

RS 3120: Religion, Democracy and Civil Society
Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley
Mondays / Thursdays @ 9:40-11am, CDSP 116
Spring 2002

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Office Hours: Thursdays @ 1-3pm; if this time slot does not fit your schedule, please feel free call for an appointment since I'm at school most weekdays.

Course Description: Scholars have long marveled at the prominent role religion plays in engendering a pluralistic and participatory civil society and, consequently, for enhancing the prospects of a vital democracy. This course is intended to assist students in critically examining the meaning and importance of civil society and for assessing the contribution of religious institutions and constituencies within it. In doing so, we will pay particular attention to such important and much-discussed themes as voluntarism, social capital, social movements and political extremism, all of which intersect with religious commitments and group in significant (often surprising) ways.

Required Texts:

Jerome P. Baggett, *Habitat for Humanity: Building Private Homes, Building Public Religion* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001).

Fredrick C. Harris, *Something Within: Religion in African-American Political Activism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

Michael Löwy, *The War of Gods: Religion and Politics in Latin America* (New York: Verso, 1996).

Kristin Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).

*There will also be a reader available for purchase at Copy Central on 2483 Hearst Avenue; selections from this reader are listed in the course schedule and identified with an asterisk.

Course Structure: For each week, I intend to present material on Mondays while Thursdays will be principally devoted to student-led class discussion.

Course Requirements:

1. Classroom preparation, attendance and participation. Rather than this being construed as my class, what I'm essentially asking here is that you contribute to making this "our" class by faithfully keeping abreast of the readings and sharing your insights and/or criticisms on a regular basis (10%).
2. Facilitation of two class discussions. This basically involves three things: a. sign up for a week for which the topic or readings are particularly interesting to you; b. write a 2-page critical reflection on part or all of that week's reading (along with a few incisive discussion questions) and make enough copies of it for everyone in the class; c. present your paper to the class on Thursday of that week and facilitate the group discussion of your questions (30%).
3. Three 4-5-page critical analysis papers. This course is divided into four subsections; students are asked to write one paper at the conclusion of any three of these subsections and submit it at the conclusion of the designated class. Each paper should be comprised of the following three sections:
 - a. Present the Analytical Concept / Argument: In this section you are to explain an analytical concept (e.g., civil society, social capital, social movement, etc.) or argument that was presented in any of the assigned readings for the appropriate subsection in the course schedule.
 - b. Evaluate the Analytical Concept / Argument: Here you should describe how the author(s) employed this concept or made this argument in one (or more) of the assigned readings. Included in this section should be your evaluation of the extent to which the author(s)'s use of the concept or presentation of the argument was insightful and what, if anything, they could have done to have made it more so.
 - c. Build Upon the Analytical Concept / Argument: In this final section, you are asked to reflect on how this concept or argument has enabled you to see the world around you in a new way. In other words, you are to employ the author(s)'s analytical concept or test the author(s)'s argument by addressing some germane phenomenon, event and/or social dynamic with which you are either familiar or have done some modest investigation (60%).

Course Schedule:

I. Civil Society, Religion and the Consequences of Modernity

Week 1 (Feb. 4 & 7): Introductions to One Another and to Public Religion

*José Casanova, "Secularization, Enlightenment, and Modern Religion" in *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 11-39.

Week 2 (Feb. 11 & 14): The Meaning of Civil Society

*Larry Diamond, "Rethinking Civil Society: Toward Democratic Consolidation," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 5, no. 3 (July 1994): 4-17.

*Lester M. Salamon and Helmut K. Anheier, "The Civil Society Sector," *Society* 34 (January-February): 60-65.

*Michael Walzer, "The Idea of Civil Society: A Path to Social Reconstruction" in E. J. Dionne, Jr., *Community Works: The Revival of Civil Society in America* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1998), pp. 123-43.

*Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. George Lawrence (New York: Anchor Books, 1969), pp. 189-95, 503-30.

*Robert Wuthnow, "The Voluntary Sector: Legacy of the Past, Hope for the Future?" in Robert Wuthnow, ed., *Between States and Markets: The Voluntary Sector in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 3-29.

Week 3 (Feb. 21): Structuring Religion in Civil Society

Baggett, *Habitat for Humanity*, chapters 1-3.

*Robert Wuthnow, "Is Civil Society in Jeopardy?" in *Christianity and Civil Society: The Contemporary Debate* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), pp. 11-40.

Week 4 (Feb. 25 & 28): The Irony of Religion in Civil Society

Baggett, *Habitat for Humanity*, chapters 4-8.

*Nancy T. Ammerman, "Golden Rule Christianity: Lived Religion in the American Mainstream" in David D. Hall, ed., *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), pp. 196-216.

NB: First critical analysis paper is due (2/28).

