

HST 201: History of United States ONLINE

F17 (Escobar 20886)

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Week 3 Forum

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Puritanism & Islam

by Joe Escobar - Saturday, October 7, 2017, 9:48 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Puritanism & Islam topic.

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BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post, something that describes which question(s) you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: Puritanism & Islam

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Concerns, understanding, bias, and modern government

by Andrew Smith - Monday, October 9, 2017, 7:51 PM

Puritanism and Islam

I am not concerned with the finding that Muslim students in Egypt relate more to Puritans than do American students. Religion dominated the lives of Puritans in a way that is nothing like modern day America. Even the most fundamental Christian today, in general, shares little life similarities with Puritans because our society is not centralized around religion nor is it a large part of American culture. I don't know much about the government of Egypt,

nor do I fully know how much of its government is centralized around Islam. However, according to the video the line between church and state is blurry. In addition the video speaks about how Islam is a large part of these students' lives. Therefore it makes complete sense that a group of people whose culture is largely affected by religion relates easily with another group of people whose culture is largely affected by religion.

From modern perspective, and a non religious one, I find the Puritans to be an ignorant group of overly religious people following what is now an outdated theology (my opinion). However, they came to an entirely new world with the only beliefs that made sense to them. From those beliefs they did their best to create a functioning society in their new surroundings. So although I can't relate in any way with the Puritans, I can understand them and their actions somewhat from knowledge of the culture and beliefs of that time period.

My lack of religion does bias my study of Puritans, but only to a degree. Having grown up in a religious family surrounded by a religious community I understand the mind set of people who are religious and how they think about the world. I think this helps reduce my bias somewhat because I can understand the Puritans beliefs and the thought processes of a religious mind.

I don't believe we are far enough yet that religion can be removed from government. 70.6 percent of the adult population in the United States is Christian (Pew Research Center). Our government was founded around the national belief in Christianity. Our government can't just change when that large of a majority of the population believes in Christianity. I believe it should due to my personal beliefs about religion in general, but it's not realistic to expect it to anytime soon, or perhaps even in my lifetime. In addition, our culture will have to change vastly before that is possible. Even though our culture isn't centrally based around religion, religion has played a part in the ideals and good nature of our culture and those are things we can't lose if we transition to a culture with no religious background. Hopefully if, or when, that happens the good nature and ideals from religion persist through time.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3

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Re: Concerns, understanding, bias, and modern government

by Peter Brasier - Thursday, October 12, 2017, 8:55 AM

To quote one of my philosophy professors, " Man can not be without religion, for what he puts time and thought into is what he holds as his beliefs. Naturally someone asked about atheist, those that don't believe in any god or organized religion to which he replied, " they are the religion of denial."

Philosophy joking aside, I have decided to foolishly take two history classes at the same time one is this one and the other is World History. The interesting thing about world history is that they have mapped the exact genetic breaks of the Homo Sapiens Sapiens family until it became the only Homo Sapiens about 200,000-100,000 years ago. The thing that allowed the Homo Sapiens Sapiens to develop and flourish instead of a cousin genus Homo Sapiens Neanderthal was due to the development of communication and work assignment, a person who is good at making tools makes tools a person who is good at hunting hunts. The weirdest thing that they discovered through carbon dating and genetic mapping was that religion or religious tendencies began to show up in art and burial sites. The class started to talk about the evolution of religion to the core religions that we have today. My questions is that with religion being so close to our species origin and

development do you ever think that religion wont exist in some way? And if their was a way to make religion disappear from the government what do you deem as the kind and good qualities that should be kept? What should be left out?

Sincerely,

Peter Brasier

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2



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Re: Non-religious America

by Liliana Valladolid Salas - Sunday, October 15, 2017, 9:41 PM

I agree where you talked about Modern American students non being related to religion. Specially in the U.S where practicing a Religion is not a required. Like you, I believe that it will be difficult to remove religion from government. I don't think we can go back in History and be able to rewrite it. I just hope that the world is able to accept it to avoid any conflicts.

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

0



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Government and Religion

by Connor Baker - Sunday, October 15, 2017, 11:09 PM

While I agree that religion has shaped the United States into the nation that it is today, I think its a little far fetched to say that the separation of church and state is not achievable. You reference a statistic that says 70 percent of Americans are christian. But what does it mean to be Christian? For many I know it means going to church on Christmas, So to simply say that 70 percent of Americans are christian seems a bit outlandish, I think there are many different ideas of what being a "christian" means. But regardless if 70 percent of the population is Christian what about the other 30 Percent. Cleary these people are either from a different religion or atheists so why should they be subject to a government that favors Christians. Without the separation of church and state, one religious group will always have some form of power over another.

