

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION AND SCIENCE

Course Number: HHP 261, 361, 362

Institution: University of Tasmania, Australia

Instructor: Dr. Julia Watkin

UNIT CONTENT

This unit introduces students to important philosophical issues in the history of the encounter between religion and science through study of the major sources of conflict. Important themes to be explored include the arguments surrounding opposed models of the universe and the methods and theories underlying scientific and religious debate.

OBJECTIVES

To give students an understanding of the philosophical issues involved in the encounter between religion and science and to develop students' understanding and reflection concerning the debate surrounding the issues.

ASSESSMENT

Two 2,000 word assignments [2,500 for 3rd years]. Each assignment is worth 20%. Late submission without proper justification or excuse will be penalized. Tutorials throughout the year are worth 10% of the course. The exam is worth 50% and covers the entire course. Assignments, TUTS, and exam are compulsory.

ASSIGNMENT TOPICS FOR THE FIRST SEMESTER:

The assignment is due on 30th April, 1996. Choose one of the following:

1. Critically discuss the assertion that science is more objectively true than religion.
2. Critically discuss the claim that there is a genuine conflict between religion and science.
3. Critically discuss **either:**

G.W. Leibniz' view of the universe as given in his essay "On the Ultimate Origination of Things" **or**

Peter Atkins' view of the origin of space, time and the universe in Creation Revisited.

PRESCRIBED TEXTS:

Reading:

Prescribed reading for whole year:

Anthony O'Hear: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Science, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989.

John Hick: Philosophy of Religion, Foundations of Philosophy, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 2nd ed. 1973. **OR:**

B.R. Tilghman: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion, Blackwell, 1994.

(These books should have been read by the end of the year. They are to ensure that everyone has an idea how the philosophy of religion and the philosophy of science are treated as separate subjects.)

Other prescribed reading will come in the weekly reading sheets, which will give the prescribed tut. texts and other material you ought to read.

Reference:

Reference whole year: To be used to fill in the background concerning the different religions we look at:

John Hinnells: A Handbook of Living Religions, Penguin Books, 1984.

(You need to consult this book for information about the backgrounds of the various religions touched on during the course.)

Extra reading: For those (especially 2nd years) needing extra help with additional reading possibilities, a number of extra possibilities will be given on the weekly reading sheets. This is not instead of any other material you may have discovered for yourself in the library but it will be available on reserve. **Please note** that your grade does not depend on how much material you have managed to read, but on what you can do with what you have read. The extra reading is meant as a source of help with extra reading, not to daunt you. **It is vital**, however, that we all come to TUTS having read and prepared the compulsory TUTS material.

BOOKS/MATERIAL (and see the weekly reading lists):

Ian Barbour: Issues in Religion and Science, SCM Press, Study Edition, 1972.

Ian Barbour: Religion in an Age of Science, SCM Press, 1990.

John Hedley Brooke: Science and Religion - some historical perspectives, The Cambridge History of Science Series, Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Nicholas Capaldi: Philosophy of Science, Monarch Press, 1966.

B. R. Tilghman: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion, Blackwell, Oxford, 1994.

Arthur Koestler: The Sleepwalkers. A History of Man's Changing Vision of the Universe, Arkana, Penguin Group, 1989.

A.E. Taylor: Aristotle, Dover Publications, New York, 1955.

Jonathan Barnes: Aristotle, Oxford University Press, Past Masters, 1982.

John Hinnells: A Handbook of Living Religions, Penguin Books, 1984.

Don Cupitt: The Worlds of Science and Religion, Sheldon Press, London, 1980.

Peter Atkins: Creation Revisited, Penguin Books, 1992.

Robert O. Ballou: The Pocket World Bible, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1948.

The Revised English Bible with Apocrypha, Oxford & Cambridge University Presses, 1989.

A.F. Chalmers: What is this thing called Science? Open University Press, Milton Keynes, 2nd ed. 1982.

Carl G. Hempel: Philosophy of Natural Science, Prentice-Hall, Foundations in Philosophy, New Jersey, 1966.

Stephen W. Hawking: A Brief History of Time, Bantam Press, 1988.

Paul Davies: God and the New Physics, Penguin Books, 1983.

Paul Davies: The Mind of God, Simon & Schuster, 1992.

Fritjof Capra: The Tao of Physics, Collins-Fontana-Flamingo, 1983.

G. MacDonald Ross: Leibniz, Oxford University Press, Past Masters, 1984.

Leibniz: Philosophical Writings, ed. G.H.R. Parkinson, Everyman's Library, 1984.

Ian Barbour: Myths, Models, and Paradigms, Harper & Row, 1976.

Ludwig Wittgenstein: Philosophical Investigations, Blackwell, 1989.

Nelson Goodman: Ways of Worldmaking, Hackett Publishing Co., 1978.

David Goodman & Colin A. Russell (eds.): The Rise of Scientific Europe 1500-1800, Open University, Hodder & Stoughton, 1991.

John Habgood: 'Can Science Survive Without Religion?' in RSA Journal, Vol. CXXXIX No. 5416, March 1991, pp. 242-250.

Open University Press (Distance course) Course Team: Introduction section to the Reason and Experience Course, 1983.

Julia Watkin: xerox: Aristotle

Julia Watkin/Ian Barbour: xerox: Models in Religion and Science

PHILOSOPHY NOTICE BOARD: Students are responsible for consulting the Philosophy notice board regularly for any messages or information addressed to 2nd and 3rd years.

LECTURES: Tuesday 11-11.50 Sem. 1 and 2 in A231

TUTS: See Philosophy Notice Board for times and places.

STUDENT CONSULTATION: Regular meeting times will be shown on the Philosophy Notice Board. Meetings also by appointment.

PROPOSED COURSE OUTLINE FOR SEMESTER ONE:

Lectures:

Week 1. What are religion and science and how do they relate to each other?

SECTION ONE: SCIENCE AND RELIGION: METHOD, PARADIGMS, MODELS:

Week 2. Theory and data in science and religion

Week 3. Paradigms in religion and science

Week 4. Scientific and religious models

SECTION TWO: HISTORY, OBJECTIVITY AND TRUTH:

Week 5. Lessing's ditch

Week 6. Reason versus faith?

Week 7. Science applied to religion

SECTION THREE: COSMOLOGY - PHYSICAL AND METAPHYSICAL:

Week 8. Towards a religion-free physics? Stephen Hawking's universe.

Week 9. Complementarity, Capra and The Tao of Physics

Week 10. Davies' Designer Universe

SECTION FOUR: THE NATURE AND EXISTENCE OF GOD:

Week 11. Rational Evidence for God's Existence

Week 12. Definitions of God

Week 13. God in at the back door? - Process Theology

SECTION FIVE: SCIENCE, RELIGION AND LANGUAGE:

Week 14. Symbol and myth in religion and science

Week 15. The role of demythologizing

Week 16. Wittgenstein and language games

SECTION SIX: THE NATURE OF AUTHORITY AND REVELATION:

Week 17. The meaning of revelation

Week 18. Science and new religiosity -Scientology

Week 19. Science and new religiosity - Transcendental Meditation

SECTION SEVEN: THE NATURE & PLACE OF HUMANS IN THE UNIVERSE

Week 20. A clever animal gifted with reason? - The Darwin debate

Week 21. Religious and scientific theories of evolution

Week 22. Souls and their survival

SECTION EIGHT: PROBLEMS OF EXPERIENCE:

Week 23. The status of miracles and parapsychological experience

Week 24. Science and religious experience

Week 25. The place of evil in religion and science

Week 26. Final summing up.