student Care Team for assistance, you can contact them at www.scu.edu/osl/report. If you would like to talk to the Office of EEO and Title IX directly, they can be reached at 408-554-3043 or by email at bguthrie@scu.edu. Reports may be submitted online through www.scu.edu/osl/report or anonymously through Ethicspoint: www.ethicspoint.com. Additionally, you can report incidents or complaints to the Office of Student Life (OSL), Campus Safety Services, and local law enforcement. For confidential support, contact the Counseling and Psychological Services office (CAPS), the YWCA, or a member of the clergy (for example, a priest or minister).

Finally, please be aware that if, for some reason, our interaction involves a disruptive behavior, a concern about your safety or the safety of others, or potential violation of University policy, I will inform the Office of Student Life. The purpose of this is to keep OSL apprised of incidents of concern, and to ensure that students can receive or stay connected to the academic support and student wellness services they need.