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1



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Addressing the questions as a whole

by Madelyn Ball - Tuesday, October 10, 2017, 1:46 PM

My attention was called to this forum after hearing the statement made by Professor Mason, “- Many of my Middle Eastern Muslim students had far more in common with seventeenth century New England Puritans, than did most of my twenty-first century American students.-”

I can not say I am shocked by this insight, but after learning the connection the Puritans have to American history I am concerned. My concern does not stem from the idea that we are not being offered the same level of education, it comes from the idea that we cannot relate the

same way a Muslim student can. I believe this is because of the connection of religion and government throughout the Middle East, whereas twenty-first century American students have not necessarily seen a government ran in that manner. A well-educated American student should know about how the Puritans views were spread throughout New England and took over many settlers ways of life. They should also be aware that a lot of those morals carried on in American life. I enjoyed the way this was put by Perry Miller and Thomas Johnson in the introduction to The Puritans: The Sourcebook of Their Writings, I, "Any inventory of the elements that have gone into the making of the 'American mind' would have to commence with Puritanism." I am a quarter Middle Eastern and my grandfather has dual citizenship in Iran. You can always notice the culture shock my grandfather goes through coming back to America after a visit in such a different country, with so many different laws and beliefs in each place my grandfather has found a level of neutral ground. Watching my grandfather work so hard to put his biases aside has always encouraged me to do the same especially when approaching studies like this one. Many are not as level as my grandpa and able to put their biases aside. Although, American government is not as religious as governments in other countries the government is still ran of human beings. It is very natural for humans to be bias, particularly when it comes to personal beliefs, so we can never fully separate church and state. I wouldn't know if this is good or bad because as a twenty-first century American Student I cannot relate to what it is like to have religion connected to my government in such a way.

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Re: Addressing the questions as a whole

by Vivian Hernandez - Wednesday, October 11, 2017, 11:23 AM

Although our government is not run with religion in mind purposefully, I think religions makes up many of the laws that come up in our daily lives. I agree that it is very natural for humans to be bias when it comes to personal beliefs. The "Center for Bio-Ethical Reform" display at Lane Community can be a good example of someone's religious beliefs that can influence laws. Someone might vote against pro-choice laws because it is a sin their religion. People in the government vote against and for laws that pass based on their core values. Their core values come from their cultural diversity and religious background.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Addressing the questions as a whole

by Madelyn Ball - Wednesday, October 11, 2017, 1:25 PM

I may have not worded my perspective on the subject correctly. What I am trying to say is religious influence in the middle east is much more prominent. In case you did not know about the difference I recommend reading this article I found on <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/globalconnections/mideast/themes/politics/index.html> Here is a little bit of that article to help understand where I am coming from when I say we are not affected quite the same way.

“Religion plays a role in political decision-making in virtually all Middle Eastern countries, different ways. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, for example, the government is run by religion with a subordinate elected parliament (candidates to which must be approved by the religious leadership). In Jordan and Morocco, the king bases his legitimacy on direct descent from but the king is not a religious leader per se.

In Lebanon, parliamentary representation is divided up according to religious affiliation, with proportions reflecting an outdated census of the population of Lebanon in 1932. Maintaining balance of power among the 18 officially recognized religions is an important government goal but the Lebanese government itself is not composed of religious leaders.

Even in strong democracies, like Turkey and Israel, the support of influential religious parties is needed by major parties to form a coalition government. When religious parties are key members of a coalition, their political clout can push the government to mold policies in a certain direction.”

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Turkey and Israel example

by Andrew Smith - Wednesday, October 11, 2017, 9:37 PM

Firstly, I found your examples of how religion plays its role in the various governments of the Middle East very interesting. I know very little about those governments, but I assumed Islam played some kind of role in most governments of that region. Your example of Turkey and Israel's governments stood out because you said that political parties seek out the support of influential religious parties. This reminds me of our government in a minor way and also pulls in the question of whether religion could be removed from its influence on government decisions. The seeking out of influential religious parties reminds me of how our politicians continue to run openly as Christians, at least for Presidency that is. I'm not saying that the politicians don't believe in Christianity themselves, but even if they didn't they wouldn't be smart to run on a platform based off say atheism or Islam. Christians make up 70.6 percent of our population, by running as Christian, regardless of actual belief or not, the politician insures that he/she retains an opportunity for those votes. That's one reason why I don't think religion can be removed from our government, at least not yet. Religion will play some type of role in decision making within our government while that large of a majority of citizens remains Christian. And honestly after pondering the question for a few days, I don't know if Christianity should stop playing a role in the decision making of our government. I think it's silly to make decisions based on all aspects of Christian belief, but the ideals of brotherhood, kindness, helping each other, etc should always remain a part of the government and the American way of life.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Turkey and Israel example