II. Civil Society, Civic Engagement and Social Capital

Week 5 (Mar. 4 & 7): Civic Engagement and Social Capital – Trends

Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, chapters 1-9.

*Andrew Greeley, "Religion and Social Capital" *The American Prospect*, vol. 8, no. 32 (May-June 1997): 1-7.

*Theda Skocpol, "Unravelling from Above" *The American Prospect*, vol. 7, no. 25 (March-April 1996): 20-25.

*Michael Schudson, "What If Civic Life Didn't Die?" *The American Prospect*, vol. 7, no. 25 (March-April 1996): 17-20.

*Garry Wills, "Putnam's America" *The American Prospect*, vol. 11, no. 16 (July 1999): 1-4.

Week 6 (Mar. 11 & 14): Civic Engagement and Social Capital – Causality

Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, chapters 10-15.

*Everett Carl Ladd, "From Bowling Leagues to Soccer Nation: Churning, Not Declining" and "In Comparative Perspective: Two Cheers for American Exceptionalism" in *The Ladd Report: Startling New Research Shows How an Explosion of Voluntary Groups, Activities, and Charitable Donations Is Transforming Our Towns and Cities* (New York: Free Press, 1999), pp. 25-60, 121-45.

*Robert Wuthnow, "Porous Institutions" in *Loose Connections: Joining Together in America's Fragmented Communities* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 58-82.

Week 7 (Mar. 18 & 21): Civic Engagement and Social Capital – Consequences

Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, chapters 16-24.

*Robert Bellah et al., “Conclusion: Democracy Means Paying Attention” in *The Good Society* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), pp. 254-86.

NB: Second critical analysis paper is due (3/21).

Week 8: Spring Break

III. Civil Society, Ideology and Social Movements

Week 9 (Apr. 1 & 4): Religion, Politics and Ideology

Löwy, *The War of Gods*, chapter 1.

*Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *On Religion* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1964), pp. 41-58, 73-81, 88-9.

*Max Weber, “The Prophet” and “Religion of Non-Privileged Classes” in *The Sociology of Religion*, trans. Ephraim Fischoff (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963[1922]), pp. 46-59, 95-117).

Week 10 (Apr. 8 & 11): Religion, Politics and Ideology – The Case of Liberation Theology

Löwy, *The War of Gods*, chapters 2-3, conclusion.

*Christian Smith, “What is Liberation Theology?” in *The Emergence of Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 25-50.

Week 11 (Apr. 15 & 18): Religion as Resource – Social Movement Theory

Harris, *Something Within*, chapters 1-4.

*Christian Smith, “Correcting a Curious Neglect, or Bringing Religion Back In” in *Disruptive Religion: The Force of Faith in Social Movement Activism* (New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 1-25

*Doug McAdam, “The Political Process Model” in *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 36-59.

Week 12 (Apr. 22 & 25): Religion as Resource – The Case of the Civil Rights Movement

Harris, *Something Within*, chapters 5-9, epilogue.

*Hans A. Baer and Merrill Singer, “Religious Diversification During the Era of Advanced Industrial Capitalism” in *African-American Religion in the Twentieth Century: Varieties of Protest and Accommodation* (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 1992), pp. 28-64.

NB: Third critical analysis paper is due (4/25).

IV. Civility, Incivility and Religious Extremism

Week 13 (Apr. 29 & May 2): Religion as Discourse – The “Culture Wars” Thesis

Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*, chapters 1-4.

*Robert Wuthnow, “Old Fissures, New Fractures” in *The Struggle for America’s Soul: Evangelicals, Liberals, and Secularism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1989), pp. 19-38.

Week 14 (May 6 & 9): Religion as Discourse – The Case of the Abortion Debate

Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*, chapters 5-9.

*James Davison Hunter, “Competing Moral Visions” in *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (New York: Basic Books, 1991), pp. 107-32

Week 15 (May 13 & 16): Religion and Terrorism – Cultures of Violence

Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, chapters 1-6.

*James A. Aho, “The Problem of the Enemy” and “Heroism, the Construction of Evil, and Violence” in *This Thing of Darkness: A Sociology of the Enemy* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), pp. 8-34.

Week 16 (May 21 & 24): Religion and Terrorism – The Logic of Violence

Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, chapters 7-11.

*David L. Coppola, “The Problem of Religion, Violence, and Peace: An Uneasy Trilogy” in Joseph H. Ehrenkranz, ed., *Religion and Violence, Religion and Peace: Essays from the Center for Christian-Jewish Understanding Conference in Aushwitz, Poland, May 1998* (Fairfield, CT: Sacred Heart University Press, 2000), pp. 15-44.

*Optional – David C. Rapoport, “Some General Observations on Religion and Violence” in Mark Juergensmeyer, ed. *Violence and the Sacred in the Modern World* (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1991), pp. 118-40.

NB: Fourth critical analysis paper is due (5/21).