by Madelyn Ball - Thursday, October 12, 2017, 10:53 AM

In my opinion, we are a very long time away from religion being removed from government. While it seems ideal to have no bias political leaders, we have A LOT of progress before I can put my hopes into that. I like your perspective on why presidents openly announce Christianity as their religion. I know a large population of Americans are Christians and it seems silly to me now that I didn't make the connection to how a president claiming Christianity could be a guarantee for attention in America.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1



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Religious Bias

by Vivian Hernandez - Tuesday, October 10, 2017, 4:50 PM

I am not concerned to learn that the Kyro and Egytian students can better understand the Puritans than American students. Compared to an average American student, an Islam student's religion is pressed upon every aspect of their lives. With my different cultural perspective, my eyes did not "glaze over" at the mentions of the Puritans in the textbook. As I was reading about the Puritans, this was the first time I read about their actual religion. The Puritans adhered strictly to the Bible teachings and looked to God in every facet of their lives. I cannot relate to their strong religious beliefs, but I am not bias when I read about them. I don't follow any religion so reading about the Puritans would be the same as reading about Mormons or Christianity. I have no bias towards or against. I have always thought religion was beautiful because I do not think I could ever believe in anything so strongly.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1



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Re: Religious Bias

by Mason Peckels St.onge - Friday, October 13, 2017, 11:14 PM

Hey Vivian

I really agree with what you have to say about the podcast. I also dont follow any religion, but I was still able to connect with and understand the impact of early religions on America. The finding of the non-american students being able to "connect" more with the material did not surprise me. But I think it would be wise for another study to be conducted investigating the validity of the statement.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1



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better connections

by Mason Peckels St.onge - Tuesday, October 10, 2017, 6:53 PM

I am honestly not surprised with Mason's findings. Our society sits on the brink of a unique edge that not many other countries have. We are all so diverse, and are encouraged to be. In countries like Egypt, this is not the case. The law is the law, and you follow it. In some

countries you can't even challenge the law. If i'm not mistaken, their region's major religion plays a significant role in the liberties the people have and the laws that they follow. However, we are as free as a bird in the U.S to say and think whatever we want.

So, I am not suprised that the Egyptian students had a stronger connection with the Puritan beliefs and their effects on the shaping of the U.S. I do think that it is worrisome that his American students were not able to comprehend the impact the early religions had on our countrie. It is good to point out though, that not all American students have this cultural block.

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Religion and the world

by Peter Brasier - Thursday, October 12, 2017, 7:38 AM

To predicate this post I must explain that I was born into a Highly Educated and Deeply Religious family. With that I have been always fascinated with the Christian religion of which I belong to a denomination of. I have always asked the questions of how or why a schism forms in a religion and can be found in almost every religion out there. That being said I was always frustrated in my public school days where they tried to remove religion from as many classes as they could: most well-known authors were a variation of Christian, agnostic, or atheistic and those tones transfer into their writing. Many scientific and philosophical ideas where founded in the pursuit of God or the pursuit against God. Religion and God as a whole belongs to every aspect of life you can look at, hell I work at a catholic hospital to says a prayer at 6:00 am every day (I work night shift). If religion can't be removed from these things than it can't be removed from the people, I believe that government should strive to better all people no matter race, religion, or gender, but I hold to the fact that government is built by people of mixed background and will have these tendency's to shine through in the laws and decisions. If I remember from our book correctly the Quakers were killed and had to move because they would "swear not" which included oaths in court and office if you have someone with that dedication in office, you will either accomplish many things or nothing.

Sincerely, Peter Brasier

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Re: Religion and the world

by Vivian Hernandez - Thursday, October 12, 2017, 12:58 PM

I think they try to take religion out of public school classes because some parents do not want their children learning about other religions. Teachers can also be bias when talking about religion based on their cultural upbringing. I would have loved to learn about Buddhism, Christianity, or Islamic religions while growing up because I feel so uninformed when I think about religions of the world. I think learning about more religions other than their own can help children be unbiased.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Re: Religion and the world

by Peter Brasier - Friday, October 13, 2017, 10:28 AM

I also conncor, pulling some of my background into this; my mother was a teacher of 6 and 8th grade history or world history to be more precise. In her class she had to teach about buddism, Islamic, Zarashtinism, Taoism, and finally Judiasm and christianity. My mom kept a score of when she got calls from parents concerned about what their children were learning. And the majority of calls came when the topics of judiasm and christianity were taught in class.

I believe in the seperation of church and state but know that it isn't possible, when i entered college the first two class I took were phycology and sociology. Both class talked about religion as a set believe a standard that someone has about the way that they live their life, in thoses terms a personal mantra could be a religion. Do you think that the world would every be without religion? If the world was able to be without religion how would a governemnt set up its writes and wrongs what would they use as a basses?

Sincerely,

Peter Brasier

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What are the essential elements of Puritanism that a well-educated American student should know?

by Joseph Maricle - Thursday, October 12, 2017, 6:31 PM

One of the big things to know is the range of separation that the puritans sought to achieve from the catholic, and to a further extent the protestant church. Under the guise of fleeing persecution and religious freedom they settled New England. Upon which set into motion a rigid and somewhat toll heavy faith in which all where punished save the most faithful. The most famous puritan incident of course is the Salem witch trials. I digress, I have an unanswered question. When did the quest of freedom turn to totalitarian oppression?

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Re: When did the quest of freedom turn to totalitarian oppression?

by Madelyn Ball - Friday, October 13, 2017, 4:11 PM

I like your question. In my opinion this happens often in history, we see that we want something that other people don't so we call them wrong for thinking differently. I wish it didn't have to be that way, but on the other hand I do not know how it could be any different. What would you suggest we try instead?

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Puritanism & Islam - after thought

by Joseph Maricle - Sunday, October 15, 2017, 7:21 PM

After listening to the podcast. I find no surprise with Islamic support of Mormon polygamy. After all the founder of Islam had several wives, so it would be culturally accepted. To my knowledge it is only christian nations that have a ban on polygamy. That is not to say its illegal in certain states save Utah, to have more than one wife, just not legal more than one legal wife at a time. i leave with this is this a moral or social issue?

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Re: Puritanism & Islam - after thought

by Mason Peckels St.onge - Sunday, October 15, 2017, 10:38 PM

Hey Joseph

I like what your saying, and you bring up a good question. I think that when discussing Mormon polygamy it is a social issue that people have moral problems with and try and relieve their anxiety about it by forming restrictive policies. When I think about the issue I consider that they aren't doing anything to hurt me or my friends and family, so if the shoe fits I guess. However, I do think this is a great example of church and state being connected. I say this because if it was separate, this wouldn't be a problems. I think just having a religious background in general most likely increases one's chances to not allow the concept to "glaze over", they would most likely have a belief about the concept through their religion. Which is most likely the reason the information did "glaze over" most American students eyes, because the majority isn't religious.

Thanks

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Re: Religion and the Constitution.

by Liliana Valladolid Salas - Sunday, October 15, 2017, 8:24 PM

First of all I have to know who Reynolds was and what was his case. I found an article called "Reynolds v. United States – The Oyez Project.

(<https://www.billofrightsintstitute.org/educate/educator-resources/lessons-plans/landmark-supreme-court-cases-elessons/reynolds-v-united-states-1878/>).

Apparently he believed that his religious duty required him to marry multiple woman.

According to the interview that Professor Scott Casper had by the Journal of American History.

He explains that students were debating if polygamy was legal or against the law. I heard of that before where a Muslim men can have seven woman in. It is hard to avoid following your religion where the place you live considers your religious beliefs wrong. Talking about religion and the Constitution is a hard topic. Specially politics and religion, there are people that have strong believes about their religion and are against politics. Also, there are people that their religion and politics go hand and hand.

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Are you concerned with this finding? Can you relate to and/or understand the Puritans and their experience and influence in the New World, or do your “eyes glaze over”?

by Connor Baker - Sunday, October 15, 2017, 8:28 PM

This topic to me wasn't alarming at all. It simply makes sense. The middle east is a very religious region it would only make sense that the people would have a better understand and ability to relate to the Puritans of the Colonial united states. The US has over the course of time become less and less religious, which would of course make us less able to understand and relate to the Puritans. Personal I find religion to be a very confusing topic, but that dose not mean I feel ill informed about the Puritan religion. I simply cant relate.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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The Constitution vs. Religion

by Liliana Valladolid Salas - Sunday, October 15, 2017, 9:14 PM

Like you, I find religion very confusing. I try to separate religion from politics. Even though the U.S is a free country where you can practice any religion. The Constitution stops it from creating conflicts. Other wise people will try to excuse themselves from the law because of their religion.

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